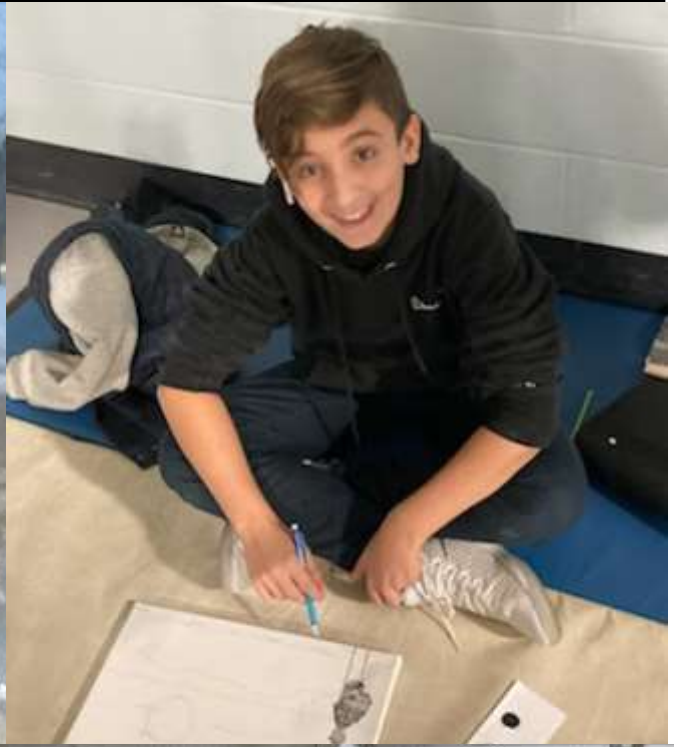


# St. Alphonsus School News

## Fall Term 2020



# From The Principal

## Sunrise

Over the fall, the sunrises have been spectacular. I noticed them particularly as they occurred when I was travelling to work. Now, we live in Transcona, almost due east of the school. Often I would find myself craning my neck, looking over my shoulder to see those glorious colours. Of course, whether I was riding my bike or driving in the car, this wasn't the wisest idea. One should concentrate on the road ahead. Still, the skies were so very beautiful that I snuck some peeks in at safe intervals.

I think there is a message in there as we navigate through this pandemic. It is challenging not to focus on what is behind us, those beautiful pre-COVID days! If we focus solely on what we are missing, we risk not seeing the beautiful things that are in our path. That doesn't mean we can't look back and remember the good times we had, but it is important to be attentive to the present and to be people of hope.

When it is time to start compiling the newsletter for a term, I normally open last year's newsletter and look back page by page to make sure that I include everything. This year, the experience of going through the newsletter was a bit more challenging, looking at the experiences from the fall last year. As I deleted the various pieces that could not happen this fall, I paused for a bit to remember. Then I started to think of all the blessings that have been part of this fall: the smiling faces behind the masks, the irrepressible joy of play, the reaffirming messages from families. What a beautiful time to celebrate, even though we are living a bizarre reality.

Our faith tells us that God journeys with us through good and bad times, but the journey is forward. We can reminisce about our Pre-COVID lives, but we can't get mired in the past. As we enter the season of Advent, we remember that we are a people of hope, joy, peace and love. We will get through this pandemic. Let us look with fresh eyes at the good things happening right now, finding joy and peace in spending time with those we love, whether in person or virtually. As well, let's hope and pray that the vaccines on the horizon, along with public health measures, provide us with a path through and into a future filled with many, more beautiful skies.

Peace,  
Christine McInnis

***There was never a night or a problem  
that could defeat sunrise or hope.***

***-Bernard Williams***



# **School Plan 2020-21**

One of the tasks of the school administration is to develop a plan in consultation with the various members of the community, including staff, students and parents. Of course, this year our main priorities will continue to be the physical safety of students and staff during the pandemic, ensuring learning continues regardless of which response level we find ourselves in and the emotional well-being of all members of our school community. That said, technology has been an ongoing priority and will continue to be a focus as we navigate through the remainder of this school year.

Once the pandemic has subsided we will return to our school plan, with its three main goal areas. Many of the initiatives pursued by schools require a long term approach for implementation. As a result, most school plans encompass more than one school year. This practice has been the case in our school; these goals will continue forward into subsequent school years.

## **Goal 1- Technology**

ICT Integration: To move further toward seamless use of technology in learning.

