

**DAVE & NETTY WIEBE***Submitted by Dave Wiebe**The Dave Wiebe family.*

We moved to the Lowe Farm area in the summer of 1984 onto a small farm. In 1989 the restaurant in town came up for sale and we thought about buying it. We talked to a few people about it and got a lot of encouragement. We are still here, 10 years later. In fact, we just celebrated our tenth Anniversary in April, 1998.

Besides Netty's Cafe, I have a small construction business called Durable Builders Ltd. I just celebrated my 20th Anniversary last fall with Durable Builders Ltd.

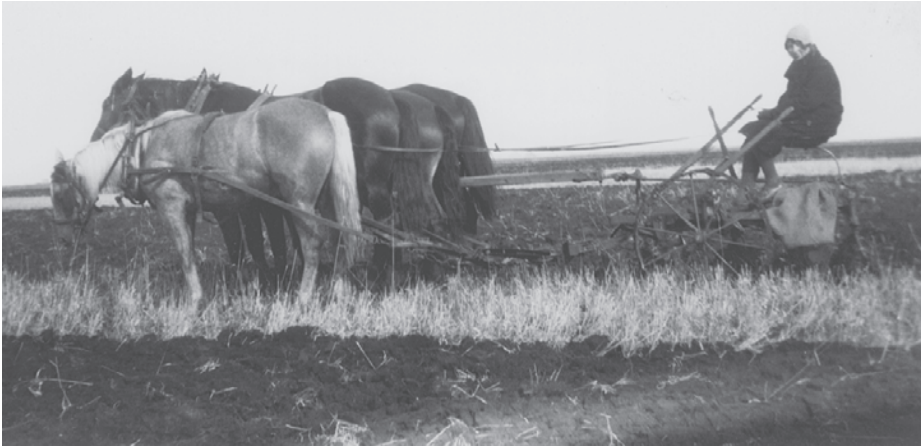
As for our personal life, we attend the Lowe Farm Bergthaler Mennonite Church and feel quite at home there, as in the community.

We have eight children and love to travel across Canada to visit them whenever we can.

**GEORGE & HELENA WIEBE***Submitted by Helena Wiebe**George and Eddy Guenther.*

*Nick Brandt, Annie Born, Abe Rempel, Mary Murner, Margaret Born, John Brandt, Susan Lewis, Helena Rempel and two unidentified children, 1923 or 1924. The plank bridge had to be crossed on the two mile walk to school. Cornelius Rempel nearly drowned at this spot, but was rescued by his sons.*

*George Wiebe and Eddy Guenther taking a lunch break.**The new seeder drill in operation, 1963.*



*Helena Wiebe plowing with horses on the Cornelius Rempel farm in the late 1920's.*



*George Wiebe and his crew take a lunch break in the 1920's.*

My parents were both born in Russia and came to Canada in the late 1800's. I was the youngest of 12 children born to Cornelius Rempel. He had three children with his first wife and nine with his second, my mother, Katherina Friesen, who outlived him by a few months. All of my brothers and sisters were born on the East Reserve but I was born east of Lowe Farm. I grew up here and got my education in a rural public school called the Heabert School.

By the time I was born, several of my older brothers and sisters had married and left home. Some of my siblings had children not much younger than I was and I babysat for some of them. As children, we always had lots of chores to do outside of school work. The girls cooked, sewed and did house-keeping and gardening. We also milked the cows and churned butter. We fed the animals and took the cattle to graze on the unbroken prairie grasslands. We even stooked grain, the stubble cutting into our legs. The girls always wore skirts so our legs were not as protected as the men's.

We walked to school in all kinds of weather, taking our lunches in honey pails. Sometimes in really cold weather my Dad would let us use a horse. One day he helped me cross a makeshift footbridge over a ditch full of quickly

flowing spring run-off water on my way to school. As he started back it broke, dumping him shoulder-deep into the cold water. He couldn't climb out on his own so I hung onto his sleeves while he hung onto the wild rose bushes on the side of the ditch. My older brothers saw the danger from the house and quickly floated a raft to him and rescued him. We were shocked at how close he came to drowning but we were very relieved that we were all safe.

In a way, the Lowe Farm School introduced me to the man who would become my husband, George Wiebe. A teacher in the school, Henry Shellenberg, was also a choir conductor and had gathered together a choir which George and I joined. George used to take me home after choir practice so we got to know each other.

George's parents also came to Canada from Russia in the late 1800's and settled north of Horndean where he was born. He was the third child of Gerhard and Aganetha Wiebe. He did not attend any public school but at the age of 19 he went to the Mennonite Collegiate Institute in Gretna where he took classes for two winters. That's all the formal education he got.

Sometime after he left school he and a close friend, Henry Buhr, bought a big threshing machine together. It had a removable seed-cleaning attachment with which they cleaned grain for people. They did the cleaning in late winter to have the grain ready for spring seeding and he always got a lot of requests from farmers. Thus, he got to know a lot of people.

When I got to know him, George had rented a house two and a half miles north of Lowe Farm from Sam Rosner, the brother of Moses Rosner who owned Rosner's Grocery Store in Lowe Farm. George and his younger brother, Ed, "batched" there until Ed got married. This



was the first land he bought after we were married.

George and I married on June 14, 1934. His friends gave us two kitchen chairs and a high chair - a joke - as wedding presents to supplement our meager furnishings. The chairs were much appreciated. George and Ed had dined bachelor style at a kitchen table they had made themselves. The top was heavy planks covered with leftover linoleum and the legs were two-by-fours. The table was high enough that they could eat standing up and didn't need chairs. Nail kegs served for those rare occasions when they wanted to sit down or had guests.

The first thing that was done after I arrived was to shorten the table legs so we could use our wedding presents to sit at the table. The high chair joke was put away for five years until we finally had our first baby.

On the evening of February 18, 1939, we listened to Foster Hewitt give a hockey play-by-play on the radio with his characteristic, "He shoots! He scores!" But we also scored that evening. A few hours after the hockey game Melvin, was born.

Three years later on July 21, 1942, Victoria, or Vicki, joined us. Leona followed on April 1, 1944. She was a "blue baby" and her condition prompted us to buy John Schroeder's house on Main Street in Lowe Farm. It had a water heating system and a small generator owned by the blacksmith, John Martens and Sons. Leona never benefited from the house. She died on July 20, 1946. We moved into the Lowe Farm house that fall after harvest.

Ruth came along the next summer on July 14, and on August 6, two years later, Ron was born. Five years after that on September 28, Charles, or Tim, as he is known to family and close friends, appeared, completing our family.

The year Ruth was born, 1947, Manitoba Hydro came to Lowe Farm. The reeve, Dietrich Hoepfner, asked us whether we would be willing to accommodate and feed some of the Hydro workers, which we did. We hired Helen Kehler, daughter of Lowe Farm's shoe-maker, to help me with the cooking, baking, housekeeping and caring for the baby and the other children.

The arrival of hydro was a very great happening in the Lowe Farm, Kane and Rosenort districts and surrounding areas. It had seemed like something unobtainable before, but now it was actually becoming a reality. Before, with the small generator, we had had very limited electricity, but now it seemed unlimited. On the farm we had had a windmill generator to run essential things like the washing machine for washing mountains of diapers. In town the small basement generator let us use the electric lights only sparingly but after the hydro came we could use the lights as much as we wanted.

In 1952, a polio epidemic struck Southern Manitoba and several families in Lowe Farm were touched by that dreaded disease. All four of our children got flu symptoms but only Ruth was sent to Winnipeg with polio. God answered our prayers. She survived and did not



*George Wiebe combining in the late 1930's.*



*The home of George and Helena Wiebe, two and a half miles north of Lowe Farm.*



*George Wiebe's threshing machine, 1920's.*



*Helena Wiebe and her immediate children on her 80th birthday.*



*Helena Wiebe and her family, 1985.*



*Helena and George Wiebe at their 35th wedding anniversary, 1969.*

have to go into an iron lung. She did lose the use of her right arm and most of her left but she went to school with the other children.

Mel and Vicki got all their grade school education in Lowe Farm, much of it in the three buildings that were torn down when the "new school" - now the community centre - was built. Ruth and Ron also started out in the red two-room school. Ruth was bussed to the Kane School for a few months when the Lowe Farm High School was under construction. Ron spent a year in Morris after the Lowe Farm School was restricted

to lower grades. Tim got his entire high school education in Morris.

All of our children have kept on learning after they left public school.

Mel is a professor of English and the chief editor of the Disraeli Project at Queen's University in Kingston. He and his wife, Dr. Lola Cuddy, have one son, Alex.

Vicki was inspired by several Lowe Farm graduates who became nurses. She started out as a Registered Nurse, but went on to get her Ph D in nursing and teaches nursing at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. She has two daughters, Liz and Kathryn. Her husband, Allen Strang, died suddenly in 1992.

Ruth went on to teach school but later left that field for freelance writing. She and her husband, Dave Enns of Sperling, live at Sanford.

Ron at first took over the family farm but eventually his passion for computers got the better of him so he joined a friend in a software development business venture, International Operating Systems. Eventually he took over the firm. He and his wife, Clara (Braun) also of Lowe Farm, live in Morris. They have two

daughters, Laurie and Jennifer.

In his university studies Charles/Tim at first followed his interest in history but later shifted to law. He and his wife, Dr. Ellen Anderson, live in Scarborough. He practices law in Toronto.

George died in 1979 after a long battle with cancer. Next to God and his family he loved the Lowe Farm land he called home and I feel privileged to have shared in building that home with him. Lowe Farm has been good to us. God has been good to us.

### **RON & CLARA (BRAUN) WIEBE**

Clara Helen Marie Braun was born in November of 1952 in the Altona Hospital to Justina and Peter Braun. She grew up in Lowe Farm, the youngest of four children.

Ronald Robert David Wiebe was born in August of 1949, in the Morris Hospital to Helena and George Wiebe. He grew up in Lowe Farm, the second youngest of five surviving children.

Ron and Clara were married in July of 1972, in the Lowe Farm Bergthaler Mennonite Church. They lived in Winnipeg while Clara was finishing her second and final year of nurses' training. Following Clara's graduation, they returned to Lowe Farm where they lived for the next two years. At this time, Ron was farming in the summer with his father on their family farm and working in winter as a general laborer in various businesses. In March of 1974, Clara began working at the Red River Valley Lodge as a Registered Nurse, where she continues to work today. In March of 1975, Ron and Clara moved to a house in Morris and the summer of that same year, Ron began to run the farm independently, which he continued to do until 1993.

In December of 1976, Ron and Clara had their first child; a daughter they named Laurie Claire. Two years following, in October of



1978, they had their second child; another daughter they named Jennifer Marie.

In 1979, on the instigation of Clara's father, Ron and Clara accommodated a young Vietnamese couple, Hoa and Lan Chau for six months as they were getting established in Canada. By the end of their stay the family had grown to three, as their daughter Lana was born in early 1980.

In February of 1983, Ron and Clara decided to accept an offer to move with their daughters to Nakuru, Kenya for two years where Ron would work in an agricultural program under CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency) through the University of Manitoba. The term ended up lasting for a year and a half, at which time they returned to Morris and continue to live today. A highlight of this trip was when Clara's parents visited for six weeks over the Christmas holiday.

Ron and Clara have been dedicated to their church involvement during their years in Lowe Farm as well as their many years in Morris, as they continued attending Lowe Farm Berghaler Mennonite Church even after they moved. Ron has served as vice chairman and chairman as well as teaching Sunday School for many years and singing in the men's quartet. Clara has also been involved in various activities in the church. They both continue to be active in the church today, as well as serving the larger community.

### HENRY B. WIEBE

Henry B. Wiebe, fondly nicknamed "The Watchmaker," was born to Bernhard and Agatha Wiebe on July 15, 1875, near Steinbach, Manitoba. The Wiebes had immigrated to Canada from Russia in 1874. Henry moved with his parents to the Weidenfeld district, near Altona, as a young child.

Photos: Four generations at Lowe Farm – 101 years.



*Henry B. Wiebe as a young man.*



*Margaretha Giesbrecht*



*Frank Giesbrechts, parents of Margaretha (Giesbrecht) Wiebe, came to Rosefarm, near Lowe Farm, in 1889.*



*David and Mary (Wiebe) Penner, married in 1940 and raised eight children in Lowe Farm (see their history in this book).*



*David and Mary Penner with their children. Back row: (l – r) Leonard, Roxana, Bob, Dave, Allan, Douglas. Front row: (l – r) Janice, Rosemarie, Mary, Marjorie.*



178c. Henry and Margaretha Wiebe lived in Lowe Farm until 1944.

In 1904, Henry was united in marriage to Anna Klassen (nee Bergen) and they made their home in Altona, where Henry practiced his profession of repairing clocks and watches.

Anna had a daughter, Elizabeth, by a previous marriage. To this new marriage were born six children, while they lived in Altona. They were: Henry, Ben, Tina, Dora, Susie (Sally), and Edd.

In the spring of 1919, Henry purchased the north half of 24-4-2w in the Kane School District, near Lowe Farm, and moved to the farm. His father purchased the north half of 35-4-2w in the Lowe Farm school district, and rented it to his son.

On March 31, 1920, a son, Peter, was born, and on April 10, Anna passed away, leaving Henry with one step-daughter, aged 20, and seven children, ranging from 10 days to 15 years.

On August 17, 1920, Henry was united in marriage to Margaretha Giesbrecht, daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Frank Giesbrecht (nee Gerbrandt). The Giesbrechts had arrived from Russia in 1874 and had settled in the Rose Farm district near Lowe Farm in 1898.

After her father's death in 1912, Margaretha had cared for her aging mother and made her living by sewing for her friends and neighbors until the death of her mother in January, 1920.

To this marriage were born three children: Mary, Jacob and Johnny, who died in infancy.

The Wiebe family lived on this farm until 1927, during which time

Henry served on the board of the Kane Consolidated School from 1924 - 1926. He also drove the school van for a few years.

In the fall of 1927, the farm went back to its former owner, a Mr. Arnold, an American, and Henry purchased the N 1/2 35-4-2w from his father and moved to the Lowe Farm School District.

The Wiebe family lived on this farm until September, 1944, at which time his son, Jacob, rented the farm and the Wiebes retired to his native Altona.

During these 17 years, Henry continued his profession of repairing clocks and watches in his spare time. He served on the Lowe Farm School District board from 1930 - 1934, and was actively involved in the founding of the Lowe Farm Burial Aid Society. He was also active in the Lowe Farm Credit Union, serving on the Supervisory Committee for a number of years. The Wiebes were also among the initial group of people who started the Rudnerweider Church at Rose Farm.

Margaretha passed away on November 12, 1960, at the age of 76, and Henry passed away on October 26, 1961. The farm was then sold to his nephew, Jacob Thiessen.

At the time of his passing, Henry was 86 years old.

His step-daughter, Elizabeth, married Jacob Peters of Lowe Farm in 1922. They homesteaded a farm north of Lowe Farm for eight years, and then moved to town, where Jake served as the local barber for a period of 30 years. They retired to Morris in 1972. Elizabeth passed away on December 31, 1978. Jacob passed away in 1989.

Henry Wiebe operated a dragline around Lowe Farm for some years and retired to Florida, U.S.A. He passed away in 1981. His wife passed away in 1998.

Ben Wiebe, also a dragline operator for many years, moved to British Columbia. He died in 1998. One of his sons passed away in 1980 and another son died in 1998. Ben's widow lives in Cochrane, Alberta.

Tina (Ernest) Fraser married a railroad foreman and moved to Florida. She passed away in 1990 and Ernest died in 1991.

Dora (Fred) Ellis married a serviceman and was widowed. She moved to Florida. Dora's only son also predeceased her.

Susie (Sally) remained single and, when she retired from her job in Chicago, Illinois, moved to Florida, where she lives at present.

Ed Wiebe drove a transfer in the Lowe Farm area for a number of years and then joined the Army, in which he served for 25 years before moving to British Columbia. He passed away in 1994. His widow lives in Chilliwack.

Peter Wiebe joined the army at the age of 19. He was seriously wounded in the Second World War, and moved to Florida. He lives in Tarpan Springs, Florida.

Mary (Dave) Penner, stayed in Lowe Farm until 1997, when they moved to Morris.

Jacob Wiebe lives in Blumenort.

## JAKE & TIENA (FRIESEN) WIEBE

*From Furrows in the Valley*

*Originally submitted by Agatha (Schroeder) Friesen*

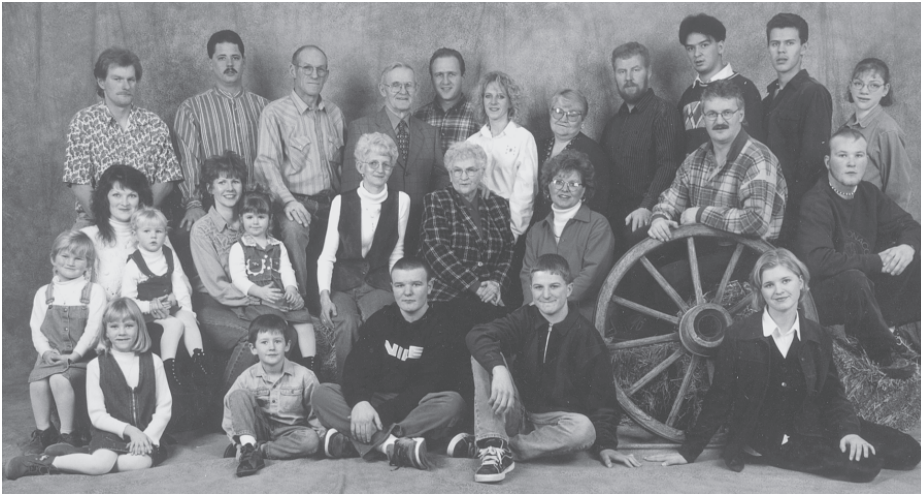
Tiena Friesen was born to Rev. Jacob and Agatha (Stoesz) Friesen in 1921, August 2, at St. Peters, Manitoba. She attended school there and was baptized and received as a member in the Sommerfeld Church at Kronweide.

On June 18, 1944, (a very rainy day) she was united in marriage to Jacob B. Wiebe. After spending some time in "Alternative Service" in a coal mine in Bienfait, Saskatchewan, they returned to Manitoba. With the sudden passing of Tiena's father in the fall of 1945, they remained with her mother for a year, later moving to a farm north of Lowe Farm. In 1978 they sold the farm and retired to Altona.

