

Sept 5, 2012

Leader-Post • leaderpost.com

CENTENNIAL

Back to school — for the 100th time

EMMA GRANEY
LEADER-POST

As students trooped back to class at Ecole Connaught Community School on Tuesday, former student George Beckett looked on.

The 1950 Connaught graduate wasn't there to see off grandkids, but to help promote the school's upcoming centennial celebrations, being held Sept. 28-30.

Things have changed at the Cathedral neighbourhood school since Beckett and his friends sat in classrooms in the brick building.

"When I started in 1941, the Depression was on, the war was on," he said.

"Discipline and the like was very strong in those days and education wasn't as varied as it is now, not as interesting."

**"WHEN I STARTED
IN 1941, THE
DEPRESSION
WAS ON, THE
WAR WAS ON."**

GEORGE BECKETT

One thing that hasn't changed, Beckett thinks, is the excitement at heading back into the classroom — or at least seeing one's friends again.

"There would be some good friends you'd see over the summer, but a lot of people had cottages and so you wouldn't see them over the summer months," he said.

"I think back then we were excited to get back, and I think it's the same now. After a long vacation you get kind of bored."

Beckett expects Connaught's centennial celebrations to be a reunion of sorts and is looking forward to catching up with people he hasn't seen in years.

"Certainly I'm going to be there on Friday to enjoy the festivities and meet some people," he said.

"I'm sure talking to some of those people will bring back a lot of memories."

Aside from a chance to reunite with former teachers and students, organizing committee chair Trish Elliott said it was a chance for people to focus on the role the school has played in the community over the years.

"It's been a vital part of the community for 100 years now and ... a lot of innovation has come out of the school as well," she said.

"This is definitely a community-based celebration because Connaught is so interconnected with everything in the community."

The free festival will feature bands, old schoolyard games and some hands-on arts and theatre workshops and bands.

"We also have at least two compositions in the works ... so we'll get some great art and music coming out of this," Elliott said.

Connaught is Regina's oldest school and was one of the first community schools in Saskatchewan.