## **Goal 2 -Indigenous Education**

Incorporating Indigenous Education: Developing our understanding of National and Provincial Indigenous Education initiatives.

## **Goal 3 – Enhanced Programming**

Enhanced Programming Opportunities: Extracurricular activities that further student learning.





# Looking Back

## September

September started with a virtual **Meet the Teacher** event on the 17th. Families got a chance to talk to staff and learn about the program in their child's grade.

At our first school mass on September 24th our grade four students received their **Bibles** as part of the liturgy. Congratulations, friends! I wish you well on your journey to learn more about our faith.



We held our annual **Terry Fox Walk/Run** on Monday September 28th. Although we couldn't go all at once, we had a great time nonetheless. We raised \$458 for cancer research.



Our school community participated in the annual **Orange T-shirt Day** on Wednesday, September 30th. The purpose of this national day is to educate all Canadians on our shared history of residential schools and the continued impact of this history today.



## October

On October 6th our grade seven and eight classes held our annual **Junior High Retreat Day**. The theme of the day was Resilience. It was a perfect day for prayer, games and team-building.



Our **Student Led Conferences** took place on October 22nd and 24th. Although we were online this year, as always these conferences provided an opportunity to celebrate student learning and to set goals for the school year. Feedback from the students, parents and teachers was positive. We came out of the conferences feeling a sense of direction and purpose.

On October 23rd we held a Hats for Hope Fundraiser to raise funds for Brain Tumour Research. Everyone donned their toques and ballcaps to mark this day. The school community raised an amazing \$1,232.00 for this organization.



Our Parent Association and staff hosted a **Hallowee'en Drive Through** on Thursday, October 29th. Families brought a non-perishable food bank item and received a treat from our crew. It was a lot of fun and it was great to see so much support for Winnipeg Harvest.

## November

On Thursday, November 10th the students participated in an online **Remembrance Day Prayer Service**. It was a great opportunity to remember the people who have sacrificed so that we might live in peace and freedom. It was a beautiful service with story, prayer, scripture and song.



Our school's **Annual General Meeting** took place on Wednesday, November 18th. It was an opportunity for the board and the administration to discuss our plans with the parent community. I have included the School Plan Summary and a Financial Report from the board in this newsletter for parents who were unable to attend the meeting.

On Friday, November 27th our **first term report cards** went home. Parents, please take this opportunity to review them with your children. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher.





## Looking Forward

### *December*

**Virtual Advent Assemblies** will take place each Monday during Advent. Our first assembly will be on November 30th at 8:45 AM (Yes I know, not technically December). Family members are always welcome to join us, please email the office to obtain the link. This first Monday will be a purple colour day to mark the change in liturgical season.



We will be having our annual **Christmas Gift Drive** on Thursday, December 10th (9th for kindergarten), where we gather presents brought in by the students for local missions. An information letter with details about the project has been sent home with your child. With the new public health restrictions in place, we realize some families may not be able to participate this year. The school will gratefully accept donations and forward them to the missions.



The **last day of school** before Christmas is on Friday, December 18th. It will be a Red/Green colour day for students in anticipation of the big day. There is an 2:10 PM dismissal on this day.



## Open House

Please mark your calendars for our first ever Virtual Open House on Sunday, January 24th. There will be presentations regarding the school and its programs, as well as an opportunity for prospective families to ask questions. If you have friends or family that are interested in seeing the school and perhaps having their children attend here, this is an excellent opportunity for them to check it out. Please direct them to the school website to register for this event or invite them to email [openhouse2021@stals.ca](mailto:openhouse2021@stals.ca)



## Nursery

Despite the pandemic, we all started school with both trepidation and excitement. Our Nursery Kids have now been in school for 11 weeks! We have certainly seen some changes in the kiddos already. They have been learning all the rules that came with Covid and the classroom rules. They are becoming more independent when it comes to the morning arrival and dismissal routines. On top of all that, they have been learning their alphabet letters, numbers and shapes. We have done a unit on Nocturnal and Diurnal Animals which they are experts at now. I look forward to the months ahead and the exciting things i have planned for the new year.



# From the Music Room

Greetings to the school community! I hope that everyone is surviving these crazy times. Despite all the challenges and upheaval, the first term of the school year is almost over: time marches on. Typically, practice for the Christmas concert would begin at this time. It's strange and sad to realize that we won't be able to celebrate the season with a concert. Hopefully we can come up with a virtual way to share the joy of Christmas as a school community.

