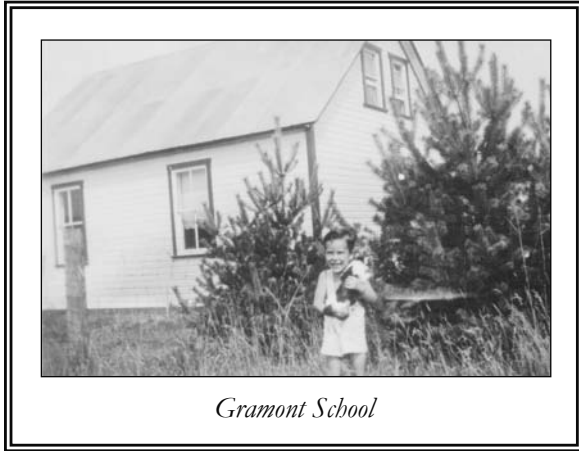


Protestant Education in the Municipality



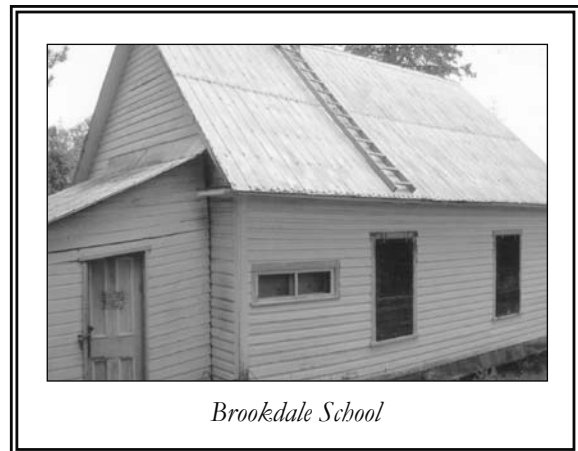
Gramont School

Scottish, German, and French settlers came to this part of the Laurentians in the nineteenth century. It was a young and rugged land. Roads did not exist so they traveled by foot, on the waterways or by horse. The backbreaking labor of clearing the lands for crops was started in order to etch out a living. With families being started, the need for schools was a top priority.

There were three schools to accommodate the Protestant communities one in Gramont, one in Brookdale and one in Rockway Valley. As well, there were three schools one in Boileau, one in Vernet and one in Brookdale to serve the Catholic communities. These all were one room schools. At the Brookdale and Gramont schools one teacher was hired to instruct grades 1 to 6. There was no electricity or running water in any of them. Pails of drinking water were brought in by one of the older students. There was no such thing as a bathroom, so they used outdoor facilities, called out houses.

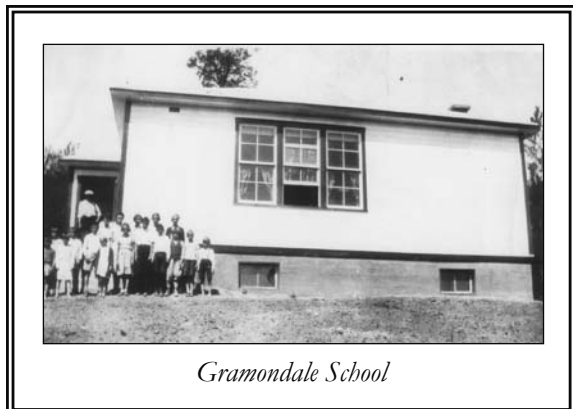
Following is a brief history of each school. The Gramont and Brookdale schools were approximately three miles apart. Pupils from both areas attended each school during the school term Brookdale for the first five months and Gramont for the last five months. The teacher boarded with a local resident. The winter months were particularly hard for the younger students. In the deep snow, the students traveled cross country, through fields and bush, to get to whichever school they were attending. The older students in a family were instructed to look after their siblings.

To alleviate this problem of two schools for the same group of students, there was a school built halfway between. It was built in 1935-36 by a contractor from Lachute, Quebec by the name of Alcide Laurin. This building cost \$1200.00 and was called "Gramondale School". Local senior students were hired to keep the building warm. One former student said that he was paid ten cents a trip to stoke the fire during the Christmas holidays. Another former student said that it was his job at ten cents a day to get to the school



Brookdale School

early in the mornings and warm up the room before the teacher and other students arrived. Still another student was hired to sweep and clean the school.



Gramondale School

The location of these schools are as follows: The Gramont School was on the corner of chemin Boileau and montée Gramont, but now is a residence. Likewise, the Brookdale School is a seasonal residence on the corner of chemin Brookdale and chemin Maskinongé. The Gramondale School, also is a seasonal residence located on montée Gramont. This school amalgamated with Namur Intermediate School in approximately 1945.

The Rockway Valley Protestant School was situated on the corner of chemin Bois Coursolle and the Route 364. The original school, built on Ed Neil's land in about 1888-90, was a one room log building. The first teacher was Charles Sinclair. While the pioneers were clearing new land, a fire destroyed the school. Never discouraged, these courageous folks built a second school in what was called Lower Rockway Valley - known today as Grey Valley. This school now is a residence. Thomas Sinclair was the secretary/treasurer of the school - it was his responsibility to collect taxes to hire teachers, and so on. Then in 1905, another school was built on Edward Sinclair's land. It was condemned in 1943, and yet another one was constructed. This school was closed in 1947-48 when it amalgamated with Arundel Protestant School. Some of the families who attended the school were the McArthurs, the McDowells, the Sinclairs, the Dubeaus, the Langdons, the Bancrofts, and the Neils.

By Greta MacWhirter.