

W.E.S.S. celebrates 40 years of classes

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monies by speaking on behalf of all present school staff.

Saturday

Registration packages were still available at the school all day Saturday.

Volleyball, slo pitch and judo demonstrations were found at the school, as well as, the nostalgia rooms were open, and souvenirs and food available.

The arena opened at 11 a.m. and food and refreshments went along with a social time there.

About 165 golfers had registered and took to the links at Dutton and Wardsville golf clubs. The weather was perfect for all events the whole weekend.

Almost 1100 partook of the dinners and dances held at three locations – West Elgin Arena (507), Elgin International Club (302) and Dutton Dunwich Community Centre (278). Marcel's Catering Service of Chatham, looked after the meals at West Lorne and Dutton, while Elgin International Club provided their own. "Day Break" was featured at the arena for dancing, while the group "Yesterday" played at the International Club and "Music Express" D.J. at Dutton.

Sunday

Events wound down on Sunday as approximately 500 of the 600 booked enjoyed brunch, served at the school by J.J.'s. This food service run by the students of the school under the direction of Ann Wrobel, was also in charge of the food on Friday evening, Saturday noon at the school and at the arena.

The attendance of about 250 was a little disappointing at the ecumenical worship service and closing ceremonies held at the school, beginning at 1:30 p.m.

Principal J.J. Prince opened the service followed by the singing of "The Church Is One Foundation." Rev Peter Burritt read the call to worship and prayer. Lessons were taken from Timothy 2: 1-13 and John 5: 19-27. The responsive reading was led by Rev. Ralph Fluit.

Guest Speaker

Bill Sheeler, a former teacher, now retired, who was born and raised in West Lorne, was the guest speaker, introduced by Mr. Prince. Mr. Sheeler told his audience that they must stop and reflect on the past and not just look to the future. He said that we must also remember those who taught and reflect on their teaching.

Andy Dienesch, former student of Mr. Sheeler, and a teacher himself for many years in the Mississauga area, gave a testimonial, reflecting on how Mr. Sheeler touched his life.

Others assisting in the service included Rev. Peg Wheeler, Father Paquette and Rev. Jim Potter. Hymns also included "What A Friend We Have In Jesus", "Be Thou My Vision," and "Amazing Grace" ended the service.

Closing remarks were given by Mr. Prince, an end to a very successful trip down memory lane for a host of former students and teachers of West Elgin Secondary School who travelled long distances to catch a glimpse of the past and renew old acquaintances.

June 29/92

Reunion a success, tired organizers say

WEST LORNE (Staff) — Jerry Prince never thought he'd say it, but he's glad the weekend is over.

The school principal said he plans to savor the peace and quiet of a Monday morning, compared to the hectic activity of the past three days.

Mr. Prince was one of several volunteers who helped organize West Elgin Secondary School's 40th anniversary. The event, which featured nostalgia rooms, sports tournaments, special dinner-dances and even a ecumenical church service, was attended by more than 1,700 former students and teacher of West Elgin.

The principal said though he wasn't surprised at the turn-out, the volume of the people was overwhelming.

"I'm so tired right now," he said in an interview Sunday night. "But it

went wonderfully."

Betty Ross, reunion co-chairman, said the event took a whole year's planning and a lot of digging for people's addresses.

Mrs. Ross said the only problem was that so many former students showed up for the event, that others (who hadn't registered beforehand) had to be turned away.

She said the bulk of the crowd took part in opening ceremonies on Friday night, which featured former teacher Dorothy Steele, who taught at the school when it first opened.

"We were surprised by the number that turned out last night," she said Saturday. "It was phenomenal."