The pandemic restrictions have impacted every aspect of society, and the students and I have certainly felt that impact in the music program. Not being able to sing has hampered our ability to make music and make music a part of our broader school experience. However, resilience is the name of the game and with a few adjustments and a bit of creativity we have managed to do a little learning and have a little fun. I have outlined what each of the grades has been working on during the first term. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this information or any aspect of the music program, please contact me at the school. I'd be happy to speak with you.

I wish you blessed Advent season and all the best in your preparations for Christmas.

John Cox  
Music Teacher

## **Kindergarten**

Over the term, the classes begin with a song for listening purposes as well as for movement. The movement allows the students to engage in the song and develop a sense of belonging and togetherness normally done through singing. The song becomes a platform for exploring *beat* (the steady pulse you feel in music) and *rhythm* (the way the words go). The students use body percussion and a variety of percussion instruments to feel/keep the beat and play the rhythm. The students have learned several rhythm symbols (*ta* = a quarter note, *ti-ti* = two eighth notes, *sh* = a quarter rest) and they practice reading and clapping them with flash cards and online games. They have also been introduced to the notion of *tempo* (the speed of music) and through games and activities can identify songs as fast or slow and note when the tempo changes in a song. The students are off to a good start and we will continue to explore musical ideas together.

## **Grade 1**

In the first term, the students have continued with the study of beat and rhythm and have expanded their rhythm vocabulary to include the half note and the whole note. They are learning to track the rhythm for simple songs and see the relationship between rhythm and beat. These concepts are the foundation for all subsequent musical literacy. An introduction to the xylophones began this term as well. The students are learning proper mallet technique and how to play a simple two-note song. They have also begun to explore the musical staff, learning to identify the treble and bass clefs and how to identify the position of notes on the Grand Staff. Online games, movement and the use of percussion instruments help students to feel the music and engage in the learning.

## **Grade 2**

In the first term, the students have reviewed the rhythm and beat concepts they learned in previous grades and are using that knowledge to track and play the rhythm in songs. They have continued to explore music on the pitched percussion instruments (xylophones), and they are learning to read and play simple melodies and accompany these melodies with a two-note chord called a *bordun*. They did a unit on the instruments of the orchestra and have reviewed the placement of notes on the staff in preparation for an introduction to reading music.

### **Grade 3**

The focus for the Grade Three program this year is the keyboard. The school purchased a classroom set of keyboards to be used by the Grade 3 & 4 students (keyboards are sanitized after every use). Over the term, the students have learned a variety of functions on the keyboard. They have been developing their right and left-hand technique and have learned to read an introductory form of musical notation to play melodies that utilize the right and left hand. In the coming weeks the students will begin to explore standard musical notation for piano (written on the bass and treble clefs). Students who take piano lessons and can already read music are provided with music appropriate to their skill level. They may also work on songs from their out-of-school program during practice time. The parish hall is a great venue for a keyboard class; the two-metre distance allows each student to better hear her/his own keyboards. Every cloud has a silver lining. The students are enjoying the keyboards and making real progress.

### **Grade 4**

The focus for the Grade Four program this year is the keyboard. The school purchased a classroom set of keyboards to be used by the Grade 3 & 4 students (keyboards are sanitized after every use). Over the term, the students have learned a variety of functions on the keyboard. They have been developing their right and left-hand technique and have learned to read an introductory form of musical notation to play melodies that utilize the right and left hand. In the coming weeks the students will begin to explore standard musical notation for piano (written on the bass and treble clefs). Students who take piano lessons and can already read music are provided with music appropriate to their skill level. They may also work on songs from their out-of-school program during practice time. The parish hall is a great venue for a keyboard class; the two-metre distance allows each student to better hear her/his own keyboards. Every cloud has a silver lining. The students are enjoying the keyboards and making real progress.

### **Grade 5**

In music this term, the Grade Five students have begun to play the ukulele. They have explored tuning, strumming, and proper fingering technique for playing chords. Their chord repertoire is expanding, and they have also learned to play several melodies on the ukulele using a form of musical notation called tablature. The students are enjoying the instrument, and many students are taking ukuleles home on weekends to practice.

