

SUN CIRCLE, WHISPERING WOODS, & FIRE!

Expanding into the Outdoor Environment

Two Very Special Projects

Our new Dr. E.W. Coffin Elementary School is smaller than the first one. It encloses the previous outdoor courtyard into one of the most interesting school libraries in Calgary, with its sunken circular well, and westward arcing windows. Left behind on the western side, within the remaining original foundations, was a sweeping expanse of tarmac, more than enough for multiple hopscotch grids.



Kathy Fedori and students within the old foundations, standing in the center of the future Sun Circle, spring 1993

What to do with this vast space? And what about that enticing little remnant of native prairie, just west beyond the school grounds? Well, be on the forefront of worldwide school ground naturalization projects, and adopt the natural area park through the City of Calgary, of course! We call them the Sun Circle, and Whispering Woods. And each has found a place in the hearts of many a student, teacher, staff, and parent at Dr. Coffin School.



Wildflowers blooming in the NE planter, spring 1994. Circular planters hold native prairie plants, rescued from Edgemont developments

Panorama of Whispering Woods, autumnal equinox 1995 Taken from a hot air balloon at the Fall Fair



Gardens and Prairie, Community and Curriculum

by Karen Gummo and
Polly Lee Knowlton Cockett,
Environment Co-coordinators

Dr. E.W. Coffin Elementary School Environmental Projects

When a small group of parents began to collaborate with a small group of teachers and administrators at Dr. E.W. Coffin elementary school, big things began to happen. In September of 1992, a \$5,000 grant was applied for and swiftly approved by Shell Canada's Environment Fund Committee. Now we had the means to transform an unsightly asphalt compound into a living, growing, outdoor classroom with a custom designed sun dial as the focal point and eight rectangular garden beds built of recycled brick radiating from it. We named this special place our Sun Circle.

The spring of 1993 was tremendously busy for our school community as we worked at one work bee after another constructing our celestial brick patio (which surrounds the sun dial, and is graced with approximately 150 named bricks, an ongoing fundraising effort to support this project), building our brick flower beds, assembling two compost bins, installing eight circular planters made of 4 foot cement piping, filling the planters and beds with gravel and then soil, searching out native plants on the hills of Edgemont with special permission from

Carma Developers, and transplanting them to our Sun Circle garden.

A special opening ceremony was held that spring to celebrate our accomplishments. Each spring since then, students, teachers, and parents have collaborated to enrich the soil in some of the beds with our compost, and choose perennial and annual crops to plant. Then they have carried out the planting, watering, and nurturing of the plants through the summer until harvest time in the fall.

The Sun Circle has become a wonderful gathering place for students and community. We have since added four sturdy picnic tables adjacent to the Sun Circle so students may sit and reflect on their outdoor learning. Now we have been successful in drawing our students and teachers and parents out of doors, for there is so much to learn outside the walls of the school. Involving the students in this project helps to make them better stewards of public property. We have gotten to know each other better by shovelling sand, soil, and compost side by side. Now we are ready to reach a little farther away from the school building to another worthwhile project... Whispering Woods!

We at Dr. Coffin are also fortunate to have a natural area just beyond the school's boundary fence. Downsloping westward and opening out is one of the most stunning mountain views in Calgary for our children, families, and the community to enjoy. More than for enjoyment, it is now ours to care for. In early 1995, Dr. Coffin School applied to adopt this area through the city's Adopt-A-Park program.

Having been given the go-ahead, the next step was to name our park. The school's Environment

Committee, composed of parents, teachers, and staff (originally struck to develop our Sun Circle), initiated a park naming contest involving student research into the cultural and natural history of the area. We received approximately 150 submissions from the children, from which we chose six favorites. The name chosen was "Whispering Woods" [submitted by Shanna Daly]. Immediately this name entered the children's common vocabulary. We then sought official acceptance of this name by the City of Calgary, and indeed it has been approved by City Council. We were able to sign the paperwork, officially adopting Whispering Woods as our park, just in time for our Fall Fair Fund-raiser last September [1995]. A highlight of the fair was our Park Naming and Adoption Ceremony. With music, poetry, dance, stories, and student-led tours, we scattered native seeds and cast droplets of water symbolizing the initiation of our care for our park.

