



WILIGHT
SCHOOL DIST. NO 4417
1929-1949

The following from:

A Grande Education:

One Hundred Schools in the
County of Grande Prairie, 1910-1960

Produced by South Peace Regional Archives

TWILIGHT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 4417

Twilight School District was authorized June 7, 1929, when the population of the Five Mile Creek School District became too much for a one-room school. One original suggestion for the name of the new district was "Skunk Hollow" because a nearby coyote den had become home to a family of skunks, but reason prevailed and "Twilight" was chosen. Debentures were issued, tenders requested, and the school built on the NE 4-72-5-6. It opened right after New Year's 1930, with 20 year old Charles Cromie teaching 21 students in grades 1 to 10.

Twilight school was well supplied from the start, and no student had to walk more than two miles to school. Like all other schools in the Great Depression, however, they had to reduce expenses in the 1930s. One way they did this was for each family to donate a load of firewood. A work bee was held to saw it.

The settlers showed their support in other ways too, as seen in a letter sent to a prospective teacher regarding the teacherage: "You are supposed to supply your own bedding. The other

necessities are furnished. The neighbours will bring the mail for you as most of them go to town two or three times a week. You will be met at the station...."

This district was marked by an unusual unity among the ratepayers in regards to the school. The School Inspectors received no written complaints, and there were no statements of finances in arrears. In fact, there were not even any board minutes; it seems that the ratepayers were happy to leave everything up to a school secretary and did not have a board of directors. Consistently good reports from the School Inspector supported their contentment: "The district is to be congratulated—conditions are very satisfactory." (1930) "Your school is under very capable management and the children are enjoying the hours spent at school." (1935) "Classes excel in Physical Training—very fine training in Singing." (1936)

Sports were important to the Twilight district. One of the popular school activities was softball, and in 1937, Twilight formed a competitive ladies

softball team. The girls financed their equipment by picking raspberries, which they traded to Porteous Hardware for bats and balls. The Twilight team won 41 consecutive games between 1939 and 1942, and won the trophy six years in a row. In 1943 their pitcher, Betty Carveth, left to join the Edmonton Walkrites and went on to play for the Rockford Peaches in the All American Girls Softball League.

When the Grande Prairie School Division was formed in 1937, the ratepayers at Twilight voted unanimously not to join the Divisional Board, but

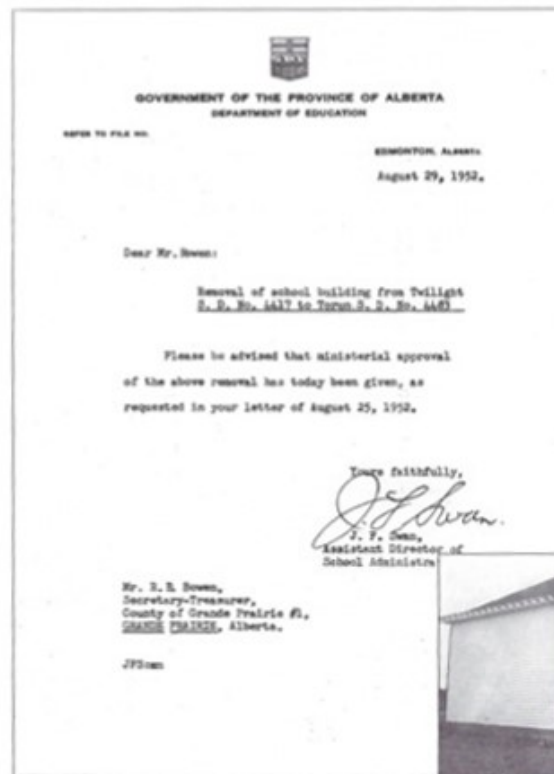
To visit the Twilight School site, take Secondary Highway 670 east from Grande Prairie to Rge Rd 53. Turn north and go 1/2 mile to where a sign on the west side of the road identifies the Twilight School site.

to retain control of their own school. As the years advanced, however, they realized their children would benefit from the larger schools. In 1950, with only 11 students left, they agreed to bus the children to Grande Prairie. Two years later they gave their consent to moving the school to the Torun District at Webster. The teacherage was also moved, and the barn, outbuildings and site were sold.

After the Torun School District closed in 1957, the old Twilight School was once again moved, this time to SE 26-72-4-W6, to be used as a residence.

Opposite page, champion Twilight Ladies Softball Team in 1940, with their coach Gerald Carveth. Photo donated by Eleanor Harrison, SPRA 2003.44.1.

Below, Twilight School after it had been moved to Webster in 1954. GP School Division photo, SPRA 063.02.096.1.



Resources: Smoky River to Grande Prairie
SPRA: Twilight School Board minutes, 1929-1937
School Division correspondence files, 1930-1953
GPPL: Isabel Campbell files, Schools—Twilight