### **Grade 6**

In the first term, the students began playing the guitar. They are learning to read notation for the guitar and can now play melodies on the first and second strings. They have also learned a number of chords so that the songs can be played ensemble style with some students playing melody and others playing chords. To jazz up the arrangement we've added drums, bass & electric guitar. Students are learning how to keep a basic beat on the drums and create a bass line. Piano, synthesizer and violin (for those who play keyboard and violin) have also been added. The parish hall works well for creating a 'bigger' sound.

### **Grade 7**

The Grade Seven music program would typically focus on creating a band with guitars, bass, drums, keyboard and voice. Since we can't sing, the focus has shifted to instrumental music. Some time was spent reviewing notation reading skills and melodies from Grade six. Now the students are expanding their song repertoire. Electric guitar, bass drums and keyboard are used, adding colour and variation to the music and providing students with opportunities to try these instruments. The band is making progress and the students are growing in their skills and confidence.

### **Grade 8**

As with the Grade Seven program, the Grade Eight music program would typically focus on creating a band with guitars, bass, drums, keyboard and voice. Since we can't sing, the focus has shifted to instrumental music. Some time was spent reviewing notation reading skills and melodies from Grade six. Now the students are expanding their repertoire of songs. Electric guitar, bass drums and keyboard are used to add colour and variation to the music and provide students with opportunities to try these instruments. It's unfortunate that we can't do the rock band thing, but the students are working hard and growing in their skills and confidence.



# From the Gym

Wow, what a strange fall this has been!

The Physical Education program started outdoors at the beginning of September and then moved into a hybrid model, with some out and some inside activities. Once schools were moved in the orange Response Level, all classes were shifted outside to allow for greater spacing between students when inside. For the most part, things have gone very well. The fall has been relatively mild, so being outside over the day has not been a problem. As we shift to colder temperatures, some of our older, more fashion conscious students may find it a bit more uncomfortable. I tell them that there is a price one has to pay for fashion, which gets me a few chuckles and the occasional eye roll. The more sophisticated students have less appreciation for my sense of humour. Really, I encourage everyone to come prepared so that Phys Ed class can be an active enjoyable experience for all.

I have to say, there have been a few positives resulting from these outdoor sessions. The children have had much more fresh air over the last few months. They are learning to engage in play and to try a variety of activities to keep active and improve their fitness. We are looking at adding some alternatives as we head deeper into the winter to keep things interesting and fresh.

I hope you and your family keep safe, healthy and active in the months ahead.

Blake McInnis  
Physical Education Teacher



# French Update

## French News across the grades

1<sup>ier</sup> année- The grade one class are an excited bunch, eager to learn and engage during French time. Students begin each class with our routine greeting “Bonjour comment ça va?”, followed by chanting days of the week, months of the year, and a dance party counting from 1-10 in French. Throughout our theme on colours students read the book “Les feuilles” and participated in literacy games and activities such as Lotto and memory. Presently, the grade one class is learning vocabulary related to our winter theme, focusing on the parts needed to build to a snowman.

2<sup>ieme</sup> année- The grade 2 class is an energized group who shows enthusiasm towards learning French. Each class, time is devoted to our calendar routine; chanting the days of the week, months of the year and the four seasons. Students enjoyed taking part in our *Tout sur Moi* theme, where they were able to describe themselves, share their favourite colour and animal in French. Currently, the class is reading Little Critter books in French and taking part in chants associated with our theme *La famille*.

3<sup>ieme</sup> année- The grade 3 class began the term reviewing calendar vocabulary; days of week, months of year, and seasons. Students took part in a variety of literacy-based activities related to our theme on weather to help promote and reinforce vocabulary and comprehension. The class enjoyed our book study “Les Animaux du Zoo”. Students were able to recognize, identify, and label the different animals and their colours.

4<sup>ieme</sup> année- In French, the grade 4 class continues to show a genuine interest in learning French. During our *L'École* unit, students were able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of newly taught vocabulary through their “Sac a Dos” mini posters. Currently, the class is learning French vocabulary related to our study of *Les Animaux Sauvages* vs. *Les Animaux de la Ferme*. The grade 4 class is looking forward to continuing their Research on their animal and the creation of their dioramas.

5<sup>ieme</sup> année- Throughout the first term, the grade 5 class continues to work on calendar recognizing written numbers in French and correctly phrasing the date “*Aujourd'hui, Hier était, Demain se sera*”. We began the year focusing on dictionary skills that help students to improve their spelling, fosters reading comprehension and writing independence. The class had a blast showcasing their knowledge of French prepositions and vocabulary related to our unit *La Maison* through their magazine art.

