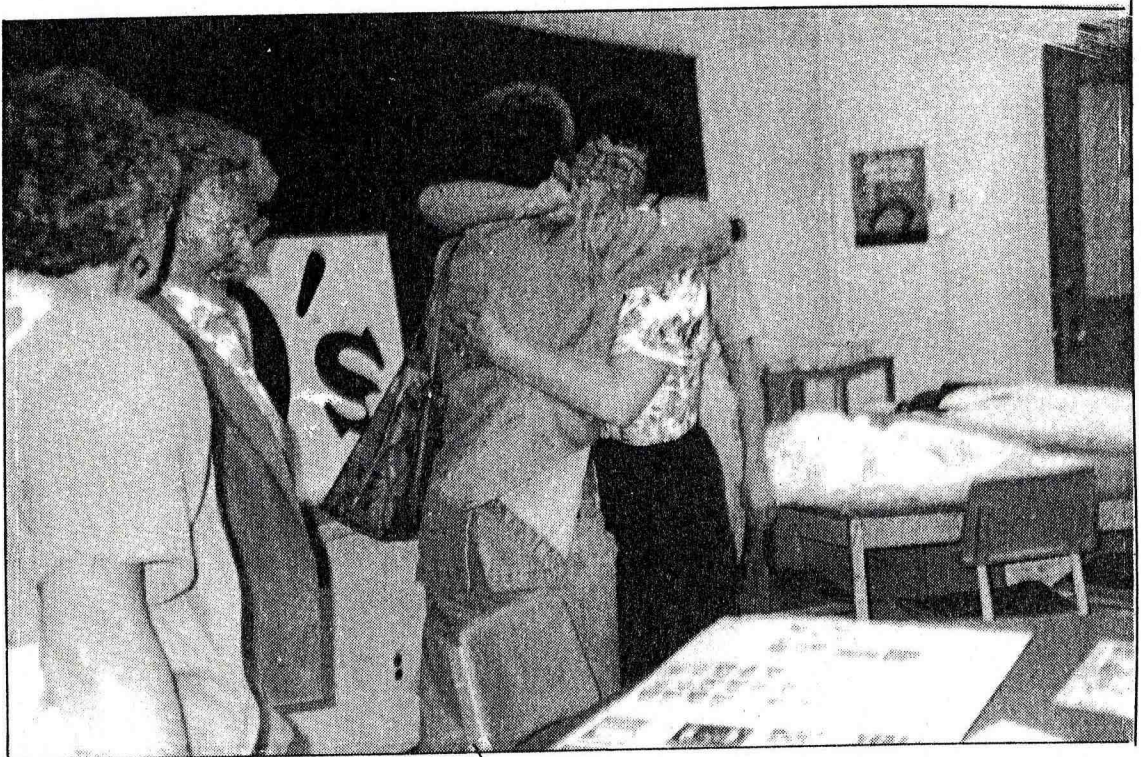




Principal of WESS and Honourary Chairman of the Reunion Committee J.J. Prince, spoke to the crowd. He welcomed everyone on behalf of the school.



Eileen Kostras, secretary-treasurer of the reunion committee greeted graduates at the door. Everyone signed the guest book.



Friends greet each other at the Friday night festivities. People who were separated by miles got to see each other, some after 40 years.



Memorabilia such as pictures, newspaper clippings, prom dresses, gymsuits, sweaters and awards from the different decades was on display in rooms at the high school during the WESS 40th Anniversary Reunion celebrations.

Welcome from the Principal

Each of you can thank the many people who enjoyed the 25th Anniversary so much because it was at their urging that the 40th was planned. I placed 1992 on my long-range calendar in 1977:

Many of you will not know me and that may be just as well. I really represent MR. BOSMAN, MR. MUMFORD, MR. THOMAS, MR. RICHMOND, MR. LANCASTER AND MR. GALLOWAY. As principals of West Elgin, I know that we all had the same basic aim in life -- that was -- to get you through those precious teen years and to get you out of our hair. You know we loved you all -- the good, the bad, the smart, the ones who thought they were smart, and the not-so-smart -- but most of all we loved to see you succeed even though we, years ago, might not have thought that you would.

The one whose spirit will always run through these halls or hide in the ceilings is the late, great MR. WILFRED JOHNSTON, the Vice-Principal who rode herd on so many of you for 18 years. RAY LEMON, the Head Custodian, would never be far behind.

I hope that these three days will allow you to bring back thousands of good memories. Let the tears flow with joy! Let the stories flow also!

Tell everyone how good you were when you were here -- I, like all of the others named above, will know when you are lying. Tell the truth some of the time as you tell these stories or one of us will still get to you.

Have a good weekend! Have a good life!

Sincerely,

J.J. Prince, Principal

Official Opening of W.E.D.H.S.

West Elgin District High School was officially opened forty years ago, on November 12, 1952. The guest speaker was A.T. Ward, M.L.A., while the message from the clergy was presented by Rev. F.P. Erb, President of the West Elgin Ministerial Association. The address and formal opening were conducted by the Hon. J.W. Dunlop, Minister of Education.

Mr. J.D. Fraser was Chairman of the school board, and the other members were W.F. Rewbotham, J.S. Kearns, Dr. J.G. Whitteker, G.L. Mortin,

Alex White, D.E. Carroll and E. Hayes.

The original teaching staff consisted of Mr. J.A. Bosman, Principal, H.M. Breckow, S.E. Wheeler, R.H. Bailey, A.J. Fontana, Wilf Johnston, W.S. Clifford, Ruth Ford (Principal's Secretary), Audrey Kirkpatrick, Dorothy Steele, Ruby McDonald, Lois Fulton, Helen Carey and Frank Bolger.

