



## Rapid City School

Public education in Rapid City is as important today as it was at its inception in 1870. Many changes have occurred over the years—buildings, locations, governing, etc., but one thing has remained constant, the children within the walls of the school buildings were and still are eager to learn. Many former students have gone on to distinguish themselves in various aspects of life, and ALL students have reaped the benefit of knowledge through our public education system in Rapid City.

The following timeline will lead you through the history of public education in Rapid City.

- **1870**
  - first public school began and was located in a log building with Mr. F. Knight as teacher.
- **1881**
  - On June 14th, the School District of Rapid City #124 was formed.
  - Classes were held in what was then Mr. Cottingham's Hall—later became Moxley's Hardware Store. Site was west of Belcher Services on 2nd Ave.
- **1882**
  - 2-storey frame building built south of town on a hill, at a cost of \$4,000.00.
- **1883**
  - The board set a budget of \$3,124.49 and hired a caretaker for \$10/month.
  - Residents felt the school tax was much too high and unreasonable!

*This concern seems to be another thing that has remained constant - only the numbers have changed!*

  - Topics of immediate concern to trustees at that time were the letting of tenders for sawing and piling wood and an adequate water supply.
- **1887**
  - A census return showed Rapid City had 101 pupils (52 boys and 49 girls).

\* 100 years later, in June of 1987, records show we had an enrollment of 129 students (61 boys and 68 girls).

\* 110 years later, in June of 1997, records show we had an enrollment of 108 students (66 boys and 42 girls).

\* 120 years later, in June of 2007, records show we had an enrollment of 80 students (46 boys and 34 girls).

  - The school (erected in 1882) was condemned by the inspector as unfit for use.
- **1902**
  - A new 2-storey brick building was erected for approximately \$12,000.00. This building is still standing and is what we now know as the **Museum or Cultural Centre**.
- **1920**
  - Increased enrollment (registers showed 200 students) made it necessary to rent the IOOF lodge room at a cost of \$1,000.00 (including caretaking and fuel) for Grades 1 and 2.
- **1921**
  - The board purchased the little brick house

at the corner of 4th St. & 4th Ave. (presently the home of Bob and Linda Thomson), to be used as a primary school. It was also used for a time as a teacherage.

- **1956**
  - Due to overcrowding, the little brick school-house was once again used as a school in order to provide more classroom space.
- **1959**
  - The board passed a motion authorizing that textbooks be purchased for students.
  - A budget of \$91,212.50 (4.6 mills) was set.
  - Substitute teachers received \$12 a day.
- **1960**
  - On Dec. 1st a new school by-law was passed by a vote of 190 for—8 against, to borrow \$90,000.00 for the construction of three classrooms, an auditorium and a library (our present school). Lots 1 to 20, Block 4, Plan A were purchased from R. Short for \$400.00 to be the site of the new school.
- **1961**
  - January 1st - Rapid City #124 ceased to exist and The Consolidated School District of Rapid City No. 2392 was formed in early 1961.
  - April 29th - A bid for \$79,690.00 from Central Construction of Brandon was accepted.
  - October 20 - The new school was opened to the public.
- **1966**
  - Country schools become obsolete.
  - Old school (museum) closed its doors and high school students are transported to Elton Collegiate as of September.
- **1967**
  - February 2nd — A meeting is called as the province attempts to convince parents of the advantages of a single school division.
  - March 10th — A vote shows all rural divisions are against the provincial proposal.
  - December 15th—Money talks, and although Rolling River is initially heavily against the proposal, they change their minds and vote for a unitary system. To go against the proposal would mean a loss of grants for them.
- **1968**
  - January 3rd — the Consolidated School District No. 2392 passes out of existence and Rolling River School Division takes charge of all operations.
  - Word is out that education costs will rise by 13%, prompting many to say, "I told you so."
  - The old brick school (museum) is once again used to house Grade 2, 3, 4 and the opportunity class.
- **1972**
  - Gymnasium is added on to present school.

## Rapid City School continued . . .

- *Grs. K-8.*
- **1989**
  - Science Lab., complete with counters, upper and lower cabinets, gas hook-ups, sinks and water at six work stations is installed.
- **1992**
  - Full computer lab. with 30+ computers is added. Each students has access to their own computer while working with their class.
  - A full library is added and 3 hrs./day is allotted to staff the library. The collection which began with a meager 500 or so books has grown to include over 8,000 books today! Initially the library began by using the old-fashioned card catalogue system, but within a couple of years became completely automated.
- **1995**
  - Rapid City School Parent Group Playground Committee successfully raises enough funds to install a new play structure.
- **2003**
  - Renovations to an existing hut and the addition of a second hut are completed, giving us two new classrooms—once for kindergarten and the other for *Grade 1 & 2*.
  - Additional library space is added to include a storytime area, additional shelving and a larger work space.
- **2004**
  - Major office renovations are completed that give much-needed additional space to the principal's office, staff work area and reception area. A security window is also added.
- **2007**
  - A new volleyball pit is added to the playground area.

From the first log school in 1870 to the present-day structure, education in Rapid City has progressed a long way. From slates—to blackboards—to whiteboards—to smartboards, from pony express—to snail-mail—to e-mail, technology has reared it's head (some might say ugly head!). With proper instruction and usage, technology has opened up a world of information to our students. We have seen many changes over the years—most due to computers. Some call it progress, while others might wonder if we have lost something along the way—perhaps the 3 R's (reading, writing and arithmetic). Only time will tell. All we can hope is that many future generations will continue to be educated in the best way possible, surrounded and protected by small communities such as Rapid City, Manitoba.

The importance of education in our community has not been forgotten by former residents and scholars. Evidence of this comes in the form of two different scholarships that have been set up to honour students who are graduating from Elton Collegiate and who have attended Rapid City School. They are:

- The **C.W. Percy Crookshank Scholarship**—Percy Crookshank was born here in 1909 and was the son of Dr. R.P. Crookshank who practiced medicine in the Rapid City area from 1885 to 1925. The C. W. Percy Crookshank Scholarship was established at Elton Collegiate in 1991.
- The **Elsie Taylor Scholarship**— This scholarship honours the life of Elsie Taylor as well as her dedication to teaching and her strong belief in higher education. Mrs. Taylor was herself a teacher and concluded her career where she herself had been educated, in Rapid City. To ensure that future generations from her home district would have the same educational opportunities, the Elsie Taylor Scholarship was established at Elton Collegiate in 1996.