

retirement

March 17 1987

by Vienna Badiuk

Retirement — does it mean a rocking chair?

For retired East Kildonan school principal, Mel Borody — the rocking chair image only fits if he's stripping off the old paint, sanding and refinishing an antique piece.

Just back from six weeks overseas, and before that having spent summer days at the lake, the first principal of Hampstead School has fond memories of his teaching career.

A person who "always wanted to be a teacher", prior to attending Normal School, Borody taught on a teacher's permit for one year at Sprage, Manitoba.

In 1942, it was off to the airforce, and stations on the west coast and service as a wireless operator.

Following his discharge, Borody made the rounds in rural Manitoba — teaching a year in Chatfield, one at Morden and three at Sandy Lake where he was married. Then there was Tyndal and Selkirk before the move to Winnipeg.

After vice principalships at Lord Wolseley, Prince Edward and Melrose Junior High (today Miles Macdonell Collegiate) — Borody began what was to be a 25 year term as principal at Hampstead.

When the school opened in the fall of 1960 there were 300 children in 11 rooms — period. There was no library, gymnasium, music room or kindergarten. "All our music and physical education was done in the hallway — outside the principal's office door."

By the time he retired there were 400 children in 15 rooms in a school which sported a library, gymnasium, music room and kindergarten.

Looking back over his 40 years and six months behind the desk, Borody notes, "Throughout the years I never expected a teacher to do something that I wouldn't do."

And as for the kids, there was the time he walked into the Grade 1 recreation area on the playground.

"A little guy grabbed me by the leg and said, 'I love you. You're the best principal I ever had.'"

"That class had never had any other principal," chuckled Borody.

Then last year, a City of Winnipeg police officer stopped him. Said the man — Thanks for giving me the strap. It was after you got mad

at me that I realized you were trying to help.

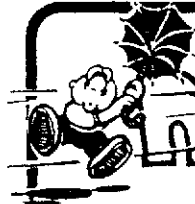
Said Borody, "Having all that behind me, I am absolutely enjoying my retirement and I wouldn't want to start it all over again. I can't picture having done anything else."

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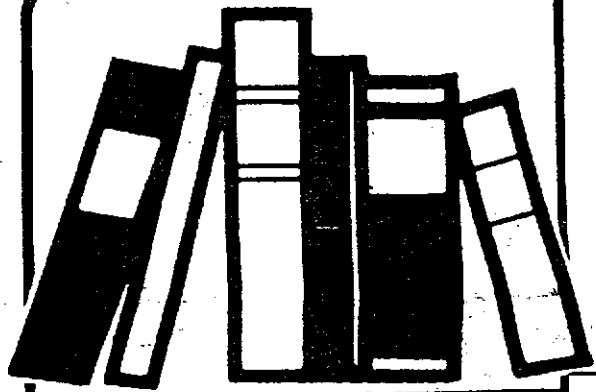
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