Tiena and Jake are the parents of four children: Edward, Menno, Irene, and Kathy.



## JACOB & SADIE (HILDEBRANDT) WIEBE



*Jacob and Sadie Wiebe and family, 1997.*

Jacob Wiebe and Sadie Hildebrandt were married in 1943 and lived in the Lowe Farm area until 1965. Jacob became the first pastor of the Emmanuel Gospel Church at Lowe Farm in 1954. In 1965, the Wiebes' retired from farming and pastoring and moved to Steinbach where Jacob continued his education. In 1966, the Wiebes' moved to Nipawin, Saskatchewan, where Jacob joined the faculty of the Nipawin Bible Institute and Sadie took up part time employment in the Town of Nipawin.

After 10 years the Wiebes' moved back to Manitoba. Jacob graduated from Winnipeg Bible College with a BRE degree in 1977. Sadie acquired PHT (Putting Hubby Through) degree working in the kitchen.

In 1979, the Wiebe's moved to Blumenort near Steinbach. Jacob became involved in a traveling ministry with the United Gospel Crusaders, and Sadie was employed by the Mennonite Village Museum in the kitchen department.

From 1981 to 1986 Jacob took a leave of absence from his traveling ministry and pastored the Elim Baptist Church of Beausejour. After this he took up his traveling ministry again in which he is still involved.

Jacob and Sadie Wiebe have four children:

Ken married Judy Friesen of Morris. He is employed with Schneiders of Winnipeg. Judy works with handicapped people of Morris and District.

Alvina married Melvin Price of Carrot River, Saskatchewan. Melvin works in the saw mill and Alvina teaches music and operates a tea house and a party center in Nipawin.

Joe married Kathy Funk of Love, Saskatchewan. Joe owns a cleaning company called Kem Dry Southeast, and Kathy sells real estate with Homelife Riverbend.

Max married Andrea Klassen of Steinbach. Max is employed selling agriculture products, Andrea is employed in the farrowing department of a 6,000 sow operation.

## KEN & MARGARET (PENNER) WIEBE

*Submitted by Margaret Wiebe*

Margaret (Penner) Wiebe is the seventh child born to Ben and Tina (Thiessen) Penner on September 29, 1943. She grew up and enjoyed her childhood years in Lowe Farm. She married Kenneth James Wiebe on August 27, 1967 in Lowe Farm at the Emmanuel Gospel Church. Margaret has fond memories of this young church and the wonderful missionary conferences.

Margaret and Ken have run a dairy, beef and grain farm in the Winkler area for many years. They are members of the Grace Mennonite Church in Winkler.

Ken has always been very community oriented, serving on various committees and boards such as minor hockey, church boards and the Association for Community Living. Ken is also an avid supporter of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

Margaret is a Registered Nurse and has been employed with the Salem Personal Care Home in Winkler for many years.

As a child, Margaret enjoyed life in Lowe Farm, spending the winter months at the local outdoor skating rink and the summer months at Heoppner's pond, located directly across the road from the Ben Penner residence. Many dreams for the future and aspirations were shared with close friend Ruth (Friesen) Johnson and cousins Marjorie (Penner) Fraser and Rose Marie (Penner) Kieper at this idyllic spot where frogs croaked and crayfish were plentiful.

Ken and Margaret have two sons and one daughter: Murray Wayne is residing in Winnipeg and is employed at Ryan's Forestry Products; Clifford James is married to Laura Groening. They have three sons, Jason, 22, Luke, 3 1/2, and Eric, 1; Julie Ann-Marie is presently enrolled at the Marvel School Hairdressing and Cosmetology in Winnipeg.

## JAKE B. & TIENA (FRIESEN) WIEBE

Jake Wiebe, the son Abram and Maria Wiebe, was born in 1916 at Hope Farm. In 1918, his parents moved Lowe Farm, Section 6-1-4w. He attended Steinfeld School. In the winter of 1940, he took a course in agriculture in Altona.

In June 1944, Jake married Tiena Friesen, the daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Jacob W. Friesen. That was during the war years, which meant that he had to help with the farm work for his dad. Then in the fall of 1944, we (Jake and Tiena) were sent to the coal mines, called Mt. S Mines in Bienfait, Saskatchewan, for the winter months.

When we came back in the spring of 1945, our son Edward was born. We had rented a quarter of land northwest of Lowe Farm, Section 9-5-2w. It was very wet that spring, so we only got our crop in late spring, but still managed to get a fair crop out of it. Jake was still helping his dad and also we had to pay Red Cross money every month. But by June, 1945, the war ended. We bought the farm and also another quarter of land.

Our son Edward and his wife Mary Ann live in Tsawwassen, British Columbia. Edward went to school at Kane, Lowe Farm and then finished at the University of Manitoba. He married Mary Ann Doerksen in 1967. He began teaching in Winnipeg and was a Physical Education instructor for 19 years in Tsawwassen. He is now involved in selling real estate there. Mary Ann had her own film company, but is now busy taking their boys to hockey, music and baseball and being a mom. They have two sons: Aaron, born in 1982, and Eli, 1990.

Our second son, Menno, was born on April 18, 1948, in the midst of a flood. Jake had to play doctor and deliver Menno himself. He is married to Debbie Messenger and they live in Calgary. He has two children; Melanie, born in 1969, and Ian, born in 1970. They are both married and live in Calgary. Melanie married Ryan Miller in 1996 and Ian married Stephanie in 1997. Menno works for Hall-Houston-Malaysia L.T.D. He went to school first in Kane, later Lowe Farm and then went on to finish four years the University of Manitoba. His work takes him to Malaysia frequently. Debbie works in Calgary.

Irene, our first daughter, was born on April 19, 1952. She married Lorne Penner, son of Ben E. and Tina Penner. She went to school at Kane, Lowe Farm and Morris. They were married in July, 1972. Lorne and Irene own an overhead garage door business called Universal Doors, in Brandon. They both work there, as well as their two sons and son-in-law. They have three children: Kathy, born in 1977; Brian, born 1979; and Jon, born 1980. Kathy married Mike Hildebrand in 1996 and they have a son, Dominik, born in 1998. All live in Brandon.

Kathy, our second daughter, was born on Christmas Day, 1956. She also got her education at Kane, Lowe Farm, Morris and then at the University of Manitoba. She married Mahmood Randaree in 1996 and they now live in Potchefstroom, South Africa. Mahmood is the manager of the agriculture office and Kathy is busy studying a course in Business Management.

We sold our farm in 1977, and bought a house in Altona. Jake kept busy with the Thresherman's Museum between Winkler and Morden for many years. In 1991, he had an aneurysm and spent one month in the St. Boniface Hospital. He did not completely recover, as he could not get his strength back. Then in 1993, Parkinson's disease set in and he had a knee replacement operation in 1994. He passed away on July 28, 1997. I sold the House and moved into an apartment in Altona where I am now living and have good health. Thanks to the Good Lord and my children, I am quite happy. I am planning on doing some traveling with my children being so far away.

### **TINA (REMPLE) (PETER SCHROEDER) & JACOB B. WIENS**

*From Furrows in the Valley*

Tina was the oldest daughter of Peter P. and Nettie Remple. On July 9, 1931, she married Peter S. Schroeder, son of Rev. Jacob and Anna Schroeder of the Kronsweide District. Peter and Tina farmed S 24-4-2w.

They had four children:

Erdman married Lorraine Summers and is living in Toronto, Ontario. They have one son.

Nettie married Willie H. Klassen. They are farmed the land which was homestead by her grandparents, Rev. Jacob J. and Anna Schroeder. This land was also farmed by her parents, Peter and Tina Schroeder. Nettie and Willie sold the land in 1995 and moved to Morris. They have four children and one grandchild.

Herman married Rosella Braun and lives in Ottawa, Ontario. They have one daughter.

Beno married Karen Manly. They live in Cobourg, Ontario and have two sons.

In 1948, Peter S. Schroeder passed away. In 1951, Tina married Jacob B. Wiens. Tina and Jacob have one son, Lionel, who is married to Lorraine Wiebe. They live two miles south and one mile west of Lowe Farm on 25-4-2w.

Jacob died in 1989. Tina lives in the Prairie View Apartments in Lowe Farm.

### **LIONEL & LORRAINE WIENS**



*Lorraine, Lionel, Cindy, Trevor and  
Carissa Wiens.*

We were both raised in the Lowe Farm area and lived there until September, 1972, when we got married.

We lived in a variety of communities including Portage La Prairie, Winnipeg, and Winkler before moving back to Lowe Farm in 1978 to start farming. We lived in town until the spring of 1981, at which time we moved to our farm two miles south and one mile west of town.

We have been actively involved in our community, serving in many different organizations including the Chamber of Commerce, Curling Clubs, Fire Department, and the various Co-op boards. Presently, Lionel serves on the Lowe Farm Credit Union Board and just completed twelve years on the Morris Macdonald School Division Board and Lorraine is employed part-time at the Lowe Farm Co-op.

We attend and are members of the Lowe Farm Berghaler Mennonite Church where we have both taught Sunday School and are involved in other committee work as well.

Lowe Farm has been a good place to raise our three children. Carissa was born in December, 1977 and graduated from Red River Community College. Trevor was born in December, 1980 and attends Morris School. Cindy was born in March 1983 and is also attending Morris School. We are pleased to have been part of this community for the past 20 years.



# **EDUCATION**

## **A CENTURY OF LEARNING**



## EDUCATION

*Submitted by Paul Joyal*

### LOWE FARM SCHOOL HISTORY



*William Friesen, school principal*

*"School is a place for learning and doing. It is also a place to grow in character. Finally, it is a place to learn some of the lessons of successful living."*

Those phrases, penned by Lowe Farm School Principal William Friesen in 1948, might best describe Lowe Farm School. The place referred to by Mr. Friesen has, during the course of the last century, taken a variety of shapes and sizes.

The first school built in Lowe Farm in 1899 was a simple one room school. In 1913 a handsome two story concrete block school was built. In 1926, with the introduction of the high school program, a small building was rented for this purpose. This building would become the only school that was not actually built by the school board. In a short period of time two other school buildings would be built. In 1936 a single room building was built east of the concrete block school. This was followed by the construction of a two roomed "red brick" building in 1939. The building program continued in 1955 with the construction of a four classroom brick

vener school. The construction of this building saw Lowe Farm School acquire its first auditorium. This particular school, with its closing in 1982, would eventually become the Lowe Farm Community Centre. The present school facility, built in 1961, would finalize the building program in Lowe Farm this century.

During the course of the past 100 years, seven separate school buildings, as outlined above, have occupied real estate in Lowe Farm. Perhaps the most colorful period in the history of Lowe Farm School might have occurred between the years 1927 and 1946. During this period four separate school buildings were in operation, and were located within close proximity to each other. The arrangement of these buildings could easily have given Lowe Farm the appearance of a small university campus.

The influx of rural students in the early years, combined with consolidation that began in 1959, were factors that contributed greatly to the building programs. These factors, however, merely reinforced the commitment to the education process.

To mark the 100th anniversary of Lowe Farm School, this section has been dedicated to the trustees, ratepayers, educators and students, past and present, whose dedication, energy, and vision have served to make Lowe Farm School the place to learn.

### CONSOLIDATION

An important factor resulting in a further increase in high school enrolment was the amalgamation of five rural school districts with Lowe Farm to form The Lowe Farm Consolidated School District. The idea of consolidation, or the formation of some kind of larger area, had been in the minds of several Lowe Farm residents for some time. The idea was given more specific form and direction when, in 1952, Inspector

Ewanchuk spoke to a gathering of trustees from the surrounding districts outlining the advantages of such a move. Reaction at first was not favorable. In January, 1953, the Lowe Farm trustees reported to the ratepayers that "the districts contacted were not in favor because they did not wish their children to be exposed to the town school, firmly believing that it would have a harmful influence on them". However, a year later a group of parents in the Neufeld School District, four miles north of the village, broached the question again and asked for a study and report. Strong leadership also came for consolidation from the St. Peter's District near Sewell. The view that the rural districts ought to contribute to the cost of providing new high school facilities led to a series of discussions on organizing a larger high school unit. An alternative was that proposed earlier, namely, consolidation.

By the spring of 1957 a meeting of the joint boards expressed preference for consolidation. The arguments presented for consolidation included: free access to high school education; cheaper transportation of students; and better opportunities for the children at the elementary level. The Lowe Farm ratepayers, in turn, because they would not be alone in bearing the cost of high school education, would benefit from a reduced mill-rate. Finally, at a special meeting on April 3, 1959, a motion was passed requesting the Municipal Council to combine the school districts of Heabert, St. Peter's and Lowe Farm into the Lowe Farm Consolidated School District. Neufeld School District was added in September of the same year. The district was further expanded when Steinfeld and Kronsweide also joined the consolidation in 1968 as a result of a dwindling population.



Kronsweide S.D. 1030 formed: Aug. 8, 1899 dissolved: Jan. 1, 1968 joined Consolidation January 1, 1968	Rose Farm S.D. 1577 formed: Aug. 25, 1896 dissolved: Jan. 4, 1965 joined Consolidation July 10, 1965	Steinfeld S.D. 1128 formed: May 27, 1901 dissolved: Jan. 1, 1968 joined Consolidation January 1, 1968
St. Peter's S.D. 1031 formed: July 29, 1899 dissolved: Jan. 7, 1959 joined Consolidation January 1, 1959	Lowe Farm S.D. 1033 formed: June 3, 1899 dissolved: July 1, 1959	Neufeld S.D. 1580 formed: July 28, 1911 dissolved: Jan. 1, 1960 joined Consolidation January 1, 1960
Heabert S.D. 1282 formed: Nov. 27, 1903 dissolved: Jan. 7, 1959 joined Consolidation January 7, 1959	Cannon S.D. 2297 formed: Sept., 15, 1939 dissolved: Jan. 1, 1967 joined Consolidation January 1, 1967	Melba S.D. 2039 formed: April 19, 1920 dissolved: January 1, 1967

Lowe Farm  
Consolidated School District 2377  
formed: July 1, 1959  
dissolved: May 1, 1969  
to form the  
Morris Macdonald  
School Division #19

## THE CURRICULUM

In the early years, following the short span of the English period, academic progress was slow and subjects such as English probably received little attention. It is not known how much German was taught, but that it was taught as part of the regular program from the time of A. K. Friesen until the middle years of the First World War is almost certain. After that, at least in all grades below Grades VII and VIII, German was taught from 8:30 a.m. until 9 a.m., before regular classes began.

In the bilingual years, approximately one fourth of the school day may have been devoted to German. Catechism and Bible stories, as well as the singing of German hymns, were taught in the last half hour of the school day prescribed by the Department of Education for religious instruction. It does not appear that all teachers made equal use of the privileges available to them in these respects. There were occasionally non-Mennonite and non-German speaking teachers who could be expected to do this kind of work.

A rather remarkable curriculum feature appeared in 1908-1909. School gardening, under the name of "Elementary Agriculture," was introduced as an integral part of a child's school experience. The authorities reasoned that in an agricultural community it was imperative to teach children the art of growing flowers, shrubs, and vegetables. The Department set up a Director of Elementary Agriculture who acted as consultant and coordinator. His office distributed certain types of seeds and shrubs to the schools, some free of charge, others at cost price. The program operated under teacher direction and was aimed at school ground beautification. The gardens were judged in the summer and awarded prizes by the Municipal Council. The inspectors entered into the program enthusiastically, and until the mid 1920's, a report on school gardening was included in the inspectors report to the Department. As the

academic courses became more amplified with more and more material to be learned and, as the economic stringency of the Depression advanced, Elementary Agriculture just faded away. Instead, more emphasis was given to cultural subjects such as music and art.

From the middle 1920's on, (possibly sooner), the prescribed program of the Department was followed pretty closely in Lowe Farm. In the lower Grades, namely I, II, and III, the three R's of education were taught. Spelling Bees also formed part of the curriculum and were enjoyed by the students. Starting in Grade V, the curriculum was expanded to include subjects such as geography and history. Geography Bees were sometimes held as well.

This trend of education continued into the 1930's and 1940's. Beginning in Grade VI, students would have been introduced to German. They would first have studied a book called the "The Fiebel," which was the book of German pronunciation, spelling, and the German alphabet. Starting in Grade VII, German would be taught as a required second language. Teaching the Fiebel would continue right through until Grade IX.

In 1913, the school district of Lowe Farm first began the policy of purchasing text books for the students. The introduction of high school in Lowe Farm in 1926 did not, however, follow the policy of purchasing books for these students. The cost of this subject matter was left to the students, or parents, to obtain.

The following compares grades at different time periods to give some insight into the curriculum. Although the subjects taught were similar in nature, there are differences. Grades and years were selected at random:

Grade III subjects in 1933 - 1934 were obtained from an old report card. Grade III students of that time were merely taught

reading, spelling and arithmetic. In 1959 - 1960, Grade III students were being taught arithmetic, english, oral reading, literature, language, spelling, writing, natural science, social studies, health and art.

In 1949 - 1950, Grade V students were being taught spelling, oral reading, arithmetic, art, health, composition, writing, nature studies and social studies. In 1994 - 1995, Grade V included language arts (reading, spelling, writing, etc.), mathematics, science, social studies, german, music, physical education and art.

The curriculum for Grade VIII students of 1965 - 1966 included social studies, spelling, literature, language, health, mathematics, music, natural science and german. By comparison Grade VIII students in 1995 - 1996 were taught language arts, spelling, reading, writing, mathematics, science, social studies, german, health, industrial arts and art.

The 1949 Grade XII subject matter included english (which included poetry, drama, novel, and composition), science, (including physics and chemistry), and mathematics, (including algebra, analytical geometry, and trigonometry). For Grade XII students of 1967, the last year this Grade was taught in Lowe Farm School, the subject matter included english, mathematics, physics, chemistry, german and history.

In 1949, John Bell, who was the high school principal for only one year, introduced typing as an optional course in the school. Typing became a credited course and remained as part of the curriculum until the end of the high school program in Lowe Farm.

Isaac Warkentin first began the teaching of Industrial Arts, and was continued by B. D. Hildebrand, under whose direction it became a credited course.

FORM 2

**D. W. FRIESEN'S SCHOOL**  
**REPORT CARD**

*Melba*  
(Name of School here)

**SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 2039**

**MONTHLY REPORT**

of *Abram Harder*  
Class \_\_\_\_\_ Grade *III*

Register Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Year 193*3* to 193*4*

For Sale By D. W. FRIESEN, School Supplies Of Every Description.  
ALTONA, MANITOBA.

