

**M**uch has happened at Pope John XXIII Catholic School on Knoxdale Road since it opened its doors in 1963, at that time, one of the new Catholic schools built to accommodate the growing suburban development in Nepean.

Trustees of the local school board at the time of the blessing of the new school by Bishop J.R. Windle in 1963 were Garfield O'Gilvie, Paul Marcotte and Georges Nash. This was one of the local school boards that existed in Nepean prior to the creation of the Carleton Roman Catholic School Board in 1969.

While it has seen class upon class of students pass through its doors over the years since 1963, Pope John XXIII School has also witnessed a myriad of events and changes take place as well. The school's custodian, Eldon Currell, parachuted into the schoolyard in the spring of 2001, certainly not an every day occurrence at any school.

The school celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the spring of 1988. One of the highlights was a special anniversary celebration picture that was taken by photographer Mr. Zwicker. Both his children and his grandchildren attended the school. A play structure in the schoolyard became a reality thanks to the school's parent council headed by Paula Cavan. Another accomplishment that pleased the school community was the paving of the school's courtyard area as well as the schoolyard area behind the gymnasium. The Environmental Committee at the school planted a maple tree at the front of the school.

Pope John XXIII Catholic School has provided students to two other new schools, St. John the Apostle Catholic School and Frank Ryan Catholic Senior Elementary School. The construction of St. John the

# POPE JOHN XXIII CATHOLIC SCHOOL



**165 Knoxdale Road  
Nepean K2G 1B1  
613-226-6223  
[www.occsb.on.ca/joh](http://www.occsb.on.ca/joh)**

Apostle School resulted in a boundary change that saw a number of Pope John XXIII students move to the new school. When Frank Ryan Catholic Senior Elementary School was built in 1980, the grades 7 and 8 students who had been attending Pope John XXIII Catholic School since its opening were redirected. This meant that an Industrial Arts room for boys and a Home Economics room for girls, as well as a lunchroom, all located in the lower level of the school, were no longer being used. At one time, grades 7 and 8 students from various Nepean schools were taken to Pope John XXIII School for a day of using these special facilities. After the downstairs

space was no longer needed for its original purpose, it served as a central resource centre, as well as a home for Kindergarten, the French Department, a meeting space for Board workshops and as the Board's technology repair depot. When it was first created, the Ottawa-Carleton Catholic School Board's education museum was housed in this downstairs area. The museum has since been moved to the Ottawa-Carleton Catholic School Board's administrative building on Hunt Club Road.

The Carleton Roman Catholic School Board's central teacher resource centre, first established at the Board's administration building in 1972, was relocated to the lower level area of Pope John XXIII Catholic School in a move which began in July 1978 and completed in March 1979. An official open house was held at the new premises at Pope John XXIII School in April 1979 to mark the relocation. In 1996, this school board central resource centre was named the "Derry Byrne Teacher Resource Centre" in memory of Derry Byrne, Director of Education of the Carleton Roman Catholic School Board at the time of his death.

Pope John XXIII Catholic School also housed the first consultants of the Carleton Roman Catholic School Board. These included Mae Rooney, Consultant for Primary Methods, Brian Bourbeau, Consultant for Health and Physical Education, Harry Bellier, Consultant for Special Education and Yvonne Beniteau, French Consultant.

Pope John XXIII Catholic School is named after the 261st pope, who reigned from October 1958 until his death in June 1963. Known affectionately by many as "Good Pope John" and "the most loved Pope in history," he was declared "blessed" by Pope John Paul II in 2000, the penultimate step on the road to sainthood.

**Present Principal**

Brenda Richard (2006-present)

**Past Principals**

Claire Janney (1963-65)  
 Earl Hogan (1965-67)  
 Russ Graham (1967-73)  
 Robert Curry (1973-78)  
 Mae Rooney (1978-83)  
 Ralph Watzenboeck (1983-87)  
 Gerard Leclair (1987-92)  
 Basil Tomlinson (1992-96)  
 Helen Bogie (1996-97)  
 Sharon O'Connor (1997-99)  
 Fergus Lyons (1999-2001)  
 Gail Taillon (2001-06)

**First Teaching Staff**

Barbara Champagne (1963)  
 Monique Michaud (1963)

**Former Students**

Alison Smyth, Music and Drama  
 Alison is one of Canada's up-and-coming singers. In her teen years, she had consistent first place rankings and six trophies in the National Capital Kiwanis Music Festival, covering both classical and show music. In 1999, she competed at the provincial level for both the Kiwanis Festival and the Ontario Registered Music Teachers' Association, placing first in both competitions. As a result, she performed with the Dofasco Male Chorus in a nationally televised CTV Christmas special. Alison moved to Toronto in 2001 to attend the Glenn Gould School of the Royal Conservatory of Music. She remained dedicated to her goal of a professional career. In early 2004, she landed a role in the Toronto production of the Broadway musical *Hair Spray*, spending nine months in this, her debut professional production.

Mike Kusiewicz, Triple "A" baseball player, member of Canada's Olympic baseball team in Greece in 2004 and inductee into the Ottawa Sports Hall of Fame in 2005.

Cam Powell, a.k.a. Scott Rush, the morning man on Hot 89.9 Radio.

**School Colours**

Green and yellow

**Logo**

A student in the special education class taught by Barry Olivier originally designed the school logo.

The logo is triangular with the name Pope John XXIII.

**Motto**

"A School To Believe In"

**Mascot**

"PJ the bear"