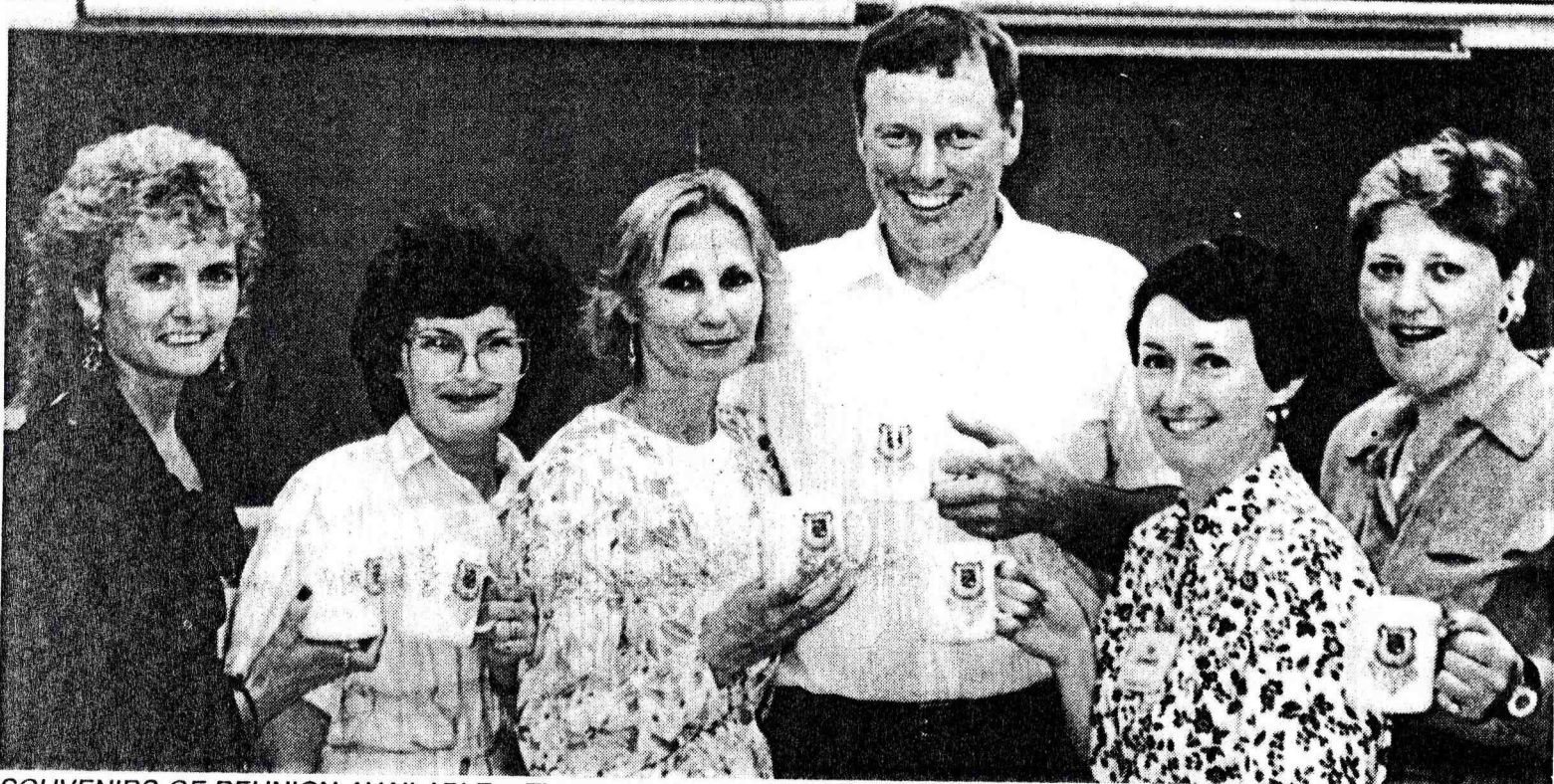
Mr. Prince said it was interesting to find out what had happened to former students.

"It's so nice to see people coming back," he said.



MEMORY LANE — Grade 9 students Matt Jamieson and Joe Swain get a chuckle out of an old photo of their teacher John McIntyre at the

40th West Elgin Secondary School reunion this weekend. —(Staff)

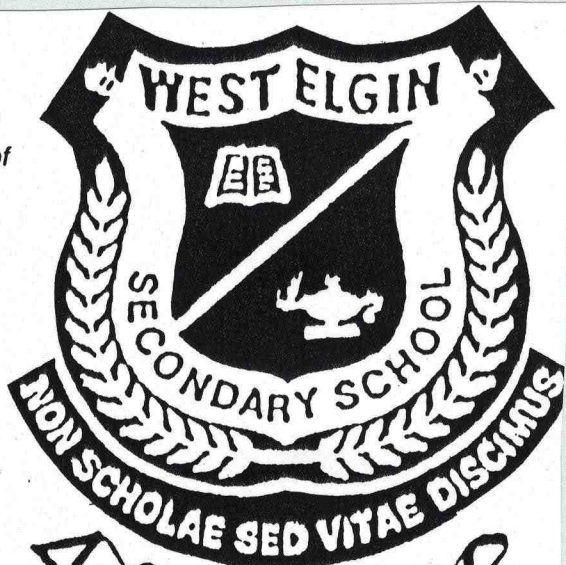


SOUVENIRS OF REUNION AVAILABLE — These coffee mugs were among several mementos at the WESS 40th anniversary celebration. Former graduates from the late 60's, pictured from

the left, are Joyce (Pearce) Rosé, Louise (McKellar) Coulter, June (Andrews) Hodder, Bob Hodder, Diane (Leitch) Drummelsmith and Sandra Brown.