Now we are going ahead with our plans, ideas, and dreams. We have plans for a park sign, and an information center. We have ideas for an interpretive pathway, utilizing existing 'desire lines.' We have dreams for a gathering place: a focal point for our outdoor classroom. We have teachers running an Environment Club for our students. All of the teachers have had their classes involved in insect studies within the park, led by a local entomologist. There are ideas for the children to map the park with homemade surveying equipment; dreams for the children to produce a calendar based on their observations in

Whispering Woods, and one day perhaps, a book! There are numerous possibilities to join the school curriculum with studies within our park, and not just in plant and animal science. Our little patch of native prairie is perfect for addressing much of the new Science Curriculum, as well as being a natural springboard for studying pioneers, native plains cultures, early man, and the glacial shaping of the Calgary landscape.

Thus together our school community of students, teachers, staff, and parents has brought to life something from nothing in our celestial gardens, and has cultivated an awareness of a hitherto underappreciated something in our natural area within arm's reach of the school. We are excited about furthering our school ground naturalization projects, continuing to nourish our environment and learning from the many facets it has to offer. We recommend any project, however small or modest a budget, which provides experiential outdoor learning. Throughout the seasons, you're sure to find there continues to be far more potential to outdoor learning than first meets the eye. Come visit us at our Sun Circle and in Whispering Woods!

Published in the *Calgary Community Home and School Association Newsletter* February 1996

Sun Circle

Bricks, More Bricks, and Yet More Bricks

Friday, 27 May 1993: And so it begins.



The bricks for the central circle arrive, and the transformation begins

Margaret Leland marks the center of the Sun Circle with a spike



Karen Gummo and Kathy Fedori team up in setting the first ring of bricks



Sweeping sand into the growing circles of bricks

Chapter 6

Over 110 hours of time completed the first stage of the project that first night.

The Saturday was rained out, and work continued on Sunday, 29th May.

Craig Herbert (age 7 during construction of the Sun Circle) said with pride:

"Most people have to buy their Sun Circles, but we're making ours."

Saturday and Sunday, 5 & 6 June 1993: Work begins on the brick planters. The cement planters are delivered and moved into place.



The bricks for the planters arrive from Weymouth Demolition. They are reclaimed bricks, originally from the Missionary School at Cluny, on the Blackfoot Reserve



Men at work



Students helping with wagon transport of bricks



Children, parents, and staff worked late, late into the night to complete the first circles of bricks that would become the focus of the Sun Circle. Rain threatens in the northwestern sky



Students helping with sand shoveling

Surrounded by bricks as planter construction progresses



Laying out the first rectangular planter

Sun Circle Bricks

by Margaret Leland

*New bricks... Old bricks,
Bricks with a past, a history
New bricks given for our circle
to create, remember, name, encircle.
Many hands, many hours, much laughter, much work
Much sand, much sun, much rain.
Hours too many to count.
Brick by brick a design, a place
moving off and then back on
Bricks that took form
round and round and round
into rectangles rising and signing the north...
Directions that hold for us
growth for us now.
Circling a timepiece
a marker that guides
Bricks that support us and teach us,
Bricks that remind us; our learning grows on.
Bricks now with our story,
Bricks now hold our history.
Sun Circle bricks.*



Margaret Leland within the bricks

Tracking the Sun

Our sundial was created and designed especially for our school by two local artisans, Perry Lang and Jennifer LeBlond of Anvil Island Forge. The sundial is a focal point for discussion within the Sun Circle. It is in a location where it can receive sun all day, and is particularly appropriate for Calgary with its many clear days. The sundial is oriented with respect to celestial north, and will show 'apparent time,' coinciding with the mean average solar clock on four days each year: 16 April, 14 June, 2 September, and 25 December. Installation was on 14 June, and shows standardized daylight savings time.