193 .....	TO	193 .....	Days Absent	Times Late	Conduct	Attendance	Age	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Arithmetic	Nature Study	Art	Health	Music	Grammar	Geography	Composition	Eng. History	Can. History	Literature	Science
September	7							35	100	50												
October	25							40	92	58												
November	25							62	94	50												
December																						
January																						
February	11							50	80	100												
March	5							65		75												
April	3							75	86	92												
May	7							70	92	90												
June																						

TO PARENTS OR GUARDIANS  
Please examine this Report carefully and return it, properly signed, to the Teacher.  
Figures used for subjects tested on. Key for other marks: E-Excellent, C-Very good, G-Good, F-Fair, U-Unsatisfactory, P-Poor.

Average	Standing	No. in class	Attitude towards work	REMARKS BY TEACHER	SIGNATURE OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN
57.5	7	11	8		<i>Abram Harder</i>
62.5	7	6	8		
68.7	7	12	8		
76.8	7	8	8		
70.7	7	9	8		
84.8	6	8	8		
84.8	9	8	8		

This certifies that the pupil herein named has been promoted from *Gr. III* to *Gr. IV* .....

Principal *A. K. Duerksen* Teacher .....



<p>THIS CERTIFIES THAT <u>Alvin Shuster</u> has been promoted from Grade <u>1</u> to Grade <u>2</u></p> <p><u>Jan 30</u> 19 <u>58</u></p> <p><u>James</u> Principal</p>	
<p align="center"><b>Certificate of Promotion</b></p>	

<p><b>Lowe Farm</b> <b>School Report</b></p> <p align="center">RECORD OF</p> <p><u>Doreen Harder</u> Pupil</p> <p>Sept. 19<u>57</u> to June 19<u>58</u></p> <p><u>Grade 1</u> Grade</p> <p><u>A. Wiener</u> Teacher</p>
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CITIZENSHIP REPORT				
HEALTH Posture	A	A	A	A
Personal Cleanliness	A	A	A	A
Safety Rules Obeyed				
NEATNESS and CARE of Appearance	A	A	A	A
of Books	A	A	A	A
of School Property	A	A	A	A
ATTITUDES Co-operation	A	A	A	A
Courtesy	A	A	A	A
Use of Time	B	B	B	A
Interest in Work	A	A	B	A
Supplementary Reading			A	A
Conduct	A	A	A	A
A—Very Good      B—Good C—Fair              D—Not Satisfactory				
SIGNATURE OF PARENT				
1. <u>Mrs. Abe Harder,</u>				
2. <u>Mrs. Abe Harder,</u>				
3. <u>Mrs. Abe Harder.</u>				
4. _____				

PUBLIC SCHOOL REPORT				
	1	2	3	4
SOCIAL STUDIES	—			
ENGLISH: <u>Oral</u> Reading	A	A	B	A
Spelling	100	100	64	76
Writing	B	B	B	A
<u>Silent Reading</u> Literature			55	84
LANGUAGE				97
HEALTH				
MATHEMATICS	88	60	74	100
ART	C	B	B	B
MUSIC				
NATURAL SCIENCE				
CRAFTS or MANUAL TRAINING				
TOTAL	188	160	198	307
Percentage	94	80	66	81.2
Days Absent	4	2		
Times Late				
A—Very Good (75% or over)      B—Good (65% to 74%) C—Average (50% to 64%)      D—Poor (below 50%)				

HIGH SCHOOL REPORT				
	1	2	3	4
SPELLING				
LITERATURE				
COMPOSITION				
SOCIAL STUDIES				
MATHEMATICS				
ALGEBRA				
GEOMETRY				
GENERAL SCIENCE				
CHEMISTRY				
PHYSICS				
HEALTH and PHYSICAL ED.				
MUSIC				
FRENCH				
GERMAN				
TYPING				
TOTAL				
Percentage				
Days Absent				
Times Late				
A—Very Good (75% or over)      B—Good (65% to 74%) C—Average (50% to 64%)      D—Poor (below 50%)				

TEACHER'S REMARKS
1. Report:— <u>Doreen does very good work.</u> <u>A. Wiener</u>
2. Report:— <u>Doreen could improve in printing.</u> <u>A. Wiener</u>
3. Report:— <u>Doreen is capable of better work.</u> <u>A. Wiener</u>
4. Report:— <u>Doreen has greatly improved in her work.</u> <u>A. Wiener</u>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Certificate of Promotion</b></p> <p>THIS CERTIFICATE THAT <u>Alvin Harder</u> has been promoted from Grade <u>III</u> to Grade <u>IV</u></p> <p style="text-align: right;">June 30 1960 <i>[Signature]</i> Principal</p>	<p><b>School Report</b> <b>Lowe Farm</b> <b>Consolidated S.D.</b> <b>No. 2377</b></p> <hr/> <p>RECORD OF <u>Doreen Harder</u> Pupil</p> <p>Sept. 19<u>59</u> to June 19<u>60</u></p> <hr/> <p><u>III</u> Grade <u>L. Klassen</u> Teacher</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CITIZENSHIP REPORT</b></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: left;"><b>HEALTH</b></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sits, stands, walks correctly</td> <td>A</td> <td>B</td> <td>B</td> <td>A</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Is clean in person and dress</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Observes the health rules</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: left;"><b>THRIFT</b></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Makes good use of time</td> <td>B</td> <td>B</td> <td>B</td> <td>A</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Keeps books and property in good condition</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: left;"><b>ATTITUDES</b></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Co-operation</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Observes school regulations</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Courtesy</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Interest in work</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Supplementary reading</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Conduct</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Respects rights of others</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> <td>A</td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>PARENTS</b></p> <p>Please sign and return this report promptly. The principal and staff cordially invite you to discuss with them any problems associated with the progress of your children.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. —Solomon.</i></p>	<b>HEALTH</b>					Sits, stands, walks correctly	A	B	B	A	Is clean in person and dress	A	A	A	A	Observes the health rules	A	A	A	A	<b>THRIFT</b>					Makes good use of time	B	B	B	A	Keeps books and property in good condition	A	A	A	A	<b>ATTITUDES</b>					Co-operation	A	A	A	A	Observes school regulations	A	A	A	A	Courtesy	A	A	A	A	Interest in work	A	A	A	A	Supplementary reading	A	A	A	A	Conduct	A	A	A	A	Respects rights of others	A	A	A	A
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From the early 1980's onward, a typical day at Lowe Farm School started with the faculty and students meeting together in the school auditorium for Assembly. Assembly is held either on Monday or Friday of the school week. Here, "O Canada" is sung, followed by a Bible story and the Lord's Prayer. The principal makes required announcements, which sometimes include the handing out of awards to individual students. On occasion visitors are welcomed to the assembly to speak to the students.

The curriculum today, besides providing the basics of the three "R"s, includes the teaching of phonics in Kindergarten. The Kindergarten program was first introduced into Lowe Farm School in 1974. Previous to that, Kindergarten was conducted in Morris, then for a while in Kane. The teaching of the German language continues to be taught as well. Students from Grade I to VIII are taught German. They learn orally at first, and then begin learning to write in German. Natural Sciences, with an emphasis on health, social studies, music, and physical education, are the subjects being taught.

Departmental exams are conducted for students in Grade III to VI, IX and XII. The purpose of enhancing educational standards and evaluation is to ensure that all students in Manitoba can read, write, think, collaborate, and compute at a high level. It will also ensure that information about student achievement is available so that opportunities for improvement can be coordinated through the cooperation of students, parents, and educators.

Since 1983, when authorized for use by the school division, computers have impacted themselves on the curriculum. From Kindergarten through to Grade VIII, computers are an important part of a students learning experience. They are used as an educational tool and in no way are they meant to replace the traditional methods of teaching. Every classroom in Lowe Farm school is equipped with at least one computer, along with a group of computers located in the computer room. The school library also has computers that are hooked into the Internet.

Over the past 100 years of education in Lowe Farm, the curriculum has provided a kaleidoscope of learning. Learning is not merely reading words in a book, nor is it learning to write words on paper, or learning to spell words on a blackboard. It is much more. Learning also teaches us to be self disciplined, confident, and self reliant.

Our education prepares us for the many challenges we all face in life; by first offering us the challenge to learn. Wise are those of us who accept the challenge.

Morris-Macdonald School Division	
No. 19	
MORRIS-MACDONALD COLLEGIATE	
MORRIS MACDONALD COLLEGIATE, LOWE FARM	
REPORT CARD	
Student	Harder, Doreen
Grade	Nine
Year	1967-1968

Studies	No. 1		No. 2		No. 3		No. 4	
	Student Mark	Class Median	Student Mark	Class Median	Student Mark	Class Median	Student Mark	Class Median
Spelling	78	62	12	73				
Literature	40	58	28	50				
English	57	64	42	67				
History	37	60	41	54				
Social Studies								
Geography	34	57	40	59				
Mathematics	43	57	29	58				
Science	45	58	27	52				
Chemistry								
Physics								
French								
German	64	68	66	68				
Art—Music	59	60	54	65				
Health	49	57	44	60				
Business Practice								
Typing—Office Prac.								
Typing W.P.M.								
Shorthand—Bookkeep.								
Shorthand W.P.M.								
Bookkeep.—Bus. Arith.								
Rapid Calculation								
Bus. Mach.—Off. Prac.								
Ret. Merchandising								
Average	50.7	60.1	45.9	44				
Days Absent	9.5							
Days Possible	78							

STUDENT ACTIVITY CARD	
	SCHOOL
	Name <u>Doreen Harder</u>
	Address <u>Box 35 Lowe Farm</u>
	Phone <u>746-2048</u> Grade <u>IX</u>
<u>H. White</u> Principal	
1967 - 1968 Printed by NATIONAL SCHOOL STUDIOS	

## STUDENTS AND ENROLLMENTS

Most important of all the groups involved in the functioning of the school are, of course, the students. It is for them that the school exists, and it is the basis of which their life there, and later development and contribution to society, that the work of the school must be evaluated.

When school first opened in Lowe Farm in 1899, many of the students attended only part of the term. In succeeding years most of the farm children began late in the fall, October or November, and stopped again in April. For many years the upper grades were poorly represented. This may have been for a couple of reasons. Firstly, farm children were required at home during the spring, summer, and fall to help out at home. Secondly, a time honored German tradition required that boys not attend school past the age of 14, and that girls not attend school past the age of 12. This trend may have continued until the introduction of the Compulsory Attendance Act that was brought into effect around 1916. Esther Goldstein was the only student to reach Grade VII for years after the school was started. A few reached Grade VII, but, for the majority, Grades IV, V, or VI were the highest rung of the educational ladder attained. There need be small wonder at this if one considers the fact that many of the teachers employed had little more than Grade VIII education themselves.

Although space will not allow for listing the entire student enrollment over the past 100 years, the following may prove interesting. In 1899, the founding year of Lowe Farm School enrollment reached 28 students. In 1999, the Centennial of Lowe Farm School, the student enrollment stood at 117. The tiny one room school that began the education program in Lowe Farm, began with the teaching of the elementary grades. Ironically Lowe Farm School, 100 years later, is once again teaching the lower grades. However, not to be forgotten is the 47 year history of the high school program, and the many students who received their high school education in Lowe Farm. Whether at the elementary or high school level, Lowe Farm School has not only provided the basis for education, it has also kindled friendships, and harbored memories that only a school can bring about.

## THE FIRST SCHOOL

The first school in Lowe Farm was built in the fall of 1899. The first organizational meeting was held on June 30, 1899. As far as can be definitely ascertained from the records, the following residents of the district were recorded as being present: John A. Stewart, Robert Reid, Alec McLaren, Wm. McIntyre, Henry D. Dyck, Peter P. Falk, Julius Banman, and F. Huckenby. John Stewart was chairman of this meeting and F. Huckenby was secretary. Robert Reid, Alec McLaren and Julius Banman were elected trustees. At the first meeting of the school

board, Robert Reid was elected chairman and Alec McLaren was elected secretary.

At a meeting held on July 26, 1899, it was moved to "build and seat" a school and that \$650 should be borrowed for this purpose. Those voting for the motion were: John Peters, Robert Reid, Wm. McIntyre and Alec McLaren. The vote carried unanimously. A Mr. McInnis was also present at the meeting, but did not vote.

Land for the school was purchased from Jacob Heppner. C. J. Nester, who, after having drawn up plans and specifications, was given the building contract by the board and a school 28 by 24 by 12 feet was built. School started very late in fall of 1899. In 1900 additional ground for the school yard was purchased from Jacob Heppner for the sum of \$100. The school yard would now consist of one acre.

The school was visited regularly by an inspector of the Department of Education. Mr. Ewert, an inspector with the Department at the time, would state in his Annual Report to the Department of Education for the year 1901 that, "The school boards without exception take great pride in the appearance and condition of their school houses. They are usually painted inside and out, and but a few have the floor painted or oiled to add to the neatness of the appearance, and facilitate the cleaning of the room".



*The first school in Lowe Farm in 1894 was very similar to this one.*

Mr. Riske was employed as the first teacher to teach school in Lowe Farm. His term lasted from late fall of 1899 until the spring of 1900.

The first school in Lowe Farm operated from late fall of 1899 until June of 1913. On July 13, 1913, the school building and approximately one acre of land were sold to Charles E. Anderson for the sum of \$450. The school building was remodeled and has served as a local residence to this day. (See The Grand Old Lady of Lowe Farm.)





## THE STONE BLOCK SCHOOL



*The stone block school.*



*Lowe Farm Grades I - III class of 1946. Front row: (l - r) Susan Klassen, Elvira Thiessen, Dorothy Wiebe, Martha Kebler, Jacque Braun, Shirley Braun, Verna Dyck, Susie Klassen, Tina Rempel, Peter Braun. Second row: Jake Neufeld, Henry Kebler, George Rempel, Jake Klassen, Edward Guenther, Walter Penner, Harold Guenther, Wesley Klassen, Peter Martens, Eddie Penner. Third row: David Heinrichs, Johnny Rempel, Johnny Banman, David Rosner, Lavonne Braun, Dora Klassen, Evelyn Funk, Evelyn Wiebe, Hilda Kebler, Teacher, Mrs. Hildebrand. Fourth (back) row: Frank Martens, Johnny Martens, Eddie Kroeker, Abe Dyck, Melvin Wiebe, Benjamin Giesbrecht, Jim Braun, Harry Penner, Eddie Rempel.*

As the interest in education rose, so did the need for more classroom space. In 1913, Lowe Farm would acquire its second school. J. P. Loewen, H. I. Dyck, and P. A. Giesbrecht, trustees at the time, received a grant from the Department of Education totaling \$3,176. An additional \$3,500 was raised by the board through the sale of debentures bearing six percent interest. With these moneys a new two story school, made of concrete blocks, was built. This handsome new building would grace the landscape of Lowe Farm for many years. It was considered one of the finest new buildings of its kind at the time and a picture of it was published in the Report of the Department of Education for the year 1913 - 1914. Inspector Weidenhammer would comment that the

new school contained every modern convenience available in a rural school: indoor toilets, slate blackboards, hot water heating, proper lighting and ventilation, and a well lit basement space for playroom use in cold weather. One interesting aspect of the new school was a motion passed by the trustees, "That the trustees buy a bell for the school". Unfortunately, the belfry topping the concrete block building remained without a bell to the end.

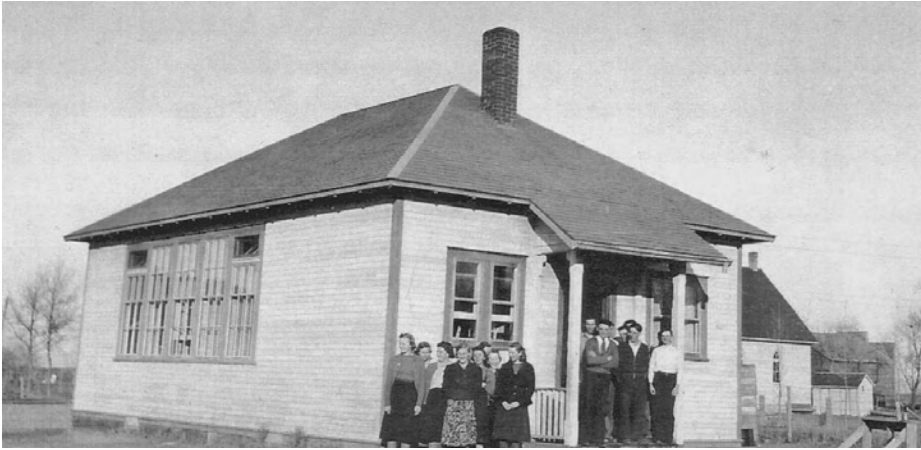
Peter and Mary Bueckert were the first teachers to teach in the new stone block school. Mr. Bueckert taught in the upper room, while Mrs. Bueckert taught in the lower room.

Until 1940 the concrete block school served the elementary needs of the community. However by 1935 this elementary school was practically busting at the seams. Enrollment had escalated to the point where the school could not handle all of the students. To alleviate some of the pressure, the following was put into effect: From Monday through Thursday, two classes a day would forfeit a day of school and stay at home. Monday it would be Grades I and V, Tuesday Grades II and VI, Wednesday Grades III and VII, and Thursday Grades IV and VIII. Friday would see the whole process repeat itself. This alternating of classrooms forfeiture continued until 1936 when a new one room school was built to the east of the concrete school.

The beginning of the school term in the fall of 1940 would see the high school students move into the belfry topped building. It was in this year that Grade XII would be re-introduced into the high school program. Grades IX and X would occupy the lower room, with Grades XI and XII occupying the upper room. From 1940 until 1955 the high school program would remain unchanged. However, over the years, as more and more students from neighboring

rural schools came to Lowe Farm for their high school education, the provision of more and better facilities eventually became a necessity. With the construction of a new high school building in 1955 and the re-location of the high school program, the geography of Lowe Farm changed forever. The handsome two story concrete block building that had so graced the landscape of Lowe Farm for so many years, was sold off by public auction in the summer of 1956. Shortly thereafter the school was dismantled.