OPENING CEREMONIES – Rae Axford, former teacher, chairman of the Reunion Committee, welcomed former students and teachers to a fun-filled weekend of events.



OVERWHELMING RESPONSE – A large crowd of former students and teachers packed the cafeteria and halls on Friday evening.



FORMER MEMBERS OF THE WRESTLING TEAM – Pat Bolger (left) and Jamey Littlejohn remembered the good old days of sports at the local high school.

Region

Friends meet once more at West Elgin reunion

‘The longer we stayed the more, when you looked at someone, you saw them as they were 22 years ago.’

By LORI RIEGER
Staff Reporter

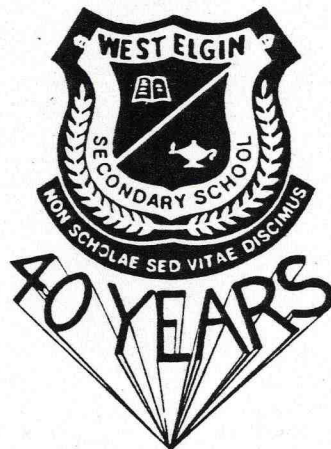
WEST LORNE — For years Judy Telford walked the halls at West Elgin Secondary School chatting with her friends, clutching her books and showing off the latest in poodle skirts.

This past weekend, she returned for a more casual stroll through the same hallway, hand-in-hand with her husband Ken, laughing at photos of people she went to school with more than 30 years ago.

Mrs. Telford was just one of more than 1,700 people who returned to the school for its 40th anniversary this weekend. It was an event she nor her husband Ken said they would not have missed.

“I just wanted to see my old high school friends I haven’t seen in years,” Mr. Telford said. “There’s a bond, whether you like it or not.”

The couple met and actually started dating while in Grade 11 at



Reunion

West Elgin. Though they now live in Annapolis, Md., the Telfords said they still think back to the years they spent in West Lorne.

Mrs. Telford said her old high school and the friends she made there will always be special, no matter how many years pass.

“I think the feeling of hominess made it special,” she said. “I think the personal attention the teachers gave you made you feel like a person, not a number.”

SPIRIT STRONG

Former student and current WESS teacher John McIntyre agrees.

“I think the school spirit has always been strong here,” he said.

Mr. McIntyre graduated in 1961 and later returned to run the physical education department in 1970. Though he has never really felt like he left school, Mr. McIntyre admitted to feeling like he had entered a time warp at a reunion party this weekend.

“The longer we stayed the more, when you looked at someone, you saw them as they were 22 years ago,” he said. “A lot of people made the comment, we stopped the clock and here we are again.”



REMEMBERING THE PROM — Former West Elgin Secondary School students Judy and Ron Telford take a trip into the past while looking at clothes worn to the prom in the 1950s. — (Staff)



1931
S.S # 13
WALL ACETOWN

FRONT ROW L to R. Ed Hoffman, Neil Moore, Norman Moore, Harry Hoffman, Gord McFarlane
Ralph Walker, Jack Callahan, Verne Campbell, Delbert Leeming, Harold
Hoffman

SECOND ROW L to R Sam Burgess, Norm Lamb, Lois Clay, Ellen Burgess, Dora Pearce, Marion
Callahan, Kathleen Burgess (in front) Jean McFarlane, Frances Forsythe,
Lenore Evans (In front) Marion Underhill, Ila McArthur, Sylvia Poysor,
Freda Poysor, Grace Revell, Marion McFarlane

BACK ROW L to R Teacher: Miss Goff, Marion Davy, Sally Burgess, Norine Pearce, Harry
Revell, Ross Moore, Sydney Lucas, Leo Lynch, Allister McKellar,
Claire Campbell, Gordon Gow, Mary Pearce, Shirley Revell, Anna
McKellar.