

A Look Back at Bayview School, Mill Bay, BC

School District #65 received government approval for a new one-room school in Mill Bay in September 1947. The school would be the first for this small community. Four acres of a parcel of 13 acres bought for \$7500 by the school district would be used for the school. The other nine acres would be sold to help the district recover some of its outlay.

The architect for the new school was Mr. Hubert Savage of Victoria, BC. The school had one classroom, a covered play area and a staffroom.

The school was originally to be named Malahat Beach School but when it opened in September 1950 it was announced that it would be called Bayview School as per a decision made by the school board in August 1950. One resident of the area, Mr. D. Kier, objected to the renaming of the school from Malahat Beach to Bayview as he claimed the word "Malahat" had historical interest throughout the North American continent. He put his objection in writing to the BC government. This resulted in a deputation from the Mill Bay area to the September 13, 1950 meeting of the school board. The deputation objected to any attempt to revert the school name to Malahat Beach. A subsequent board meeting decided to keep the name Bayview.

The first teacher in the one-room school was Mrs. Alexander Jessie Embree. She taught grades 1-6 at the school from 1950-1957. She wrote the school name as "Bay View" on her class registers. It was not until 1963 that teachers at the school wrote the school name as "Bayview".

There was a large old tree on the school playground under which the school children liked to play before school and at recess. One year, just as the morning bell rang for the start of recess, the tree was struck by lightning scattering tree bark for 50 feet around. Fortunately all the children were still inside the school. The tree was later taken down in the interests of safety.



In September 1957 only grades 1-3 students remained at the school as students in grades 4-6 were transferred to Cobble Hill School.

Student Gene Smith, age 9 years, was hospitalized January 13, 1958 when, on his way to school, his bicycle went out of control into the path of a car near the Millstream Bridge on the TransCanada Highway. Gene suffered a bump on the forehead, a cut requiring stitches on his chin and other cuts and bruises. He was taken by ambulance to King's Daughters' Hospital in Duncan and was in good condition two days later.



Another classroom was added to the school and during the 1970's and 1980's and it became a two-classroom grade 1 only school annexed to Mill Bay Elementary School.

Changes to the Island Highway caused local school district officials to consider the school site to be dangerous and inconvenient. Thus the BC Ministry of Education formally approved a plan to close the school in August 1991. The school's 81 students were moved to primary classes at Cobble Hill School on Watson Avenue, Cobble Hill. Portable classrooms had been added there to accommodate the new students. The Bayview School building and property were sold the same year and the school demolished. Today the Bayview School site is the location of the Mill Bay Tim Horton's restaurant.

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