

West Prospect School

West Prospect School was built in 1881. When Prospect School District became too large, and the distances children had to travel became too great, the settlers decided to build two schools, East Prospect and West Prospect.

West Prospect School was a one-room school house, with ante-room and shed at the back for toilets. It was built by Mr. Ed Logan. It had the traditional belfry, but no bell. Between the years 1881 and 1883, it was also used as a church until a church was built. There was a stable at the school for the horses and, because there was no well, the children had to carry their own water from home.

Over the years, the school had seen many changes: The creation of a basement, the addition of a front porch in 1948, red siding to insulate brick and back again. Successive heating systems included in the beginning a big box stove that everyone sat around in the winter mornings to keep warm. Next came

a pot-bellied Quebec heater. After the basement was built by Walter Brown, a furnace downstairs with one register in the middle of the room was used, and later a hot air system heated by oil from the basement. The basement eventually included a toilet and washing facilities as well.

The school saw three distinctly different kinds of desks. The original ones were two-seaters. These were replaced in 1907 by individual desks and more recently in 1950, by desks that opened at the top. Note the ink wells in all of the desks.

The first teacher was John Ingram. There were forty-nine students in the year 1885-1886. In 1965 when the school closed there were nine. A list of teachers can be found on the wall of the school.

Another teacher that taught in this school was Mary-Louise Pickering. When she was

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undertook all of the expenses of placing the school and refurbishing it.

The entrance lobby contains sports memorabilia, old skates, old curling rocks (very heavy!), skis and ski poles, a cricket racket, and photos of various local sports teams.

Inside the classroom, children are amazed to hear that all grades were in this one room. Older kids would sit at the back. Usually one of the older boys would come to school early and light the stove so the classroom would be warm. Check the teachers desk to see the strap! A typical punishment in those days might be that the teacher would draw a circle on the board and make you stand with your nose in the circle. There is a display of drawings of all the various rural area schools (these prints are for sale at the General Store). An original photograph of a class that went to this school is at the back of the room. The display case holds an attendance register from Mount Pleasant School, some old Dick and Jane books, ink bottles and a large collection of old school books and readers.