The gnomon, perpendicular to the center of the sloping dial, represents Earth's axis, and points to Polaris, the North Star. The sloping face of the dial is parallel to Earth's equator, thus representing Calgary's latitude of 51 degrees north. An equatorial dial would be set at 39 degrees, an angle equal to the co-latitude. Horizontal and polar dials have the gnomon rising from point 0 at an angle equal to the latitude of the site

Spokes are marked at 15 degree intervals. The noon spoke points directly north; the 6 a.m. spoke points west. Students can use math skills and tables to arrive at a clock time. The hawk depicted on the upper surface indicates the side of the sundial to read when the sun is riding high in the prairie's summer sky. The ground squirrels on the base indicate the need to use the underside of the sundial, where there is a second gnomon and dial face, when the winter sun rides low in the southern sky.

Our themes expressed by the sundial and gardens are those of unity, cycles of life, and working together in harmony.

Now we have completed construction of our Sun Circle. Oddly enough, we take bricks out of it every two years. We replace the plain bricks with those engraved with names. Subsequent to the 25th Anniversary Celebration, there are now over 200 named bricks installed in the Sun Circle.

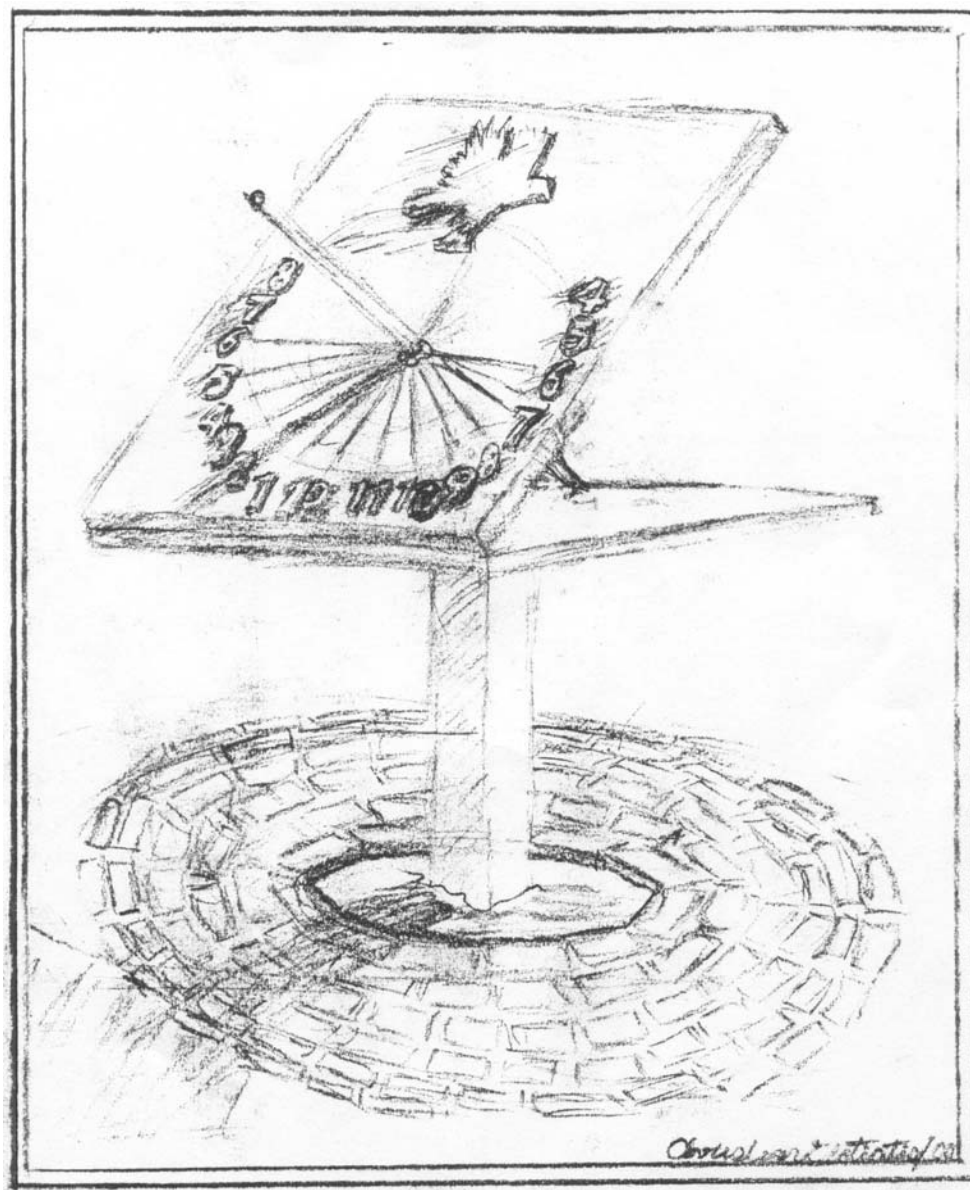
How many can you find there now?