### THE EAST SCHOOL



111. *The East School.*



112. *Lowe Farm Grades VI - VIII, 1946. Back row: (l - r) Herman Giesbrecht, George Klassen, Nick Hyde, John Friesen, Abe Sawatzky, Willie Klassen, Henry Dyck, Willie Heinrichs. Second row: Gladys Dyck, Tina Heinrichs, Dorothy Dyck, Lara Funk, Marjorie Dyck, Marion Paetkau, Doreen Penner. Third row: George Enns, Willie Kroeker, Benny Remple, Ben Klassen, Art Braun, Philip Klassen, Abe Neufeld, Harold Peters. Front row: Bill Kehler, Joyce Dyck, Jeannie Dyck, Anne Kehler, Priscilla Bolton, Tina Banman, Tina Remple, Art Hiebert. Teacher: Frank Giesbrecht.*

A single room building was built east of the concrete building to meet the needs of an increasing school population. This school building was built in 1936, and was used as such until 1955. Anna Wiens was hired as the additional teacher, with Grades VI, VII, and VIII being taught. In 1956, the school building was sold off at public auction to John Dueck, and moved to his farm yard. It was moved once again in later years to the farm yard of Cliff Matthies where it is still used today as a granary.

### THE "RED BRICK" SCHOOL

As student enrollments continued to increase, so did the need for more classroom space. In 1939, a two room school was built to the west of the concrete block school. Debentures totaling \$4,000 were raised for the purpose of its construction. This particular school was one of the most recognized and talked about of all of the schools. Perhaps this was because of the fact the exterior of the school was covered in an asphalt building material that resembled red bricks, making it easily identifiable.

This school was in operation from 1939 until 1962. With the opening of the new collegiate in 1962, a major shift in the student population was created. The high school students were transferred into the new collegiate building. This subsequently led to the transfer of the lower grades into the former high school building built in 1955. With the transfer of students complete, the "red brick" school building would become the workshop until the mid 1960s.

After falling into a state of disrepair, the school building was put up for tender to be demolished. Peter Paetkau, who submitted a bid of \$150, was awarded the contract for demolition on October 15, 1968.



*The "Red Brick" School.*



*The Red Brick School, the high school and the East School.*

## 1955 SCHOOL



At the annual ratepayers meeting held in Lowe Farm, the school trustees initiated plans for a new school building. The plan was approved by the ratepayers, and construction began.

Upon completion, a four classroom brick veneer building complete with spacious washrooms, staff room and kitchen, commercial room, shop, office, science laboratory (equipped with gas and running water) and a 40 by 70 foot auditorium replaced the two oldest buildings, namely the concrete block school and the one room school to the east. The two room imitation red brick frame building was kept in operation because there were not enough classrooms to accommodate all grades in the new school.

In 1957, an enlarging school enrollment necessitated the opening of a third high school room. This was accomplished by converting the industrial workshop into a classroom. By September, 1959, the high school population would again increase, a direct result of the shift to a larger high school administrative unit and the provision of transportation for high school students.

The merging of Rose Farm, Kane and Lowe Farm high schools left the School Division without a place large enough to accommodate all students. The problem was resolved by transporting all of the students in Grades IX and X to Kane, and all Grades XI and XII to Lowe Farm. This arrangement would continue for the next two and a half years, until the fall of 1962 when a new collegiate opened in Lowe Farm. From 1974 until 1982, Grades V through IX would be taught in the former high school.

With a leaking roof and inadequate plumbing and washroom facilities, the school was condemned and closed by Christmas of 1982. From that date, students in all grades would be housed under one roof, that of the present school facility.



*Grades II and III in 1960. Back row: (l - r) Kenneth Brown, Teddy Hildebrand, Barry Wiens, Barbara Anderson, Judy Heinrichs, Verna Klassen, Larry Ginter, Lorne Penner, Billy Enns, Doreen Harder. Second row: Myrna Rempel, Ron Heinrichs, Marilyn Giesbrecht, Kathy Gerbrandt, Ken Knutt, Joan Bergen, Marlene Klassen, Keith Brown, Betty Ann Harder. Front row: Sharon Enns, Dianna Schroeder, Dianna Klassen, Connie Martens, Debra Funk, Mary Ann Falk, Betty Friesen, Mabel Febr, Merelyn Braun, Brenda Wiebe.*



*Grades I and II, 1960, with teacher Anna Wiens.*





*The present school, built in 1962.*

### PRESENT SCHOOL



*Grade IV, 1979 - 80. Front row: (l - r) Margaret Klassen, Paulene Dueck, Lori Penner, Francene Hiebert, Tammy Martens, Audrey Unrau, Arlene Hiebert, Rosalie Falk. Middle row: Alvin Heinrichs, Trevor Paetkau, Darryl Toews, Robert Klassen, Ronald Ginter, Todd Paetkau, Corey Penner, Bryan Neufeld, Brian Dueck. Back row: Dean Switzer, Marilyn Groening, Connie Rempel, Sherry Wiebe, Janice Kebler, Betty Penner, Sandy Derksen.*



*Lowe Farm School, 1998 - 1999.*

In 1961, construction began on the first and only collegiate that would be built in Lowe Farm. With its completion by Christmas of 1962, the new building would become known as the "Morris Macdonald Collegiate - Lowe Farm".

The Grade IX and X students who were attending high school in Kane and the Grades XI and XII students from Lowe Farm, were all transferred into the new collegiate. The new collegiate which had been built to accommodate the high school students from Lowe Farm, Kane and Rose Farm, was creating as many problems as it was meant to solve. The new collegiate was too small to offer a number of options without putting unreasonable loads on the teaching staff. By 1966 the university entrance course and commercial students were starting to attend the Morris Collegiate where a more diversified curriculum was available. Gradually the university entrance course was phased out at Lowe Farm. This marked the beginning of the decline that resulted in the decision of 1973 to transport all high school students to the Morris Collegiate. That decision ended the 47 year history of high school education in Lowe Farm.

In 1974, the Grade IX students would be relocated into the former high school, (now the Community Centre). Grades I through IV would now occupy the former collegiate.

The gymnasium that was built as part of the collegiate was too small to be of real value. With its small size and low ceiling it was quite often referred to as a "cubby hole" rather than a gymnasium. In retrospect, this tiny gymnasium afforded practice area for the boys' basketball team, who became Provincial Basketball Champions in 1963 - 1964 and again in 1964 - 1965. In June of 1982 drawings were approved by the Public Schools Finance Board for the construction of a new gymnasium, classrooms, washrooms, change/shower rooms and storage areas at the former collegiate building. In total, \$549,382 was committed by the PSFB for these additions. In addition, the School Division committed the majority of the \$28,160 which was required for the construction of the multi-purpose room, stage and storage area which were not included as part of the additions. The completion of the addition to the former collegiate resulted in the closing of the former Junior High School by Christmas of 1982. The only school facility left in Lowe Farm would now house Kindergarten through Grade IX. Starting with the fall term of 1991, the Grade IX students would also be transferred to the Morris Collegiate.

### LOWE FARM SCHOOL WORKSHOPS

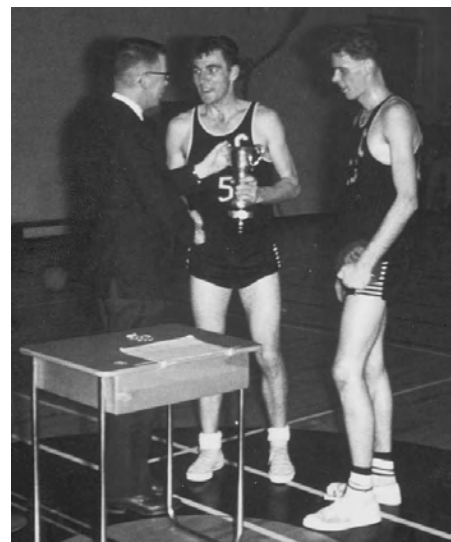
In 1940, the high school program relocated into the concrete block school. This meant space had become available for the teaching of Industrial Arts. In the years to come, the Industrial Arts program would see several buildings as home. The former high school building was used as the first school workshop until 1946. From there

it would be moved to the upper level of the school barn, where it remained until 1955. The new school built in 1955 became the next home of the shop course where it stayed until 1962. The Red Brick School would next see the Industrial Arts program until the latter part of the 1960's, when the dilapidated condition of this building forced its demolition in 1968. The former Kronsweide School relocated to the Lowe Farm schoolyard, served as the next school workshop. In 1981, the land it occupied was sold to the Lowe Farm Housing Corporation to make room for the new apartments. The Kronsweide School was then sold off at public auction and moved to the Altona area where it is still in use. With no practicable space available for Industrial Arts instruction in Lowe Farm, the high school students were transported to Morris School for this course. In 1995, budgetary restraints necessitated the cancellation of transporting Lowe Farm students to Morris for Industrial Arts. Sadly this decision ended the Industrial Arts program in Lowe Farm School.



*Kronsweide School, used as a workshop.*

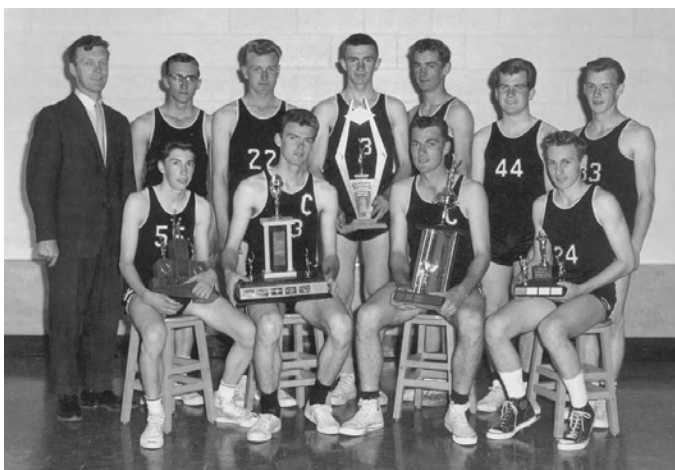
### SPORTS



*Ed Wiebe and Ralph Groening accepting trophy for Provincial boys basketball.*



*Champions! Back row: (l - r) Larry Gluck, Ed Wiebe, Ralph Groening, Alvin Enns, Eugene Hildebrand, Garry Enns. Front row: Paul Friesen, Peter Gerbrandt, Larry Brown.*



*Manitoba High School Athletic Association Basketball Provincial Champions. Back row: (l - r) Hardy Kebler, Art Wiebe, Harold Dyck, Earl Dyck, Eugene Hildebrand, Bert Friesen, Paul Friesen. Front row: Larry Gluck, Ralph Groening, Ed Wiebe, Menno Wiebe.*

In its formative years Lowe Farm school probably had no regular form of regular physical activity in place. The emphasis would have been focused more on the literary aspects of education. Although no records could be found to substantiate any type of physical program, one would have to assume such activities did, in fact, take place. With the large number of English and American residents present at the time, soccer and baseball would almost certainly have been played. Other games such as tag, pom-pom pull away, along with running and jumping would have been played as well.

During the early 1920s, Grades I, II and III did not partake in any form of regular physical exercise in



*Red River Basketball League Division Champions, 1965. Back row (l - r) Myrna Rempel, Maryann Giesbrecht, Judy Heinrichs, Hardy Kebler, Doreen Harder, Debra Funk, Brenda Wiebe. Front row: Irene Wiebe, Merelyn Braun, Gina Neufeld, Sandra Schroeder, Gladys Febr.*



*An early Lancer team. Back row: (l - r) Bruce Brown, Alvin Wiebe, Brian Brown, Terry Brown, Tony Dyck, Eldon Thiesen, Ken Brown. Front row: Stan Friesen, Randy Schroeder, Menno Bergen, Rick Giesbrecht. Coaches: Mr. Zenith and Bob Wiebe.*

school. Starting in Grade IV, a more defined approach to these activities began to develop. Under the guidance of the teacher, rhythmic exercises, volleyball, baseball, and football occupied the morning and afternoon recess periods. Baseball was a particular favorite of the students, due to the fact they would travel to schools from other districts to play games.

During the 1930s and 1940s, games such as the flying Dutchman, drop the hankie, three deep, and dodge ball were played. PT classes consisted of Borden ball (a form of English rugby), dodgeball, baseball, volleyball, and football (soccer) were played by the students in addition to the rhythmic exercises.



All of these activities would have occurred outdoors. Lowe Farm School did not acquire its' first indoor gymnasium until 1955. During the winter months, borden ball, football, and rhythmic exercises formed the main part of the exercise program. During the spring and fall softball, volleyball, baseball, and dodgeball were the games of choice.

In the latter years of the 1940s school track meets began to appear. In 1947 Lowe Farm students entered the Divisional track meet, held annually in Carman, for the first time. Frank Giesbrecht, as physical education instructor, had the chief responsibility of training the boys and girls for this event. Although inexperience was a handicap, a number of Lowe Farm students acquitted themselves quite well. One of the Grade XII students, Art Toews won the track meet shield for the highest marks in the Senior's Division. In another year the Senior boys' relay team placed first. At the Track Meet of the Inspectors Division # 13 held in Carman on May 28, 1949, Bill Kehler won a silver medal in the junior class, along with a number of others who did well. Of the girls' who were entered in events only one did fairly well. Agatha Peters was awarded a half point for having tied for third place in the class D high jump.

Curling was first introduced to the students of Lowe Farm High School by William Friesen around Christmas of 1948. Curling was held Saturday afternoons and the students were charged a nominal fee of 10 cents per student per rink. If there were not enough high school students, the younger grade students were approached about playing. The first game was played on January 10, 1949 and continued throughout the winter.

Until the middle years of the 1950s, sports would change very little. During the spring and fall, baseball and volleyball continued to be played outdoors. When inclement weather would not allow outdoor activity, rhythmic exercises were held indoors, usually right in the classroom.



*A Lowe Farm girls' basketball team. Back row: (l - r) Janice Penner, Diana Schroeder, Evelyn Braun, Jackie Born, Joan Friesen. Front row: Betty Friesen, Irene Wiebe, Debra Funk, Mable Febr, Mirna Rempel. Coach: Dave Enns.*



*1965 high school curling rink: Harold Dyck, Mr. Kehler, Linda Dyck and Margaret Born.*



*1974 Girls Volleyball Team*

*First row: Janice Groening, Karen Kebler, Carol Froese, Janet Dyck, Colleen Funk, Sharon Klassen, Michele Trudeau  
Second row: Terese Funk, Corinne Dyck, Roxy Penner, Sheila Klassen, Barbara Klassen, Cory Ginter, Mrs. Hiebert.*



*Sports committee in 1969: Rick Giesbrecht, Vivian Harder, Mr. Enns, Carol Hildebrand, Bob Froese.*

The opening of the new school in 1955 created major changes in the area of sports in school. For the first time, the students of Lowe Farm School could participate in sporting activities indoors, thanks to the construction of a 40 by 70 foot gymnasium. From this point forward sports really took off. Regular gymnastic classes were begun, which included running, jumping, and rope climbing, along with volleyball, and basketball. Basketball, and volleyball were quickly becoming school favorites. In short order Lowe Farm School began competing against other schools in the district, such as Morris. With the opening of the Collegiate by Christmas of 1962, Lowe Farm School had acquired its' second gymnasium. This gymnasium with its small size and low ceiling proved to be a challenge to the boys' basketball teams of the middle 1960s. Practices were held at the collegiate, but home games were played in the seemingly larger Junior High School auditorium. In retrospect, the tiny gymnasium at the collegiate created two Provincial Boys Basketball Champions. The Lowe Farm Lancers first won the Provincial crown in 1963 - 1964, and were repeat champions in 1964 - 1965. Inter-mural basketball was first introduced into Lowe Farm School in 1965 - 1966, and continues to be played today.

Besides basketball, baseball, volleyball, curling, and track and field, additional sports were added. During the 1976 -1977 school year, ping-pong, and field hockey were played by the students.

In 1982, the tiny gymnasium that had been attached to the former collegiate was replaced by a newer, larger facility. Sports, as well, became larger in content with new sports such as badminton and floor hockey becoming part of the sports' program.

Lowe Farm School is of a relatively small size, yet it has produced some championship teams. Although it has only one Provincial Championship team to its' credit, Lowe Farm has done very well at the Divisional level. Volleyball, basketball, and floor hockey teams have become Divisional champions. The many trophies that adorn the school trophy case lay claim to these accomplishments.

Much has been written about sports and the students who partake in them, however, it should be emphasized that the teaching staff play an important role in the development of sports in school. Not only do the teachers act as coaches for the most part, they also help to develop the potential of young budding athletes, encourage sportsmanship, and look out for the students physical well being. They unselfishly donate the extra time and effort to provide the opportunity for the students to participate in the many sports the school has to offer.

## EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

With the opening of the first school in Lowe Farm in late fall of 1899, very little attention would have been giving to the area of extra curricular activities. Indeed, when the school day ended students would have been required to help with chores at home. However, even in those very early years school was not all work and no play. Although school gardening was part of the curriculum, it could have also provided a form of extra curricular activity. Christmas concerts and school picnics held at the end of school year perhaps made up the majority of these activities. Christmas concerts were first held in the school itself, then were later moved to the church to accommodate more people. School picnics were sometimes held together with neighboring schools. For instance, the picnic would be held one year in Lowe Farm, the next year at Kronsweide school.

The extra curricular activity would change very little until the high school program began in Lowe Farm in 1926. In 1927, Isaac J. Warkentin initiated annual year-end excursions of three day camping trips for students, which became somewhat of a tradition in the school. Points on the Winnipeg River, the Whiteshell Forest, or in western Ontario were visited. Largely vocational, these trips afforded students from the bald open prairie opportunities to study plant, animal and mineral resources on the western rim of the Canadian Shield. Regrettably these undertakings became impractical as the enrollment increased and were consequently discontinued in 1961.

The Depression years of the 1930s did not allow for expansion of extra curricular activity. During these years the high school joined with the elementary school in putting on the Christmas concerts. School picnics, or field days continued to be held at the end of the school term.

With the arrival of the 1940s, the economy began to improve. For the school it meant money could be made available to expand the area of extra curricular activity. In 1945, the high school would start publishing a school paper known as the "The Bugle". It first appeared in handwritten form, then in 1946, came out as a printed paper, and was made available for sale to the general public at five cents per copy.

In 1948, the students of Lowe Farm High School formed an elected constitution committee. This consisted entirely of students who drew up a constitution that was ratified by the student body as a whole, and which became the basis of a student government that was forthwith elected. The organization would become known as "The Lowe Farm High School Students' Association," and would be used by succeeding classes for many years.

The first High School commencement exercises was held in 1948, complete with valedictorian, outside speakers, presentation of diplomas, and a dinner for the

The Board of Trustees  
 The Teaching Staff  
 and the  
 Students  
 of the  
 Howe Farm High School  
 invite you to attend  
**Commencement  
 Exercises**  
 to be held  
 in the  
 Bergthaler Church, Howe Farm, Man.

