

SCHOOL HISTORY

Sooke Elementary dates back to 1891 when the first school in Springside area became too small and Mr. William Bell Charters donated land for a new school. Since then the school has had new buildings, been rebuilt, then added to and more recently renovated. With a rich history and a claim to fame of being the oldest school in B.C situated on the original site, we celebrate our past and look forward to meeting the needs of our students and community in the years to come.

Currently we have 251 children registered in Kindergarten to Grade Five. On behalf of the staff, parents and students of Sooke Elementary School, we welcome you to our school community.



To the left are (left) Katherine Muir, (center) Miss Christine Irvine, one of the first teachers when she was just sixteen years old, and (right) Isabella Muir.

Pictured to the right is John Muir Jr. with his wife Annie Welsh. The lumber industry was the main employer of the parents in Sooke when the first school opened and continued to do so for the following century. The Muirs operated the first successful steam powered sawmill in the province



The pioneer family of John Muir donated the land for the first school to be constructed in the area which is now Caldwell Road, pictured to the left in the fall of 1882. Posing in front of the school is Thomas Murray.

By 1891 the original building in the Springside area was to be replaced with a larger more conveniently located building. The current school site was donated by Mr. William Bell Charters.



Teacher Donald A. Frasier (pictured left) in the early 1900's is preparing a lesson for the next day.

1922 Basketball Team (pictured right) Back row, left to right, Irene Helgesen, Bonnie Nicholson, Lillian Helgesen (Lillian became a teacher at the school later). Front row, left to right, Teddy Arbour, Bob Mugford.



A second school building was built on the current school site in 1919. The senior students attended classes there and the junior students were taught in the first building which stood just east of this one. Written above the entrance was: "Act well your part for there the honour lies", (Pope).

1959 Staff Back row, left to right, Elinor McClimon, Herman Leung, Violet Crane, Ingrid Greenlees. Front row, left to right, Muriel Westad, Annie

**Acreman, Laurie Simpson,
Dorothy Kendrew, Stella
Lajeunesse**



Sports Day Sooke School - 1972 Back row, left to right, Rob Davies, Len Carolen, Jim Vancoughnett, Bob Gibson, Pete Rumsby, Jackie Gordon, Doug Partridge. Front row, Randy Musfelt, Brett Hansen, Mike Penner, Don Thompson, Mike Musfelt, Don Gordon, Jeff Wilford, unidentified, Russel Smith.

**The Mugford Boarding House,
run by Aunt Janey, was home
for most of the single teachers
in Sooke at this time.**



**The Mugford Family Photo Mr. & Mrs.
Robert John Mugford (nee Emma Jane
Bradley) and sons, Bertram and Robert.**



Many of the Sooke area residents who served in the Canadian Armed Forces during both World Wars were former students of Sooke Elementary. At this time the school was named Sooke Superior School and went to grade 10. Consequently many students joined Canada's military shortly after leaving school during both World Wars. Two of those students killed in action during WWII were William Duncan and Victor Syrett. George Woodhams, who taught at the school, took a leave of absence from his teaching position to join the Air Force during.

Back row, left to right, unidentified, Claude Dilley, Earl Gray. 3rd row, Harold Welsh, Mandus Michelsen, Joe Phillipson, Annie Acreman, Ralph Pontious, Dade Michelsen. 2nd row, Helen Shields, Sylvia Brown, Joyce Greenwood, Roy Thompson, unidentified, unidentified, Lily Michelsen. Front row, Helen Welsh, Hilda Richardson, Jim Richardson, Evelyn Greenwood, Mollie Richardson.

"The fact Sooke is a good community in which to live is, in itself the greatest tribute one can pay to the school." Joe Phillipson (Pictured in the class of '25), Deputy Minister of Education, retired





Sooke School Basketball Team - 1927
Left rear, Will Shields, Ernie Walsh,
Tommy Wright, Harry Helgesen, Harold
Pontious. Front left, Sara Michelsen
(Vowles), Byron Charters, Nellie Charters
(Carlow).

**Winning B.C Softball Team in Juvenile
League - 1952** Back row, Buster Monk,
Norman Essery, Vernon Musfelt, Bob
Hodges, Bob George, Pat George,
Danny Lajeunesse, Wally Butler.
Front row, Howard Monk, David
McClimon, David Conder, Paul
Morton, Gary Jones, Sidney Morton