6<sup>ieme</sup> année- In French, the grade 6's begin each class working on *Message du jour*, an important component to balanced literacy. This helps to actively engaged the class in thematic study, as well as, reinforce proper French spelling, phrasing and reading. Students were able to demonstrate their knowledge of “*j'aime, j'adore, je n'aime pas & je déteste*” phrasing on their jigsaw puzzles. The group furthered their understanding by incorporating these phrases in with their *jouer vs faire* poster project.

7<sup>ieme</sup> année- This term, the grade 7's focused on the introduction of regular “er” verbs and their proper conjugation forms. Students were asked to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of “er” conjugations through their Halloween Art activity. Presently, the class is continuing to work with the text “*Habiller Dans le Noir*”. Students have been able to properly sequence the story in French, fill in the missing information, and properly conjugate the “er” verbs within the text.

8<sup>ieme</sup> année- The grade 8 class continues to show progress in reading and writing through their cahier entries. The beginning of term, the class focused on the text “*Frankenstein*”, where students worked on reading and re-reading the text for comprehension and fluency, as well as, sequencing the story and filling in missing information in French. During part of our unit on Être and Avoir, the grade eights were able to create a celebrity “*Qui suis-je?*”, highlighting their ability to properly use the irregular French verbs in a complete sentence format. Currently, the class is working on completing their booklet project reviewing all regular er, re, & ir French



# 100th Anniversary– 2021

We are looking forward to celebrating the school's centennial year in 2021, what an amazing milestone! Our 100th Anniversary committee has been meeting regularly to discuss options to get this party started. There are plans underway for in-school celebrations, as well as a virtual event being organized by our intrepid Gala committee.

More information will be coming home in the weeks and months ahead, watch for:

- A 100th T-shirt order form (yea, days without uniform!)
- Banners designed by Maria Cox (yea, her banners are so beautiful!)
- In-school celebration information (yea, cupcakes are coming!)
- Information on our **Virtual Gala**, scheduled for **February 27th** (yea, a “social” event”)
- An invitation to join us for a fireworks display (yea, fireworks...what else can we say?!)

We hope you are as excited as we are! Our school has way more than 100 reasons to celebrate!

In the meantime, check out the 100th Anniversary tab on our school website to see some of the photos from our archives and join our Facebook group, links below.

<http://www.stalphonsusschool.ca/100th-anniversary/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/447883836198385>

If you, or someone you know, is an alumni of the school please encourage them to share their memories by emailing [100th@stals.ca](mailto:100th@stals.ca).





# **School Board News**

As a board we are blessed and honoured to support Christine, our teachers, students and families as we navigate the 2020/21 school year pandemic style!

This term we have addressed the ever changing public health requirements as schools have opened in this new environment and moved into code orange where we continue to operate. Staff, students and families have engaged in some remote learning for those who find that in person learning is not healthy for them at this time. I wish to thank our teachers and support staff who continue to find new ways to deliver the best learning experience to our kids, under stressful circumstances. Thank you also to PALS and all those involved in the Halloween drive thru and the fundraisers we continue to undertake as it really has helped maintain our community spirit. As a board, we continue to work closely with Christine to ensure the needs of everyone at the school are being met in the best way possible. It is also great to see people following public health advice by wearing masks, distancing at pick up/drop off, and keeping students home when they show symptoms of any illness.

Over the summer, we continued our monthly board meetings instead of suspending them as we typically do and in the first term we have held 3 board meetings as well as our Annual General Meeting (AGM) on November 18th. No new board members were elected this year and most members are staying on from last year. It was nice to see some parents attend the AGM via zoom and it was the highest AGM attendance I have seen in my time on the board!

Portfolios for the 2020-21 school year are as follows:

Chairperson: Christina Love  
Vice Chair: Sam Pellettieri  
Finance: Michelle Luedtke  
Recording Secretary: Craig Rowbotham  
IT: Kurt Walker  
Public Relations: Kelly Melchor & Dawn Gerbrandt  
Member at Large: Jonathan Schinkel  
Human Resources: Paul McDonald  
Principal: Christine McInnis  
Pastor: Father Greg Mulligan

Parents and parishioners are welcome to attend the open portion of Board meetings, which are held monthly. Check the calendar on the school website for further details.