Friday Evening, May the fourteenth  
 nineteen hundred and forty eight  
 at seven thirty o'clock.

#### THE PROGRAMME

Song ..... High School Choir  
 "Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah"  
 Introducing the Graduates ..... W. Friesen  
 Piano Duet: Mrs. J. D. Reimer and Thelma Friesen  
 Valedictory ..... Abram Paetkau  
 Song ..... High School Choir  
 "Send Out Thy Light"  
 Address ..... Rev. J. N. Hoepfner  
 Guest Speaker ..... Dr. R. O. McFarlane  
 Deputy Minister of Education  
 Presentation of Diplomas  
 Song ..... High School Choir  
 "Farewell"  
 God Save The King

#### In Honor of the Graduating Class Grade XII, 1948

Lenora Doreen Brown  
 Hilda Dyck  
 Archie Harder  
 Erdman I. Kroeker  
 Abram Paetkau  
 Helen Paetkau  
 Lena Sawatzky

*Graduation program from 1948*



*Drama in High School. Back row: (l - r) Lorraine Wiebe, Gerald Klassen, Karl Fast (teacher and director). Front row: Barb Klassen, Marilyn Klassen, Lionel Wiens.*



graduates and their guests. In 1949, the high school students decided to publish a school yearbook rather than hold Commencement Exercises. The "Fiftieth Anniversary Yearbook" was published to commemorate the anniversary of the Lowe Farm school. It contained a fairly full description of current activities in the school and a history of Lowe Farm.

Aside from these activities, others took place as well. Literary and music presentations were held periodically by the upper elementary and high school students. A school choir under the direction of F. P. Giesbrecht, the assistant high school teacher, reached a fairly high level of competence and performed at Jugend Vereins (Youth Gatherings) and other public occasions. In addition, socials, public speaking, debating teams, annuals or yearbooks, along with Halloween and skating parties made up the majority of extra curricular activity.

Toward the end of the 1940s, the practice of presenting a full three act play was begun. One of the plays that was presented by the school was "David Copperfield". The students of the school were forced to sell tickets to this play, due to the fact it required a royalty payment. The school had never

before presented a three act play. Interest and enthusiasm by the public enabled the play to be sold out. In order that everyone who desired might have training in dramatics, all those that were unable to take parts in David Copperfield, put on a one act play at one of the High School Variety Programs. "Tommy Answers an Ad" featured Benny Remple as a typical high school boy, Tommy. Thelma Friesen and Eddie Schroeder played his parents, along with Joyce Dyck who played his sister Myrna. Tommy was in the habit of answering all sorts of ads to show off to his girlfriend, Eloise, played by Annie Kehler. Tommy's parents became tired of this, so his mother worked out a cure for Buddy. The climax was reached when Buddy was caught by his chum, sister, and girlfriend in the hands of a make-up demonstrator, Eleanor Hyde. Luckily, all ended well for Buddy just before the curtain fell.

During the 1950s and 1960s these extra curricular activities were continued, and expanded. Initiation days were held at the beginning of the school year. Students entering high school for the first time were "bought" by the older students and made to do whatever the student who had purchased them wanted. Sports was becoming ever more popular as well, and will be described in a subsequent chapter. Halloween, Valentine's Day, and skating parties were held at their appropriate times throughout the year. Yearbooks continued to be published, as well, the student council remained an important and viable element within the school. School dramas as they had in the past, continued to inspire the talents of the students.

From the 1970's on, extra curricular activities would become many and varied. Spring Teas hosted by the school were initiated in 1977 - 1978 by Anne Schleier and Carol Abrahams. At Easter, there was, of course, the annual



*Drama in Lowe Farm. (l - r) Marilyn Klassen, Lionel Wiens, Gerald Klassen.*



*Early Drama in the Lowe Farm School.*

Easter egg hunt. In the early 1980s, Christmas concerts featured the school band and choir. As well, Kindergarten through Grade V would present Christmas concerts that included a Christmas pageant, along with the singing of traditional German Christmas songs. Because Halloween and Thanksgiving Day were closely related by the calendar, they were replaced by an event called Fall Frolics. This day was devoted to fun and games. Students were afforded the opportunity to participate in a variety of different activities, which included pillow fights, goalie shootout, rope climbing, throwing darts at balloons and air band concerts.

To many students, the annual school Science Fair is the highlight of the school year. Students from Grade V to VIII participate in this event. Any subject dealing with some aspect of science can be chosen. The students usually work in teams of two and must provide detailed accounts of their projects, both graphically and with a written explanation of what their project entails, as well, they must be able to answer questions related to the project. Judging is conducted by local townspeople as well as the teachers. The three top entries are awarded Gold, Silver, or Bronze medals, the three winners from the school then move on to the Divisional Science Fair. From the Divisionals the winners then enter the Provincial Science Fair, where the competition becomes very stiff. Here the Lowe Farm School has done very well, capturing Gold and Silver medals on numerous occasions.

Commencing in 1970, the Grade VIII and IX students went on weekend camping trips to such places as Riding Mountain National Park and Falcon Lake. These outings were similar in nature to those started by Mr. Warkentin in the 1920's.

In 1979, Jake Goertzen started the school band program in Lowe Farm school. The school band played at festivals, such as Winkler, and also at the annual Christmas concert

During the school term of 1980-1981, Gordon Sawatsky initiated a "Skip-a-Thon" which was held every two years to raise money for Manitoba Heart and Stroke Foundation.

One day field trips held at the end of the school year have taken students to a variety of locations that have included, the Assiniboine Park Zoo, the Legislative Buildings, Museum of Man and Nature, and visits to the Winnipeg Fire Department. School picnics are held at the end of the school year, generally on the school grounds or at the park.

Extra curricular activities form an important part of the school's curriculum. Whether fun in nature such as field trips, or more serious, such as music or drama, the emphasis is learning while having fun. To this end Lowe Farm school can be proud of its endeavors toward extra curricular programs.

## THE BUGLE



*John Friesen and June Toews printing the Bugle in 1948.*

In 1945 Lowe Farm High School students began publishing a school paper known as "The Bugle." The first Bugle was not a printed paper, but a written one that was read at literary programs rendered by the students.

The Bugle staff consisted of the editor-in-chief, associate editor, class reporters, local news reporters, sports editors, humor editor, staff artists, current events editor and circulation manager. Each of these functions played an important role in producing the paper. In November of 1946, The Bugle first appeared in printed form, thanks to the use of Principal Friesen's duplicating machine. The use of Abe Rosner's duplicating machine was also made available to the students. Bernice Bolton was the first editor-in-chief of The Bugle.

The 1946-47 school term produced two issues of the paper, as did the school term of 1948-49. During the school term 1947-48 three issues of the paper were published.

The Bugle's contents were many and varied, from current events to sports on the school grounds, humor editorials, write ups of school programs and socials, along with socials given by people in town and other interesting paragraphs, essays, and poems written by the high school students. The principal even had one page for his own message.

The Bugle was inspired by A. J. Sawatsky in 1945. The purpose of publishing a school paper was to produce something that the students could be proud of because it was their very own. It also brought out hidden talents within the students that in turn instilled confidence, and encouraged them to put forth their best efforts. The Bugle was published by Lowe Farm High School until at least 1969. It continued to be an informative and educational tool within the school until its demise.

## SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION



*Early rural school transportation.*



*Family automobiles were used as transportation after consolidation in 1959.*



*Modern school transportation in 1999.  
Note safety feature on the front of the bus.*

When school first opened in Lowe Farm late in the fall of 1899, many of the students who attended were from farming families located around the village. Attending school in those early years must have been challenging to say the least.

To attend school, students either walked, or for those who were lucky enough, rode a horse, or perhaps employed some other form of locomotion. During the harsh winter months, a small hut built on skids was used for transportation. A barn located on the school grounds provided shelter for the animals during school hours. This mode of transportation, for many, continued well into the 1940s.

After Consolidation, which began in 1959, the automobile became the choice for the transportation of students. Parents of rural students pooled together and provided the necessary transportation. This was accomplished by using private family owned vehicles. Participating parents were assigned students and were responsible for their transportation to and from school. Extra curricular activities such as sporting events at neighboring schools or field trips were made possible by the generosity of parents with vehicles.

The creation of the Morris Macdonald School Division in 1969 brought about the transportation of students via school buses, a facet of the education system that continues to this day.

## THE TEACHERS

When teachers come to a community it is generally agreed that it is their function to teach, to help children to learn and develop, to facilitate educational growth, and as a result of this to help to shape the development of a community. In order to succeed in this it is necessary that this shaping be a two-way process. Not only the community, but also the teacher, has to be shaped and be allowed to grow in his turn. Lowe Farm, its citizens, trustees, and students, over the years have played an important part in shaping the lives, the life styles, and the philosophies of the teachers that have had the privilege of teaching in its schools.

With the opening of the first school in the Fall of 1899 to the ending of the school term on June 30, 1999, a total of 155 teachers have taught classes in Lowe Farm. To these Educators the community of Lowe Farm offers a Centennial Salute.

1899-1900	Mr. Riske
1900-1904	Wm. Nau
	TN Blakely
	A. Buhr
1904-1907	A. K. Friesen
1907-1910	Jacob Hooge
1910-1911	Jacob Braun
1911-1912	J.S. Walkof
1912-1913	Peter Bueckert

1913-1914 Peter Bueckert  
Mary Bueckert  
1914-1915 P.H. Siemens  
Susan Neufeld  
1915-1916 P.H. Siemens  
Susan Neufeld  
1916-1917 P.H. Siemens  
Susan Neufeld  
1917-1918 P.H. Siemens  
Wm. Kornelson  
Frank Epp  
S. E. Heppner  
M. O. Brinston  
1918-1919 P.H. Siemens  
Mabel Kelington  
1919-1920 P.H. Siemens  
Helena Siemens  
1920-1921 Maurice Sanger  
Whitefield Ganong  
Tiene Uhrich  
1921-1922 G. E. Penner  
Tiene Uhrich  
1922-1923 G. E. Penner  
Tiene Uhrich  
1923-1924 G. E. Penner  
Anna W. Peters  
1924-1925 J. J. Siemens  
Anna W. Peters  
1925-1926 J. J. Siemens  
Anna W. Peters  
1926-1927 I. J. Warkentin  
J. J. Siemens  
Anna W. Peters  
1917-1928 I. J. Warkentin  
J. J. Siemens  
Lena Warkentin

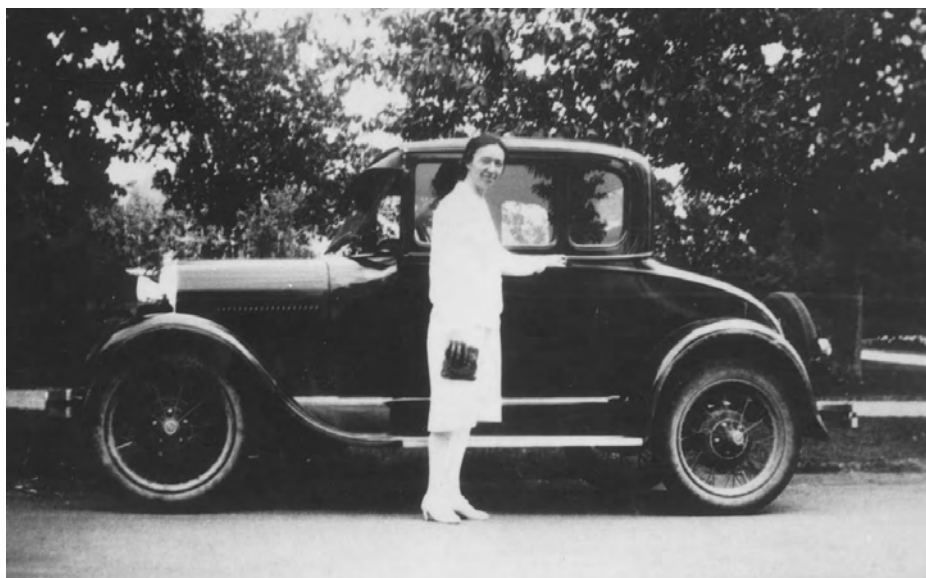
1928-1929 I. J. Warkentin  
J. J. Siemens  
Olive E. Smith  
1929-1930 I.J. Warkentin  
J. V. Neufeld  
Ida J. Hoffman  
1930-1931 I.J. Warkentin  
W.M. Friesen  
Ida J. Hoffman  
1932-1933 I.J. Warkentin  
H.S. Schellenberg  
Ida J. Hoffman  
1933-1934 I.J. Warkentin  
H.S. Schellenberg  
Ida J. Hoffman  
1934-1935 I.J. Warkentin  
H.S. Schellenberg  
Helen D. Loewen  
1935-1936 I.J. Warkentin  
H.S. Schellenberg  
Helen D. Loewen  
1936-1937 I.J. Warkentin  
H.S. Schellenberg  
Helen D. Loewen  
Anna Wiens  
1937-1938 I.J. Warkentin  
Mary J. Loewen  
Anna Wiens  
Johannah Reimer  
1939-1940 I.J. Warkentin  
1939-1941 Mary J. Loewen  
B. D. Hildebrand  
Anna Wiens  
Johannah Reimer  
1940-1941 I.J. Warkentin  
Mary J. Loewen

B.D. Hildebrandt  
Anna Wiens  
H.J. Penner



*B. Hildebrand, Helen Penner, Anna Wiens, and Mary Loewen, 1941.*

1941-1942 I.J. Warkentin  
B. D. Hildebrand  
M. E. Hildebrand  
Anna Wiens  
H. P. Penner  
1942-1943 I. J. Warkentin  
B. D. Hildebrand  
M. E. Hildebrand  
G. E. Penner  
Anna Wiens  
1943-1944 I.J. Warkentin  
B. D. Hildebrand  
M. E. Hildebrand  
J. A. Penner  
Lena Martens  
1944-1945 A. J. Sawatzky  
B. D. Hildebrand  
M. E. Hildebrand  
J. G. Siemens  
J. Pauls  
H. J. Schroeder  
R. M. Reimer  
Irma Schaefer  
1945-1946 A. J. Sawatzky  
B. D. Hildebrand  
F. P. Giesbrecht  
M.E. Hildebrand  
Justina Wiens  
1946-1947 Wm. Friesen  
F. P. Giesbrecht  
Justina Wiens  
Jesse Giesbrecht  
Mrs. Dan Penner



*Anna W. Peters*



1947-1948

Wm. Friesen  
F. P. Giesbrecht  
Justina Wiens  
Jesse Giesbrecht  
A. B. Loewen

*F.P. Giesbrecht**Abe B. Loewen**Justina Wiens**Jessie Giesbrecht*

1948-1949

Wm. Friesen  
F. P. Giesbrecht  
Justina Wiens  
Jesse Giesbrecht  
A. B. Loewen

1949-1950

John Bell  
F. P. Giesbrecht  
Justina Wiens  
George Olfert  
Anna Wiens

1950-1951

John Enns  
F.P. Giesbrecht  
Justina Wiens  
George Olfert  
Anna Wiens

1951-1952

John Enns  
F. P. Giesbrecht  
Anna Wiens  
Pat Enns  
Jacob Bergman

1952-1953

John Enns  
F. P. Giesbrecht  
Anna Wiens  
A. J. Friesen  
Agnes Wiebe

1953-1954

John Enns  
F. P. Giesbrecht  
Anna Wiens  
A. J. Friesen  
Agnes Wiebe

1954-1955

John Enns  
D. M. Friesen  
Anna Wiens  
Agnes Wiebe  
G. B. Goosen

1955-1956

John Enns  
A. P. Hildebrand  
G. B. Gossen  
F. A. Metasinka  
Anna Wiens  
Agnes Wiebe

1956-1957

John Enns  
A. P. Hildebrand  
G. B. Gossen  
Anna Wiens  
Ervin Strempler  
V. Lichema  
Agnes Wiebe

1957-1958

John Enns  
A. P. Hildebrand  
G. B. Gossen  
J. L. Doerksen  
Rudy Martens  
Anna Wiens  
Alvina Kroeker

1958-1959

John Enns  
A. P. Hildebrand  
G. B. Gossen  
J. L. Doerksen  
Rudy Martens  
Anna Wiens  
K. Klassen

1959-1960

John Enns  
A. P. Hildebrand  
G. B. Gossen  
J. L. Doerksen  
Rudy Martens

1960-1961 K. Klassen  
Ruth Janken  
John Enns  
A. P. Hildebrand  
J.L. Doerksen  
Anna Wiens  
K. Klassen  
Evelyn Wiens  
Abram Peters  
Evelyn Friesen

1961-1962 John Enns  
J.L. Doerksen  
John B. Wiebe  
H. Hildebrand  
Cornelius Fehr  
Anna Wiens  
K. Klassen  
Evelyn Wiens  
John Enns  
J.L. Doerksen  
John B. Wiebe  
Hardy Kehler  
H. Hildebrand  
Cornelius Fehr  
Anna Wiens  
K. Klassen  
Evelyn Wiens  
John Enns  
Hardy Kehler  
Esther Webb  
H. Schroeder  
H. Hildebrand  
Cornelius Fehr  
Anna Wiens  
K. Klassen  
Rosella Braun

1963-1964 John Enns  
Hardy Kehler  
Esther Webb  
H. Schroeder  
H. Hildebrand  
Cornelius Fehr  
Anna Wiens  
K. Klassen  
Rosella Braun

1964-1965 John Enns  
Hardy Kehler  
Esther Webb  
C. Krahn  
H. Hildebrand  
Cornelius Fehr  
Victor Enns  
Anna Wiens  
K. Klassen  
H. Kehler  
Esther Webb  
Dave Enns  
Albert Klassen  
Georgia Clow  
H. Hildebrand  
Cornelius Fehr  
Victor Enns  
Anna Wiens  
K. Klassen  
Eliz. Schroeder

1966-1967

*Esther Webb**H. Kehler, principal*

1967-1968

1968-1969

H. Kehler  
Esther Webb  
Dave Enns  
Georgia Clow  
A. J. Novotny  
H. Hildebrand  
Cornelius Fehr  
Victor Enns  
Anna Wiens  
Justina Wiens  
H. Kehler  
Esther Webb  
Dave Enns  
A.J. Novotny  
Leonard Zenith  
H. Hildebrand  
Cornelius Fehr  
Anna Wiens  
Helen Letkeman  
Norman Wiebe  
H. Kehler  
Esther Webb  
Dave Enns

A.J. Novotny  
V. Groening  
H. Hildebrand  
Cornelius Fehr  
Anna Wiens  
Helen Letkeman  
Norman Wiebe  
Marion Webb