The original Student Council consisted of Jon Jewell (President), Barbara Kelly (Secretary), Jill Arnold (Student Treasurer), Mr. Fontana

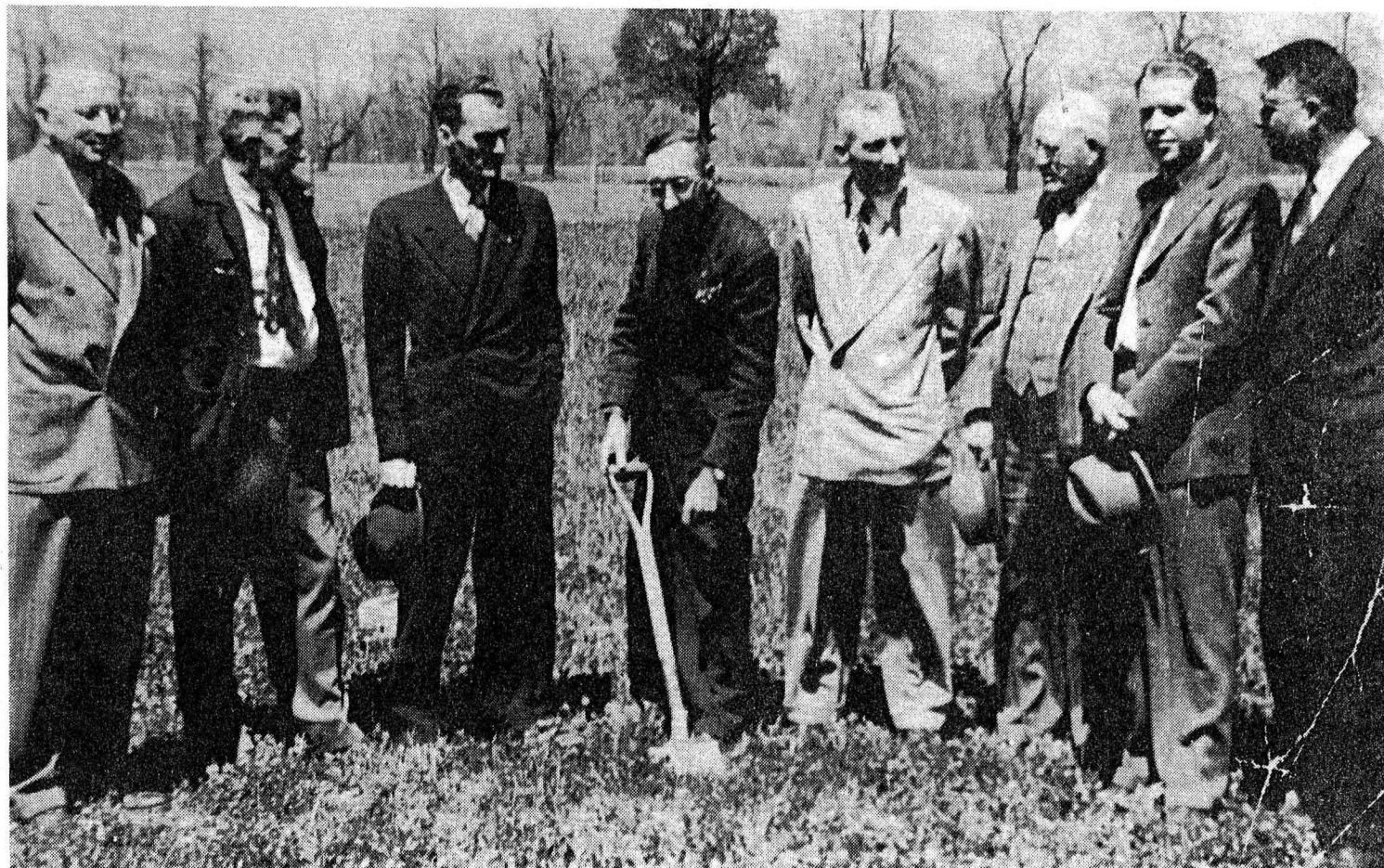
(teacher treasurer), Shirley Gammon, Barbara McNeil, Jack Whitteker, Bob Ronson, Joe Fischer, Jeanne Reid and Gwen Wilson.

Principal Bosman's greeting in the Official Opening booklet read: West Elgin is indeed fortunate in having one of the finest, modern secondary schools in the province. It is a pleasure for me to express on behalf of the staff and student body our sincere appreciation to the ratepayers of this community for providing such a splendid, modern and well equipped

school building.

While the former schools provided many notable graduates, the new school will, with its modern equipment and additional facilities, meet the needs of the present generation for many years to come. It is now up to the individual students to make the most of these opportunities

The initial enrolment of the school was 335, and a full curriculum was provided, including Home Economics, Shop, Agriculture, Commercial and academic studies.



Turning of the first sod at the site of the district high school, just south of the West Lorne village limits, was held in May 1951. Joe Kearns the Aldborough representative had the honor. Four of the board of seven members were present. Standing left to right are: Maynard Hopper, John Quigley, Wilf Rewbotham, a West Lorne member of the board, Joe

Kearns Aldborough representative, Dr. J. G. Whitteker, Rodney's representative, Henry Miller, E.E. Hayes, the second West Lorne board member, and V.E. Lemon. The three members absent were: David Fraser, chairman, Dutton, D.E. Carroll, Dunwich representative, and Alex Wight, Wallacetown, the county appointee.