Christina Love, CPA, CA  
Chairperson, St. Alphonsus School Board of Directors



# School Board News Cont'd

## Financial Report for the year ended June 30, 2020

For 2019/2020 enrollment decreased to 230 from the 2019/2020 level of 232 students.

Academic revenue increased due to inflationary increases in government grants partially offset by decreased enrollment.

Other revenue decreased due to closure of Alternate Kindergarten, Nursery, Before and After, Bingo and Gym rentals at the end of March due to COVID. This has been partially offset by offering an afternoon care program for Nursery which operated from September to March.

Expenses decreased from prior year primarily as a result Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) reducing salary costs. In 2019/2020 \$84,200 was spent on capital purchases, specifically a new sound system in gym, additional computer equipment for students and a washroom in Nursery / Before and After room.

<b>Summarized Financial Statements</b>		
<b>Balance Sheet</b>	<b>June 2020</b>	<b>June 2019</b>
Current Assets	\$ 1,512,777	\$ 1,304,344
Capital Assets	705,783	728,826
Total Assets	\$ 2,218,560	\$ 2,033,170
Current Liabilities & Debt	\$ 435,967	\$ 483,886
Net Assets	1,782,593	1,549,284
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$ 2,218,560	\$ 2,033,170
<b>Statement of Revenues &amp; Expenditures</b>		
Academic Revenue	\$ 1,853,147	\$ 1,838,722
Other Revenue	375,840	414,152
Expenses	(1,995,678)	(2,108,083)
Excess Revenues over Expenses before other expenses	233,309	144,791
Write-off of net proposed expansion costs	---	(21,000)
Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues over Expenses	\$ 233,309	\$ 123,791

If you would like to see the complete financial statements please make a request at the office.

As always, a huge thank you again to all the individuals and groups that contribute to the success of our School!

If you have any questions please forward them to the office.

Sincerely yours,

Kim Le Heiget, CPA, CA  
Finance Officer

# PALS

Hi There!

Looking back at past December newsletters I talked about how I couldn't believe it was December already. This year I feel, like I'm sure many of you feel, glad that this year is almost over. A big thank you to the teachers, EAs and support staff for taking such good care of our kids. Having had a taste of home schooling in the spring we are even more appreciative of what you do.

This fall we've had to miss out on our Wine Tasting and Halloween Social but we've started a new fundraiser in the Glenlea poinsettias and wreath sale. Thank you to Michelle Davison for making this happen for our school.

We cannot serve our usual hot chocolate and candy canes for the afternoon of gift wrapping so instead we will be giving Christmas cheer to the kids in the shape of a Christmas themed cookie from Dolce Bake Shop. Thank you to Roberto for helping us with this endeavour.

On the PALS executive Nicole Henderson and I will stay on as co-chair and chair for one more year. Nancy Pereira and Barb Bursey will remain with PALS but their roles of treasurer and secretary will be filled by Betty Pagani-Kwiatkowski and Lindsay Ruffeski. Thank you Barb and Nancy for all you have done and continue to do for PALS!

If you find yourself with a Tuesday evening off and feel like chatting with other parents from the school, come to a PALS meeting. Our meetings are by Zoom so if you would like to join please email the school and we will add your name to our list. Our next meeting dates are December 8<sup>th</sup>, January 12<sup>th</sup>, February 9<sup>th</sup>, March 9<sup>th</sup>, April 13<sup>th</sup>, May 11<sup>th</sup> and June 8<sup>th</sup>. Meetings start at 7 pm and generally run about an hour.

Wishing you and your family a very merry Christmas and all the best in the New Year.

Cheers!

Lisa Rowbotham  
Chair





## Quilt from 1995



We found this quilt while looking through the archives for photos to celebrate our 100th Anniversary. It was made in 1995 to mark the 125th anniversary of the province. Pictured with Mrs. McInnis are a few of the students whose parents attended the school in 1995 and whose handprints we found on the quilt! Neat piece of our history!

## Glenlea Greenhouse Fundraiser

Thank you to everyone who participated in our first ever Glenlea Greenhouse Christmas Plant Fundraiser. Just as with the spring fundraiser, the plants were beautiful! What a great way to decorate for the holiday season and support the school at the same time.

Watch for information on the Spring Plant Fundraiser coming home in early February!