1969-1970 Ron. Dalby  
Esther Webb  
Donald Johnson  
John D. Wiebe  
Siegfried Grafe  
Wm. Kehler  
Cornelius Fehr  
Anna Wiens  
Helen Letkeman  
Norman Wiebe  
Darlene Schade  
R. Dalby  
Esther Webb  
Donald Johnson  
C. Thompson  
Wm. Kehler  
Cornelius Fehr  
Anna Wiens  
Helen Letkeman  
Vernon Penner  
Darlene Schade  
Marge Matthies  
Carl Fast

1970-1971 Don Warkentin  
Esther Webb  
Claude Goulet  
Mrs. D. Daku  
Wm. Kehler  
Elsie Klassen  
Darlene Schade  
Cornelius Fehr  
Vernon Penner  
Anne Goertzen  
Jac. Bergstresser  
Don Warkentin  
Wm. Ginter  
John Voth  
Helen Peters  
Esther Webb  
Wm. Kehler  
Cornelius Fehr  
Helen Letkeman  
Ann Goertzen  
Jac. Bergstresser  
Wm. Kehler  
Cornelius Fehr  
Vernon Penner  
Larry Eidse  
Helen Letkeman

*Bill Kebler*

1974-1975

Gloria Penner  
Jaq. Bergstresser  
Lillian Hiebert  
Larry Eidse  
Cornelius Fehr  
Lillian Hebert  
Wm. Kehler  
Helen Letkeman  
Gloria Penner  
Vernon Penner  
Anne Schleier  
B. Straszynski

*Cornelius Fehr*

1975-1976

Larry Eidse  
Cornelius Fehr  
Wm. Kehler  
Helen Letkeman  
Gloria Penner  
Vernon Penner  
Anne Schleier  
Barb Straszynski  
1976-1977  
Larry Eidse  
Marilyn Epler  
Cornelius Fehr  
Wm. Kehler  
Helen Letkeman  
Gloria Penner  
Vernon Penner

*Gloria Penner**Vernon Penner*

1977-1978

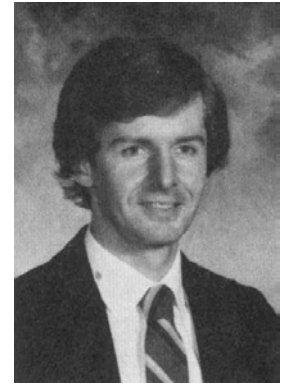
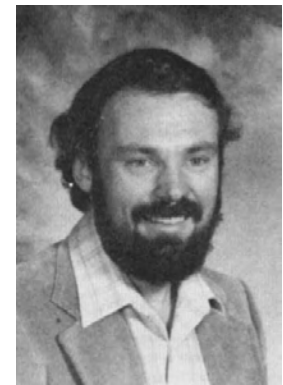
Anne Schleier  
Barb Straszynski  
Larry Eidse  
Carol Abrahams  
Peter Kroeker  
Earla Lawson  
Helen Letkeman  
Gloria Penner  
Ann Penner  
Barb. Straszynski  
Cornelius Fehr  
Wilbert Loewen

1978-1979

Larry Eidse  
Cornelius Fehr  
Margaret Harms  
Earla Lawson  
Helen Letkeman  
Gloria Penner  
Gordon Sawatzky  
Barb. Straszynski  
Joyce Williams  
1979-1980  
Larry Eidse  
Jake Goertzen  
Margaret Harms  
Helen Letkeman  
Gloria Penner  
Gordon Sawatzky  
Barb. Straszynski  
Christina Waite  
Joyce Williams

1980-1981

Gordon Sawatzky  
Jake Goertzen  
Margaret Harms  
Helen Letkeman  
Gloria Penner  
Barb. Straszynski  
Christina Waite  
Joyce Williams  
1981-1982  
Gordon Sawatzky  
Jake Goertzen  
Margaret Harms  
Helen Letkeman  
Gloria Penner  
Louise Redekop  
Barb. Straszynski  
Joyce Williams

*Gordon Sawatzky**Jake Goertzen*

1982-1983

Gordon Sawatzky  
Jake Goertzen  
Margaret Harms  
Helen Letkeman  
Gloria Penner  
Louise Redekop  
Barb. Straszynski  
Joyce Williams  
1983-1984  
Gordon Sawatzky  
Jake Goertzen  
Margaret Harms  
Helen Letkeman  
Gloria Penner  
Louise Redekop  
Barb. Straszynski  
Joyce Williams

1984-1985

Gordon Sawatzky  
Curtis Friesen  
Jake Goertzen  
Margaret Harms  
Barry Lewis  
Gloria Penner  
Louise Redekop  
Barb. Straszynski  
Joyce Williams  
1985-1986  
Gordon Sawatzky  
Curtis Friesen

1986-1987 Jake Goertzen  
Margaret Harms  
Barry Lewis  
Gloria Penner  
Louise Redekop  
Barb Straszynski  
Joyce Williams  
Gordon Sawatzky  
Curtis Friesen  
Jake Goertzen  
Margaret Harms  
Barry Lewis  
Gloria Penner  
Barb. Straszynski  
Clara Weiss  
Joyce Williams  
Gordon Sawatzky  
Curtis Friesen  
Jake Goertzen  
Margaret Harms  
Barry Lewis  
Gloria Penner  
Barb. Straszynski  
Clara Weiss  
Joyce Williams

1987-1988 Ken Yerama  
Harold Epp  
Curtis Friesen  
Margaret Harms  
Barry Lewis  
Gloria Penner  
Monica Peters  
Barb. Straszynski  
Joyce Williams

1988-1989 Larry Eidse  
Edna Dreger  
Curtis Friesen  
Joyce Groening  
Anne Hamilton  
Margaret Harms  
Barry Lewis  
Gloria Penner  
Monica Weiss  
Joyce Williams

1989-1990 David Schmidt  
Brad Curtis  
Joyce Groening  
Margaret Harms  
Barry Lewis  
Gloria Penner  
Monica Weiss  
Barb Straszynski  
Monica Thiessen

1990-1991 David Schmidt  
Herb Bjarnason  
Verna Funk  
Joyce Groening

1991-1992

1992-1993

1993-1994

*Alice Brown**Gloria Penner*

1994-1995

Margaret Harms  
Steve Lawrie  
Gloria Penner  
Monica Thiessen  
Barb Straszynski  
Anne Hamilton  
David Schmidt  
Herb Bjarnason  
Verna Funk  
Joyce Groening  
Anne Hamilton  
Margaret Harms  
Steve Lawrie  
Gloria Penner  
Monica Thiessen  
David Schmidt  
Herb Bjarnason  
Alice Brown  
Verna Funk  
Anne Hamilton  
Margaret Harms  
Gloria Penner  
Joyce Siemens  
Monica Kornelson

*Herb Bjarnason*

1995-1996

1996-1997

1997-1998

1998-1999

Joyce Siemens  
David Schmidt  
Herb Bjarnason  
Alice Brown  
Anne Hamilton  
Margaret Harms  
Gloria Penner  
Linda Schell  
Joanne Schmidt  
Joyce Siemens  
David Schmidt  
John Bergman  
Alice Brown  
Anne Hamilton  
Margaret Harms  
Gloria Penner  
Linda Schell  
Joanne Schmidt  
Joyce Siemens  
David Schmidt  
John Bergman  
Alice Brown  
Anne Hamilton  
Margaret Harms  
Anne Penner  
Gloria Penner  
Linda Schell  
Joanne Schmidt  
Joyce Siemens  
David Schmidt  
John Bergman  
Alice Brown  
Anne Hamilton  
Margaret Harms  
Gloria Penner  
Linda Schell  
Joanne Schmidt  
Joyce Siemens





*Lowe Farm Centennial Staff*

*B. Joyce Siemens, John Bergmann, Peter Harder (custodian),  
Linda Schell, Margaret Wiebe (T.A.)*

*M: Gloria Penner, Sharman Wiebe (T.A.), Rose Marie Ewbank  
(T.A.), Joann Schmidt, Diane Lilke (T.A.), Anne Hamilton  
(Resource Teacher)*

*F: Margaret Harms, L. Zacharias (Secretary/ Librarian), Dave  
Schmidt (Principal), Alice Brown, Anne Hiebert (T.A.)*

## RESOURCE TEACHERS

Resource teachers, with their specialized teaching skills are employed at many schools throughout Manitoba, including Lowe Farm. Their purpose is to provide support programs and materials for students who experience learning difficulties. They also provide enrichment materials for use within the classroom.

Over the course of the last several years the following teachers have provided this valuable service:

1975-76

Mary Kehler

1976-77

Margaret Harms

1977-78 to 1978-79

Henry Warkentin

1979-80 to 1980-81

Janice Rayner

1981-82 to 1988-89

Barb Straszynski

1989-90 to 1998-99

Anne Hamilton

Shirley Yerama

Anne Penner

## PARA - PROFESSIONALS, TEACHERS AIDS & LANGUAGE ASSISTANTS

Whether the term used is Para-Professional, Teachers Aid, or Language Assistant, the role of these individuals is to provide support for students under the direction of the classroom and/or resource teacher.

1974-75

Marion Harder

Marge Matthies

1975-76 to 1981-82

Marion Harder

Alice Brown

Lydia Groening

1982-83

Marion Harder

Alice Brown

Marge Matthies

1983-84 to 1986-87

Marion Harder

Alice Brown

1987-88

Marion Harder

Alice Brown

1990-91

Alice Brown

Margaret Gluck

Marion Harder

1991-92

Alice Brown

Margaret Gluck

Marion Harder

Diane Rintoul

1992-93

Donna Ehnes

Anne Hiebert

Diane Lilke

Diane Rintoul

Linda Schroeder

Margaret Wiebe

1993-94

Anne Hiebert

Diane Lilke

Diane Rintoul

Linda Schroeder

Margaret Wiebe

1994-95

Rose Marie Ewbank

Anne Hiebert

Diane Lilke

Linda Schroeder

1995-96

Rose Marie Ewbank

Anne Hiebert

Diane Lilke

1996-97

Rose Marie Ewbank

Anne Hiebert

Diane Lilke

Margaret Wiebe

1997-98

Rose Marie Ewbank

Anne Hiebert

Diane Lilke

Margaret Wiebe

Sharmen Wiebe

1988-89 to 1989-90

Alice Brown

## ROLE OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

In the Morris Macdonald School Division, the board meets twice a month, the first and third Tuesdays. Each board member sits on a minimum of three committees as well. These include: Personnel and Finance; Buildings and Transportation; Education; Red River Technical and Vocational Board; and Professional Development. There is also a trustee representative on ad hoc committees in areas like technology, fine arts, and site based management.

The Manitoba Association of School Trustees offers trustee development twice a year, usually in March and December that are really valuable. Trustees also serve on local school advisory councils to report on board activities and dialogue about local issues in education to take back to the board. Although trusteeship is demanding and challenging, it is also quite rewarding. School Trustees fulfill a number of roles:

- They are an advocate for children, doing what is best for the development of the whole child.
- They are a politician, responsible to an electorate through the democratic process.
- They are a goal setter, identifying the results the system is to achieve.
- They are a planner, by setting priorities.
- They serve as an evaluator, ensuring policies are consistent, compatible, fair and effective.
- They are a financial planner, developing and adopting the budget.
- They are a communicator, interacting with the many stakeholders in education.
- They are an advocate for education, presenting a positive image of schools to the community and to keep the community aware of public education's accomplishments.
- They receive and disseminate

information.

-They are an adjudicator, hearing appeals from people who feel policies and decisions of the board are incorrect.

-They are a lobbyist, communicating with all levels of government.

## ISAAC J. WARKENTIN



*Isaak J. Warkentin*

Isaak J. Warkentin was born in the Mennonite farm village of Hoffnugsfeld, Manitoba, on November 27, 1885. His parents had come to South-Central Manitoba from South Russia in the great Mennonite migrations of the 1870s.

He attended school in Winkler and Gretna, Manitoba, and took Normal School training in Altona, Manitoba, in 1904 - 1905. After teaching in rural schools in Manitoba for three years, he attended Wesley College in Winnipeg, graduating with a B. A. in 1912. In the summer months he taught school at Haskett (1909), and in Saskatchewan (1910-1911). In 1912-13 Mr. Warkentin taught in Winkler, holding the position of Principal in the Intermediate School, and then going to Germany in 1913 to study at Leipzig University. He was interned as a Prisoner of War in Ruhleben Prisoner of War Camp shortly after the outbreak of World War I. All told, he was in Germany from September, 1913, to November, 1918.

From January, 1919, to June, 1919, he attended Normal School in Winnipeg, and then took up his teaching career once more, serving various Mennonite communities in rural Manitoba. These include Winkler (1919 - 1921), a private Mennonite high school in Altona (1921 - 1924), principal in Lowe Farm High School (1926 - 1944), and Steinbach (1944 - 1951). He retired from the Steinbach school system in 1951, but taught a few more years at Grunthal (1951 - 1952) and Elma (1952 - 1953), though retaining his home in Steinbach. He also continued to do some occasional teaching in the Steinbach area after this. He died on October 6, 1971 in Steinbach.

Mr. Warkentin was married on August 3, 1924, to Maria Warkentin, who predeceased him on November 3, 1970 at the age of 71. They had the following children: Helen - born 1925, in Altona; John - born 1928, in Lowe Farm; Bernhard Alfred - born 1935, in Winnipeg; Frances Winnifred - born 1936, in Lowe Farm.

## WILLIAM FRIESEN



*Bill and Tina (Reimer) Friesen,  
June 28, 1931.*



*Bill and Tina Friesen, at Bill's 80th birthday.*

My grandparents came to Manitoba from Russia in 1875. My paternal grandfather, a wheelwright and a farmer, believed in education, and four of his sons became teachers. After four years of farming experience I decided to become a teacher. I completed Grade XI through private study and took a five months Normal Course at Manitou. That December, in 1925, I began teaching in a rural school near Altona. After two years of teaching I took another five months Normal training in Winnipeg and earned a Second Class teaching certificate. Steinfeld School District, in the Morris Municipality, needed a teacher in the middle of the school year and I got the job.

I taught there for two and a half years. Enrollments in Steinfeld were quite heavy, usually reaching at least 50 during the winter months. This school had twice as many boys as girls and 10 of the boys were named Peter; a little unusual, I thought. The Grades ranged from I to VII. In addition to the usual school sports and annual picnics, we had weekly softball practice by the young men and senior boys of Steinfeld and neighboring districts in the fall. We even had a soccer team one fall and winter, but could not handle the more experienced Lowe Farm soccer team.

In September, 1930, I was engaged by the Lowe Farm School Board to take charge of the upper elementary room, Grades V to VIII, at a salary of \$1,250.00 and the rental of a small suite of rooms in J.J. Schroeder's garage. My school classroom was not large and after the enrollment reached over 50 that winter, there was hardly

any space left for the teacher to move around in. Although a number of students came only for the winter months, the level of achievement on the whole was quite high.

Here I met Tina Reimer. We were married at the end of the first school year, on June 28. Instead of going on a honeymoon, we moved to Winnipeg for the summer and I took grade XII physics and chemistry at the University. Tina kept house and helped to pass the time by typing my chemistry notes. We stayed another year in Lowe Farm and then moved to Kane to take charge of a small branch general store that Tina's brother, Henry W. Reimer, had opened in Kane that spring.

The trading area served by Kane was small and lightly populated; consequently, the duties evolving from the conduct of the business were not unduly pressing. As a result, we had time to take a fairly active part in community activities. Tina was soon involved in the social activities of the ladies, such as teas and card parties. In a short space of time, I was asked to be secretary of the Sunday School, Bible Class teacher, secretary and physical education instructor of the Young Men's Athletic Club, member of the softball team, and, finally, President of the Community Club. All this sounds like a lot of work, but actually, since the community was small none of the duties was very onerous or time-consuming.

We were in the "Dirty Thirties"; times were very hard for the local residents and therefore also for us. For many people in the district, incomes were extremely low or almost non-existent. Eggs were seven or eight cents a dozen and brought only a cent or two more delivered in Winnipeg. Ground Santos coffee cost us 20 cents a pound and sold for 25 cents; ground Rio coffee (poor stuff) cost us 15 cents and sold for 20 cents. Bread delivered by the Morris Bakery, at its lowest, cost four cents a loaf and sold for five cents. Sugar cost about \$8.00 a 100 pound bag and sold for \$8.35. By the pound, it retailed for 10 cents.

Early in the new year, our first child, Thelma, was born and this made the cramped living space in the north end of the store feel even more cramped. Our memory of the two short years spent in the Kane community will always stay with us as a pleasant interlude in our lives.

When we received the offer to take charge of the Alt Bergthal School near Altona, we accepted it. We sold our stock in the store and went back to teaching. That summer, while we were staying with Tina's parents in Lowe Farm, Irene was born. Richard was born two years later during our stay in Alt Bergthal. The next 12 years, all out of the Morris Municipality, were spent teaching in elementary and secondary schools, in gaining experience, and in advancing academic standing. When we moved back to Lowe Farm in 1946, I had a BA, a Collegiate Principal's certificate, and was well on the way to a B. Ed. degree. All of this was interesting and challenging for me, but it proved to be quite a hard grind for Tina,

especially during the first years. Because of the low salaries paid teachers at the time, she stayed at home with the children, did the canning, and looked after the cow and chickens during my annual six weeks' absence in Summer School. Fortunately, the neighbors were kind and kept a watchful eye on the situation at the school house.

For the next three years, after coming back to Lowe Farm, I served as high school teacher and Principal. They were very busy years and, on the whole, happy and productive. The school set-up, with its three separate buildings and a total of five classrooms, two of them high school, functioned quite well. The students were co-operative and hard-working in academic studies, and also in the various extra-curricular activities. Most of the latter was not allowed to usurp school time. An outstanding example of academic achievement and the students' willingness to apply themselves were the record of the 1947 Grade XI class in the June Departmental Examinations. The 10 students in the class had a total of only two sups. When these were written off in the fall we had a clear 100 per cent pass.

On August 15, 1949, I was appointed Inspector of Schools and posted to Eriksdale. After four years at Eriksdale and four more at Stonewall, we were moved to Winnipeg where I served the remaining 12 and a half years until my retirement.

Tina was quite active in a variety of community activities, most of them in connection with our local church. After my retirement I managed to keep with church work, historical research and various hobbies such as gardening, travel, photography, and the study of radio and television electronics.

As parents and grandparents, Tina and I have had much to be thankful for. Life has often been hard, and therefore challenging; but it has also been greatly rewarding. To our children and grandchild-

dren, to our country, Canada, and to God, the Creator of all, for His many blessings and eternal love we give grateful thanks.

*Postscript: William Friesen died in 1984. Tina, born in 1904, lives in Stonewall.*

### A TRIBUTE TO ANNA AND JUSTINA WIENS



*Justina Wiens*

Hard work and determination can make impossible dreams become reality. Learning about the history of the parents and grandparents of Lowe Farm educators, Anna and Justina Wiens, we see that they had insight, determination and a willingness to work. Their efforts were not in vain. Their parents, realizing the value of education, encouraged and helped their children to receive as much schooling as possible. Anna and Justina, in turn, helped many children begin and continue their education. They taught and served in various schools and communities for 40 and 30 years, respectively.

The grandparents, Peter and Justina Wiens, had immigrated to Canada from Russia in 1874. Anna, daughter of J. W. and Maria Wiens, was born in Lowe Farm in January,

1907, and grew up on a farm near the village of Lowe Farm. It was also here where she received most of her education. One of her teachers, Miss Peters, had left such a favorable impression on her that she decided she would like to become a teacher.

To earn money to go to Normal School she worked as a nurses' assistant in the Tuberculosis Sanitarium in Ninette. However, the money saved the first year was needed for seed grain for her father's farm. This meant working another year for the necessary tuition money. Even after graduation from Normal School, there were no teaching positions for all who wanted to enter this field of work; so it meant going back to Ninette a third year. The following year, 1930, she was chosen for her first teaching position over 300 other applicants.

In those years, classroom enrollments were high, with eight or more grades to instruct and not too much equipment to work with. Teacher and students were also in charge of janitorial work and keeping the fire in the stove going in the winter. Many interesting and humorous incidents have been related to family and friends as we would reminisce about those early years of teaching. Even to the end of her teaching days, Anna would be cautious not to waste any materials, using paper carefully, remembering how one had to make do with so much less than is now available.

During Anna's teaching career she taught at St. Peter's School, Wood Bay, Stephenfield, and Lowe Farm, where she welcomed many youngsters to the first Grade. With 40 years in the profession and spending about 30 of these in her home community, she taught second and third generation children.

In 1967, Canada's centennial year, Anna was chosen Centennial Citizen of the week and received a



Canadian Centennial Medal for her outstanding work in the community. Miss Anna Wiens retired from teaching in 1971, when she could not continue because of ill health. A farewell evening was held in her honor at the Lowe Farm Elementary School in June, 1971. A class of students acted out a play, choosing a school setting and singing some of the favorite songs learned in her classes. A plaque, in appreciation of her services, was presented to her at this time.



*Anna Wiens*

Justina Wiens, born in Lowe Farm in August 1913, grew up on her parents' farm. She received her elementary and high school education in Lowe Farm and her teacher training in Winnipeg. In 1937 she began her teaching career. Faithfully and conscientiously, she worked in the Neufeld, Gnadenfeld, Lowe Farm and Morris School Districts until June of 1967. Ill health made it necessary for her to retire from teaching early. This was, however, not to be complete retirement, for in 1969 she started another Kindergarten class in her home, which she continued for another two years.

Her love for children and teaching was again demonstrated. With eager anticipation the children looked forward to the afternoon they could go to Miss Wiens' home for Kindergarten.

Both Anna and Justina were prominent workers in the Women's Institute for many years. They were actively and whole heartedly involved from the time of its inception in 1947 to its termination in 1973. They were leaders, directors and convenors in the W. I., in 4-H, Garden and Cooking Clubs. They also contributed through catering services and took an active part in the interests and welfare of the community wherever possible.

Both also enjoyed travelling and traveled extensively in Europe, the Holy Land, Bermuda, the Bahamas, Hawaii, the United States and Canada. They brought back many beautiful slides and first-hand information from the various places to share with students and friends. Anna would frequently say, "Travel while you can still walk and see." Many friendships were made on these trips which were kept up throughout the years. Through their experience in the Holy Land, they became popular with their slides. Reports, slides, souvenirs, and first hand information from the various countries were valuable teaching aids and served to entertain and enlighten friends in their home, in school and at community functions.

Anna and Justina will be remembered by family and friends through their unique characteristics and outstanding contributions. Anna was more outgoing than her sister, and had a lively sense of humor. Where things needed to be improved, she would see to it that action was taken. Justina enjoyed homemaking, sewing, crafts and had a quiet friendly personality. Music, singing, and taking part in school festivals were other areas of interest of both Anna and Justina. They possessed great determina-

tion and optimism which made it possible to achieve great goals in life and passed their ideals on to others.

## SCHOOL RECOLLECTIONS

*Submitted by John Enns*

Who would have thought that the young couple, John and Neta Enns - penniless and newly returned from a year of voluntary service in Mexico, would become long term residents of Lowe Farm?

I came for a job interview in June, 1950. It was scarcely the time to experience Lowe Farm at its best. The wear and tear of fighting the flood, sheltering refugees, worrying about crops and coping with the prospect of a rail strike, were not without effect. Weeds grew knee-high, roads were in deplorable condition from incessant rains, and people's spirits were frayed. When we moved here in August we lived for a week with no furniture in the house, since, because of a rail strike, it was sealed in a boxcar somewhere on the CN tracks.

That first winter, 1950 - 1951, was an adventure one would not care to repeat. The teacherage, being old and uninsulated, provided only indifferent shelter from the elements. Our first baby arrived in October. Keeping ourselves and the baby warm taxed our utmost resources. There was no furnace in the residence. Someone sold us a huge "circulator" space heater that created a hefty draft at your feet while virtually roasting the head region. Anything more than three feet away from the heater remained frigid. Water left in the basin overnight was solid ice in the morning. In subsequent years renovations were made to the house that improved the level of comfort significantly. Then, in 1960, a new teacherage was built with an oil furnace, bathroom and water taps which made a huge difference to our living standard.

In our two room high school, the work-load initially was enormous. Four grades, eight subjects per grade, meant each teacher had 16 daily lesson preparations, as well as student work to check, tests to set and mark, extra curricular activities to initiate and supervise, plus the essential administration work. All of this was done with few resources, no secretarial help or the aid of a duplicating machine. Staff had to be super-capable and, luckily, the students were by and large self-starters and conscientious workers. In retrospect it is hard to fathom how time was found to present literary concerts, music and drama nights, to produce winning sports teams, publish a school paper and go on year-end camping trips with the students.

New school buildings, appearing in 1955 and again in 1966, ushered in an exciting era. The work was distributed among more staff. There were comfortable classrooms as well as an equipped science lab, a woodworking shop with new machines, a commercial room and a much used gymnasium-auditorium. There was even a duplicating machine! Enrolment increase as a result of consolidation brought with it new challenges and greater opportunities.

Both Neta and I made it a point to be involved in community activities. For many years Neta served enthusiastically in the Women's Institute. I soon found myself on the boards of the Credit Union and the local Chamber of Commerce - both important organizations of the community. The Chamber of Commerce was instrumental in getting Highway 23 rebuilt and paved. It figured in acquiring a pumper truck and establishing a community volunteer fire brigade of which I was a member. Three big fires to which we were called linger in my memory: a Lowe Farm grain elevator (which burned to the ground); another elevator fire in

Homewood (which was put out); and Martens Garage. The garage burned, but surrounding buildings were saved. Other community activities in which I was engaged included curling and taking my turn at supervising the out-door ice rink change house.

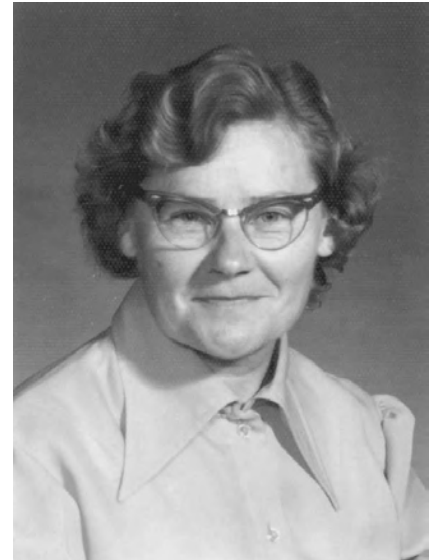
Neta and I were used to participating in church activities in whatever community we lived. It was therefore natural for us to try to fit in locally. Neta taught Sunday School intermittently and for a time conducted the children's choir. I was recruited to lead the adult choir, having shown my interest in choir work at school. For a time I sang in a male quartet that occasionally assisted in programs given at the penitentiary as well as the Gospel Mission in Winnipeg. I gratefully recall the patient assistance given by pianists Marie (Kroeker) Schmidt and Margaret (Dueck) Thiessen as well as her sister Esther since our music-making required some rote-learning. The church filled an important need in our lives.

In essence, our 15 years at Lowe Farm were good years in a number of ways. We felt accepted by the community. Our five children were born during that time. The village was a safe and friendly place for children to grow. It was a time of positive growth in Manitoba education. The school work was stimulating and fully supported by school board and community and shared with caring colleagues. Students, with few exceptions, were responsive and highly motivated, attributes that carried a good number of the graduates to subsequent important rolls in the wider aspects of life. Thanks, Lowe Farm, for having allowed us to grow in experience, to make mistakes, to work cooperatively and to nurture our family.

Congratulations on the occasion of your centenary, and to the far-sighted people who undertook to organize this project.

## MY YEARS IN LOWE FARM

*Submitted by Helen Letkeman*



*Helen Letkeman*

When I came for an interview with the School Board in spring of 1967, Lowe Farm was a strange town to me. I knew of two families who farmed around this area. I had also heard of a well-liked teacher, Miss Anna Wiens, who lived in Lowe Farm, whom I had hoped to meet some day.

Members of the Lowe Farm School Board at that time decided to hire me as the Grade III and IV teacher for the coming year. I was thankful for this and came to live with Eva Rempel in August, 1967. I was thankful for room and board so close to school. It was also good to be closer to home, where my parents lived at that time, which was Winkler, and could go home for weekends.

After four good years of working with many wonderful students, I decided to take a leave of absence to attend University for one year. By this time I had spent many summers taking summer school courses, and to come closer to my goal of finishing three years of university studies, it seemed right to set aside some time for this purpose.

In early spring of 1972, when it was time again for applications for another school term, decisions had to be made. I was hoping Morris Macdonald School Division would have an opening for me, but where? Then I was told Lowe Farm School needed a Grade III and IV teacher, would I come? It sounded too good to be true, but a number of questions arose. Was this the right place for me now? Was this where the Lord wanted me? I looked for affirmation. The Lord answered through people and through His Word. A verse I saw on the wall at a friend's house helped me at that time. It read: "He who has helped you hither to, will help you all your journey through."

I moved back to Lowe Farm in August, 1972, into the teacherage on the school yard, where I had lived for a year before my leave of absence. It was good to be back and I experienced many blessings. I continued to teach for another 12 years, mainly Grades III - V, but also some subjects in Grades I, II and VI. Some changes during these years brought the elementary classes to the school east of town, which had been the high school for many years. Eventually, new classrooms were added to this building and there was enough room for Grades K - IX under one roof. It was good to be together in this way.

To all the students I was able to work with, I want to say a very big "Thank you!" I also want to ask for forgiveness where I have not been patient and understanding. Many thoughts come to mind where I should have been more considerate, more understanding and loving. At times I might have seemed like a hard task master, but I did want each of you to do your best. I felt responsible to you, your parents and the school board.

We also had many fun times together. I enjoyed playing with you at recess, going on nature walks, having an annual Easter-basket hunt, and doing various other things.

In 1984 I seriously began to think of retiring from teaching. I loved my class and my work, and on days when I felt well, I thought "no." After struggling to keep going when colds and flu symptoms continued over a period of many weeks, the final decision was "yes." It was time to let younger teachers, who were waiting for jobs, step in.

As a farewell gift, my 1983-84 class presented me with a much-treasured Bible, the "New King James Version" in larger print. It still is a daily treasure, and now especially helpful that the smaller print is becoming more difficult to read.

There were other treasured gifts from the staff, the whole student body, and from the Division. All are much appreciated. Many good wishes came with the closing of this chapter in my life.

A very difficult time came when it was time for a new school term in fall of 1984, and I was not part of it. How

I missed the staff and students! My name was on the substitute teachers' list for the next few years, and it was with anticipation and joy I went to help out when I was called. It was like going home.

I continued to live in Lowe Farm until fall of 1985; not in the teacherage, but in the house I had been able to buy from Agatha Kehler in 1977. The Lord provides and blesses, to Him be the praise!

The many friends I gained while living in Lowe Farm I cherish and respect. Participating in the church services and church activities brought many blessings. I want to thank for all the deeds of kindness. On various occasions I would come home from school and find "someone" had left some baking or other treats at my door. When no name was with it, I couldn't even respond with a "thank you." It was greatly appreciated.

When my father became very ill on November 1, 1985, and needed emergency surgery, our family spent many hours at St. Boniface Hospital and later Winkler Hospital, until the Lord took him Home January 27, 1986. I knew at this time my responsibility was with my mother, so I moved to Winkler to be of more help to her.

Now, October, 1997, four years have passed since my mother also was called to her eternal rest.

Again I want to thank all my former students for the blessing they have been to me. I am pleased to meet some of you at different times, and if I do not speak a word of greeting first, please pardon, for I may not recognize you now. I do appreciate seeing you. May God bless and guide each one.

Post Script: Education is important and necessary for all of us. However, not all learning comes through books and attending classes in school. Traveling and seeing new places can be very educational and enjoyable.

Since 1984 I have had the opportunity to travel to the eastern provinces in Canada and to some of the states south of us. A very valuable experience was traveling to the Holy Land, seeing and learning more about the country where our Savior lived while here on earth.

Then a recent trip to Ukraine allowed me to see and experience some of the places where my parents and many of our ancestors once lived. A cruise along the great Dnieper River, visiting the different villages and touring some of the cities was very meaningful and wonderful. I am truly thankful for these experiences, never having thought it possible to visit the land of Israel, or the land of our ancestors.

However, having been to these countries, we again realize how fortunate we are to live in Canada. May we ever be grateful for this and do our part to keep Canada strong and true, that it could be a Christian country with high moral values.

### PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

*Submitted by Dave Schmidt, Principal, Lowe Farm School*



As administrator of the K-VIII school in Lowe Farm, I am keenly aware of the many changes that have taken place and continue to take place in our community. Since 1990, when my family and I moved to the community of Lowe Farm, until now, we have noticed a tremendous change in education as well as our community.

The change in agriculture has meant fewer young people are farming as a career and therefore most youth leave to find opportunities in other centers. The village of Lowe Farm is becoming a community where families live but work in the surrounding towns and cities.

The many small country schools are all gone and the schools have consolidated to form Lowe Farm School. The high school students have been going to Morris School for several decades now and home-schooling is becoming more of a popular option for parents. The many changes continue to come at us very fast and I wonder what challenges the community will face over the next few decades.

The many challenges of the last decade include the flood of 1997. Although the school at Lowe Farm continued to operate during the flood, the high school students could not venture to Morris. Therefore our school library became a study hall for high school students. On several occasions, teachers from Morris came to help high school students in the library over this five week period.

Another significant change is the piloting of an alternate school year in our community. This occurred in the 1998-99 school year. With the high school students going to Morris, the Early and Middle Year students had a longer day (8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.), rather than the regular (9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.) hours set by the school divisions.

The school continues to be a center where people come together. The Christmas concert continues to be a social highlight for many in the community. Our community has and continues to produce people of immense skill and ability. A dedicated school staff works hard to provide quality education for all students.



*Lowe Farm 1950's*

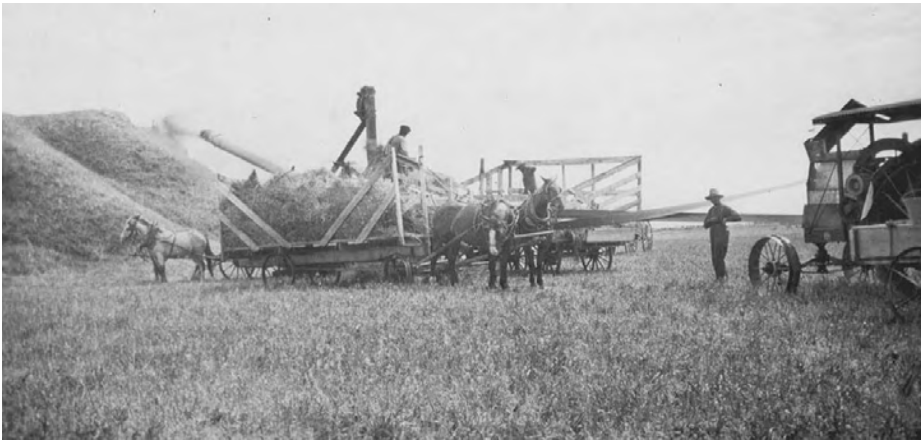


# AGRICULTURE



## AGRICULTURE, THEN AND NOW

*Submitted by Peter G. Unrau*



*H.A. Groening threshing outfit in the 1920's*



*Horse power harvesting*



*J. Martens threshing outfit, threshing oats six miles north of Lowe Farm, 1924.*

Lowe Farm - the very name implies agriculture. It all began in the 1880's when three men bought large tracts of land west of Morris. These men were: Mr. Hope, Mr. Rose and John Lowe.

By 1887, John Lowe is reported to have owned 13 sections, or 8,320 acres. His farm manager, William Stephenson, was apparently a very inventive man, and built his own steam engine as well as a big plough used to break the virgin sod. He also mounted a threshing machine on a platform attached to the side of this steam engine. In this way, while the tractor moved along the field, men pitched the sheaves into the machine as it moved along instead of hauling them to the machine. But his machines were too unwieldy to operate on sometimes wet soil conditions, and were soon left to rust.

Meanwhile, Mr. Rose was experimenting with a unique way of plowing the virgin prairie by anchoring a steam engine with a winch at each end of the field and pulling a huge plough back and forth along the field by winch and cable. After each pass of the plow, the engines had to be moved into position with horses for the next pass. But all the grandiose ideas of large scale farming seem not to have been too successful.

The Mennonite Reserve to the south was rapidly being filled up, and Mennonites were looking north for more land. By 1885 they were moving into the Lowe Farm area, and seem to have had a large influence in the agricultural development of the area. We hear that Americans also bought large tracts of virgin prairie. They broke the land and planted flax on the freshly turned sod. Apparently they made a killing by growing flax this way, but they left the land when the growing got tough.

We have to admire the settlers that came, brought their families, and stayed. They did not have grand machines but depended on

oxen and horse power. They found a land that was hard to work when too dry, and hard to work when too wet and sticky. A two bottom plow that could be pulled by a four horse team further south, needed five or even six horses here. If the season happened to be wet, mosquitoes tried to eat both man and beast alive. And, as one farmer put it, "The hardest thing to get used to when I moved to Lowe Farm, was when wet, every time I had to leave the farm to go anywhere, the farm wanted to come with me."

There were always moisture problems in this land they had come to. It was either too dry or too wet. It was a land, especially a few miles north of Lowe Farm, which flooded every spring after a winter of heavy snow fall. It was a land that did not yield water, even if you dug or drilled a well. If you found a well that did yield water, the water was so brackish that no human or animal would drink it. And every settler had livestock; horses for power, cattle for milk and cream and beef, pigs for pork, and chickens to supply the family with eggs. These things were his livelihood, and all needed water.

Water holes were dug. These would supposedly fill up in spring when the snow melted. Some winters there was little snow, and, as a result, little water, followed by a dry summer. What would the farmer do for water during the winter? Even in the 1930's and early 1940's, water sometimes had to be hauled from as far as four miles away - and remember, this was done by horse and sleigh. However, they also found out livestock would eat snow, thereby cutting down on the consumption of water.

A water supply for the family was also a problem. Rain water was caught in large galvanized cisterns, or rain barrels, in the summer. If there was a prolonged period with no rain, some families had to resort to their dug out water for household use. There were no purifiers or filters in those days. In winter, most kitchen stoves had a barrel next to it that was filled with melting snow. If there was no clean snow, ice was hauled from as far away as the Red River. Compare that to our modern day cisterns, into which water is hauled by truck, or with the new water pipeline that now hooks Lowe Farm with both Morris and Winkler water supplies. Farmers can also connect up to this supply, both for domestic, and agriculture, purposes.

This was a land with no trees in sight for firewood. Any tree you saw had been planted. Some had money to buy coal or firewood in town. For others, having a fuel supply meant hauling firewood from 20 miles east of the Red River by horse drawn wagons or sleighs. The last resort for fuel was to use manure. This was pressed, cut and dried in the summer and stored for winter fuel. Compare that to our oil or gas or electric furnace. Compare also our lighting, baking, washing, drying, and cooking - all done by the flick of a switch.

The farmer lived off the land. After his crops were off, he had to make sure he put enough feed away to



*No bales, just pitch forks and hay.*



*C. P. Unrau's new John Deere plowing in the fall of 1936.  
David Braun farm yard center,  
background and C. P. Unrau yard left.*



*Abe, Walter, Esther and Ruth Sawatsky, 1960.*

feed his horses, (his power supply) and keep enough aside to feed his chickens and pigs. Then, he could sell what was left over to meet his running expenses. Cream was made into butter, taken to the local store, and exchanged for groceries. Any surplus eggs produced were used for the same purpose.

If there was enough, the farmer took his cans of cream, or cases of eggs, to the Lowe Farm station twice a week and shipped them to Winnipeg. Next, the transfer business in town sent their trucks out twice a week to pick up these products at the farm. In time, the creameries in Winnipeg had their own trucks running to make these farm pick ups.

It must have been with great faith, or desperation, that these people stuck it out. Many did not, they went broke, and lost their farms. They quit to try their hand at something else. Some were fortunate enough to be able to buy their land a second time, but some never did, and were renters for the rest of their farming life.

Even though some of the more well-to-do farmers had tractors previous to the Depression years, mechanization of the farms came only afterwards, during the last half of the 1930's with the advent of the John Deere Models A, R and B, and the McCormick W30 and W20 tractors, for example. The war years of the 1940's were boom years for farmers. The years since World War II have seen bigger changes in the agricultural scene (as well as in everything else) than any century past. Some have been good, and some bad. For example, chemicals developed during the war, became beneficial for farmers. Chemicals for weed control, pesticides for insect control, fertilizers to raise crop yields. With this, new machinery never dreamed of before came on the scene, including sprayers and fertilizer spreaders.

The practice of summerfallowing has disappeared. Everything became specialized, including crops, livestock and poultry. Good or bad? We have surplus crops and clogged up elevators. We have no horses, no cows, and thus, no need for all the feed to raise and keep them. All this grain now goes to the market. With the changes came special crops. The first were sugar beets and sunflowers. Sugar beets have now fallen by the wayside. Sunflowers are not as popular as they once were. Then came mustard, canola, canary seed and, the latest, hemp.

Marketing has also changed drastically. Every farmer used to be within hauling distance of a country elevator, via horse and wagon, or sleigh. With rail lines being abandoned, these elevators are fast disappearing off the face of the prairie. With new mega inland terminals being built, the crops have to be hauled further, creating a great strain for any small operator left.

All marketing is controlled by marketing boards. At the instigation of the Provincial Government, raising hogs has become a big corporation business. And we are now witnessing the results of gross over production, leaving no room for a small producer. Chicken and egg production is gone for the small producer as well. It

would seem the family farm is on the way out. With large, modern equipment, two people now do the work of six small farms of the past.

One can not but wonder what the future holds. How much longer will agriculture mean farmers? In the Lowe Farm History book of 2024, will Lowe Farm still be described as a farming community? I hope so.

## CHANGES IN AGRICULTURE

*Submitted by Abe Sawatsky*

A very detailed and accurate description of agriculture from 1880 - 1980 is found in the book "Furrows in the Valley" by the Rural Municipality of Morris and in the "Lowe Farm History Book." Therefore, this will only be a very brief summary of those years, focusing more on the last 19 years.

Let's sit back, relax, and review the change that took place.

Nobody could have dreamt of the changes that were to happen to this wonderful, wild, prairie land in the coming century.

John Lowe, Deputy Minister of Agriculture for the Dominion of Canada from 1871 - 1895 purchased 16 sections of land in this area. He intended to make this large farm into a model farm. After his death in 1913 his holdings were sold to individual farmers.

The early settlers very soon discovered that once the heavy prairie land was broken the soil was extremely fertile and with very few stones. They could even get a crop in medium dry years.

Settlers or pioneers came from Ontario, the British Isles and Russia. Two thirds of the population were of Mennonite descent. They were farmers and usually homesteaded on a quarter section of land or bought a quarter section for six to eight dollars an acre. The yield was between 10 to 20 bushels per acres.

The railway line was built in 1889. The same year a store was built, and many settlers came. This growing bud, in a few years, turned into a beautiful flower and Lowe Farm was born in 1899, named in remembrance of John Lowe, former Minister of Agriculture.

Improvements in roads and drainage were made and soon the land was saturated with pioneer farmers. Only about 26 per cent of the people lived in small towns like Lowe Farm.

Crops grew well in the virgin soil even though they never knew of fertilizer, or chemicals. In wet years, excess moisture needed to be drained into the Red River. Drainage and roads were made with slush scrapers pulled by a team of horses manned by a strong man that could operate the scraper.

Ponds were made in the same manner to hold runoff water for livestock and sometimes for human use if the barrels of rainwater went dry. Rainwater was gathered from the roof when it rained. With six to eight farmers to a pond building bee, they could build or dig a pond in six to eight days.



*Abe Sawatsky harvesting in 1990.*



*Abe Sawatsky seeding operation in 1998.*



*Butch Harder seeding west of Lowe Farm  
with his new Case (quadtrac) four wheel drive tractor, 1998.*

Fortunately, better machines were invented which meant more powerful tractors Caterpillars and heavier equipment. The dragline made digging a pond or ditch and road building much easier.

Seventy per cent of the crops grown at the time were wheat. Twenty per cent were barley, oats and flax.

The Depression in the early thirties hit all farmers hard. Wheat prices went down to 20 cents a bushel. Eggs sold for eight cents a dozen. Some farmers had to declare bankruptcy. Some of them were fortunate enough to be able to buy this land back when farming became more successful again.

During and after World War II, farming was booming. Factories once again manufactured non-military machinery and vehicles. Streamlined cars and grain trucks with a hoist were produced. Farm machinery became bigger. Farm tractors came with rubber tires and a power range from 15 to 45 horsepower. Combines replaced the threshing machines. Also, the much needed auger was invented. Farmers gladly put the pitchfork and grain scoop to rest. A chemical called 2,4D became available to spray and kill mustard in grain fields. This was now called "Modern Farming." The title was well deserved.

Farming became more specialized from 1950 to 1960. Livestock and poultry barns grew in size. The era of bigger farms had started.

In the 1960's, sunflowers, and a new crop called rapeseed (later canola) showed up on some farms. These very yellow fields, when in bloom, were well noticed. Wheat prices went up to \$3.50 per bushel and then down to under a dollar a bushel.

The 1970's and 1980's saw another rapid change when wheat prices went up from one dollar to \$4.50 per bushel in two years. Land prices climbed from \$100 an acre to over \$700 an acre. Every farmer had to pay income tax,





*Assembling a new combine south of the train tracks.*



*H.A. Groening's farm, chopping oats.*



*Using horsepower to get feed into the barn on Bert Oltman's farm.*

having made enough money to qualify. Things were too good to believe. Could they last for long?

Farmers took advantage of the good, prosperous times in the 1980's and 1990's. Many small farms were sold, mainly to larger farms. It seemed that the good times were here to stay. Big, four wheel drive tractors, big self-propelled combines, all with plush air conditioned cabs, big 5,000 bushel grain bins, and huge machine sheds were seen on many farm yards.

Farming now had to be run in business fashion; Wheat was \$4 to \$5 a bushel, flax sold for \$5 to \$9 a bushel, canola (rapeseed) was selling for \$5.50 to \$9.50 a bushel. Big sprayers with 800 gallon tanks and well over 100 feet wide, better chemicals, including wild oat chemicals, made farming easier. We began "farming for fun." Airplanes equipped to spray farm fields became quite popular. They would not run any grain down as was the case with wheeled machines.

Chemicals and application costs were \$15 to \$40 an acres. Continuous cropping, instead of summerfallow every third year, gave quackgrass and thistles an opportunity to flourish. Spraying a chemical like Round Up, cost an extra \$15 per acre. When applied to a crop when almost ripe, the chemical worked best. It also matured the crop earlier. The following year, the field would be almost without quack grass and thistles.

Farmers in this area are a fine group of individuals who are proud to have clean, nice looking fields and, of course, good yields. Today some weeds are becoming chemical resistant, creating another challenge for the farmer and chemical companies.

Some farms have carried big debt loads. Interest rates jumped from six per cent to 20 per cent in the mid 1980's and those farmers were hurt financially again. Al-

though it was no fault of their own, some were forced to close to avoid bankruptcy. The land was usually sold to neighboring farmers for about \$500 an acre.

By now the average size of a farm might be anywhere from 600 acres to over 2,000 acres. Most years, crops yielded a good average yield of about 20 to 45 bushels an acre for wheat, 20 to 45 bushels an acre for canola, and 20 to 40 bushels an acre for flax. The price of wheat declined from \$5 a bushel to \$2.50 a bushel in a few years. Canola prices ranged from \$6 a bushel to \$10 a bushel. Flax prices were in the same range.

The acres seeded to wheat, although the most favorite crop, went down to only 30 per cent of the seeded crop. Canola went to 40 per cent and flax to 15 per cent of the seeded crop.

Chemicals are largely responsible for continuous cropping. Chemicals, fertilizers and new crop varieties helped to increase yields.

Soil testing is important and popular among farmers. It dictates which blend and how much fertilizer to use for each crop.

Many farmers apply anhydrous ammonia, a compressed gas that turns to liquid under pressure. It is the least costly type of nitrogen to use. It needs a cultivator with special equipment to apply it four inches into the ground. It is extremely dangerous, as it can, on contact, make a person blind instantly, or freeze whatever it touches.

A little extra nitrogen does increase the protein in wheat. Today, wheat is sold, not only by grade, but also by the amount of protein in the wheat. Extra protein brings a good premium.

Canola is the most sensitive to nitrogen for yield. Crops also need phosphate, potash, sulfur, zinc, copper, and many more micro-nutrients to grow a healthy plant and to maximize yields. Fertilizer expenses normally range from \$15 to \$40 an acre.

It is interesting to notice that until 1950, every acre had to be plowed. Then the heavy duty deep tiller cultivator came into use. Some straw and stubble remained on the fields, which prevented soil drifting and losing precious topsoil.

In the 1990's, minimum tillage became famous. Now, zero tillage is becoming debatable. The heavy soils at Lowe Farm become more mellow with less fieldwork and also earthworms, which are good for the soil, are much higher in numbers.

Farming, then and now, has seen tremendous changes, almost similar to the first airplane and the space age. A farm today can have a base of 600 to 2,000 acres, and a value from \$420,000. A new combine, with a new global positioning system (GPS) equipment, is listed at over \$285,000. Thus, a farmer

can have machinery and other inventory ranging from \$250,000, to well over one million dollars.

The farmers have reason to be thankful, and are thankful, for the freedom, the privileges to farm in this great land.

Many thanksgivings have been celebrated by Mennonites who came from Russia, and others, thanking God for this great country, Canada.

## THE RAILWAY

*Submitted by Paul Joyal*

On July 2, 1887, Premier John Norquay, assisted by the Mayor of Winnipeg, turned over the first sod of the Red River Valley Railway. Construction began in earnest on July 13, the intention being to have the line traveling southward from Winnipeg to the International Boundary completed by September 1 of that year.

On September 4, 1888, the Northern Pacific and Manitoba Railway Company became incorporated by the Province of Manitoba, to take over, complete and operate the Red River Valley Railway. The Northern Pacific and Manitoba Railway would complete and operate a line from Winnipeg to the International Boundary and to Portage La Prairie, as well as a line from Morris to Brandon.

The Morris - Brandon branch of the NP&M was built and opened for traffic on September 1, 1889. In 1901, the NP&M, besieged by financial difficulties, was taken over by the Canadian Northern Railway. The Canadian Northern operated until 1918, when it too fell victim to financial difficulties and was taken over by the Dominion Government. On June 6, 1919, by an Act of Parliament, the Dominion Government amalgamated the many thousands of miles of the many different railways acquired over the years and incorporated them into one, the Canadian National Railways.

In 1904, Canadian Northern



*Coffee break on the Bert Oltman farm. William Stephenson's steam tractor on the right. Bert Oltman, top, middle.*

Railway built the railway station in Lowe Farm, with a Mr. Sharpe employed as the first agent. Other agents who occupied the station were: Jim Beggs, Phil Bourgeois, Mr. Fanning, Mr. Wade, Allen Wade, Emile Brunet and Bill Basset.

The rail line and station were a boom to the community. Not only did railway provide a means for farmers to send their produce to market, they also provided a somewhat more reliable avenue of transportation to the public. When roads became plugged by winter storms or impassable due to wet springs or heavy rains, the train could usually make it.

With the opening of the Morris-Brandon branch of the Northern Pacific and Manitoba Railway passenger service in 1894 was provided on a three day per week schedule in each direction. In addition to passenger service the NP&M was also operating a scheduled daily freight service.

It is unknown for certain what kind of passenger service the Northern Pacific and Manitoba Railway may have provided during its short existence. In 1914, the



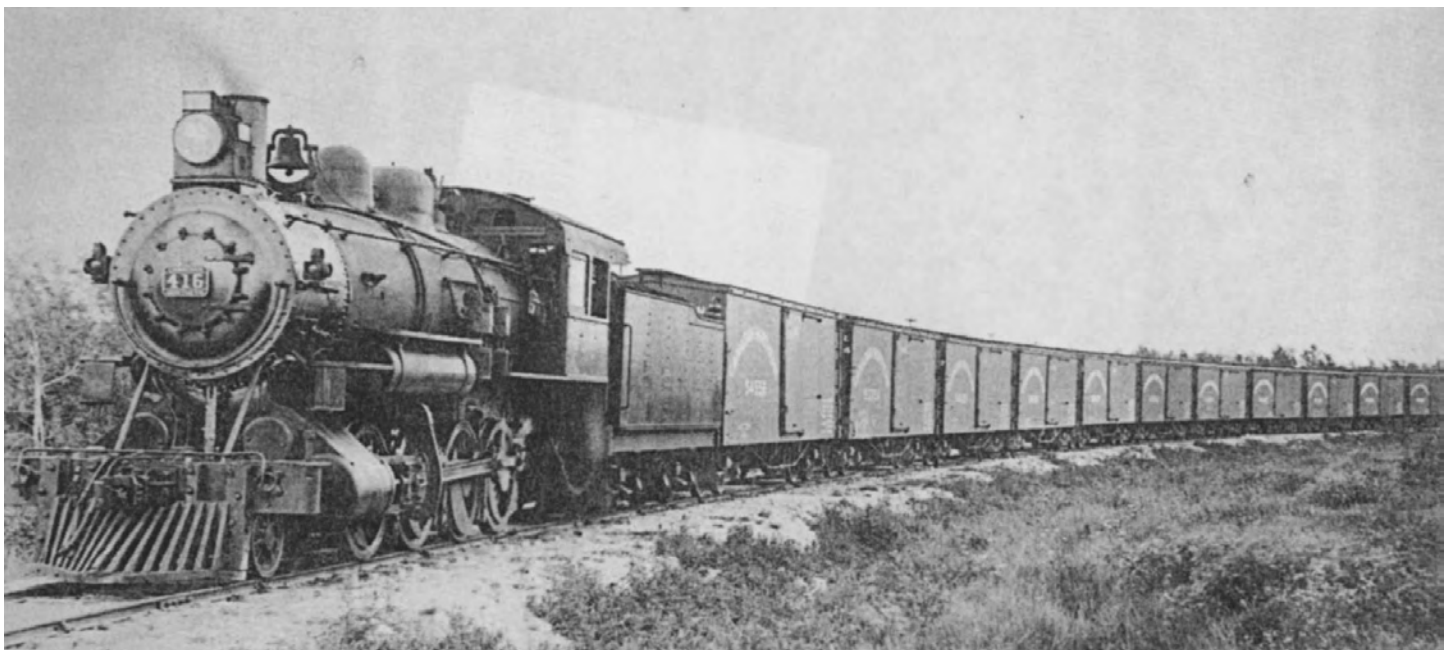
*Lowe Farm Station.*



*Canadian Northern train derailment.*



*Emile Brunet, Station Master in Lowe Farm.*



*A trainload of grain starts on its way to market behind Canadian Northern.*