*Perry Lang, watched by Richardson's Ground Squirrels, installs our sundial in the center of our Sun Circle
What time is it now?*



What time is it? Our sundial is cemented into place in the center of our Sun Circle





*Sundial Encircled by Bricks at 2:00 p.m.
by Christian Glatiotis, grade 6 student*

The Zen of Bricklaying

by Pam Bradley

For the past couple of years I have taken on the job of chief bricklayer for the Sun Circle, replacing plain old bricks with new engraved ones. Believe it or not, I actually find it a rather therapeutic activity. It's a peaceful solitude out there in the sunshine, on my hands and knees, scraping in the sand. That is, until the buzzer sounds to announce recess. The solitude is broken, but the students' renewed interest in the Sun Circle is a delight to see. "Our family's brick is over here." "There's my friend's brick." "That was my brother's teacher and they gave her a brick when she left." A few of the older children remember helping to build the Sun Circle back in 1993. Some of them had not even started school, but were there with their older siblings. What a time it was! Foremost in my memory is that it was an incredible hive of activity with many individuals and families pitching in to make the dream a reality. (Of course, there were also those handful of individuals who put in countless hours of work when the rest of us were not there.) At the official opening there was such a feeling of pride on the part of the students because so many had had a hand in its creation. I feel that the Sun Circle stands as a lasting symbol of that great Dr. Coffin community spirit!

Just contact the school to order your own named brick.

Named Sun Circle Bricks: June 2000

Ring 1

Andrea + Leah Macrae
Daniel + Grace Ma
Anah-Jayne Scholz
The Lockhart family
Keegan + Kyle Austin
Russ + Katrina Ward
McTaggart Family
Ron + Karen Larson
Kenna + Zane Rowe
The Schmulands
Patrick Graham
Janet Daines 84-91

Ring 2

Roger Jarrett Allard
Eva Den Haan
Sophie Den Haan
Ana + Garrett Brett
Alanna Surplus 1994
Maggie Surplus 1994
Kimberly Lemmen
Jillian Lemmen
Oliver Baxter
Don + Charlene Nelson
Dolores Ferrel
Alexander Jeffery
RDSJ Anderson
Cheri L. Hanson
Muriel D. Anderson
Matthew Tetz 88-92
Albrechtsons Family
Cheryl D. Hanson
Heidi Price
Pat Robertson

Ring 3

Russell Edworthy
Murray Olson
Joel + Jordy Ellams
David M. Johns 1993
Meghan Sired
The Firla Family
The Milne Family
Mr. + Mrs. R.S. Price
Erin K. Vaughan
Greg Brooks
Sheldon Family
Bryan Callahan
The Smistad Family
Madeleine Nixon
Jordie Nixon
Sean Goebel Year 4
Julian Walter Buck
Jordan Anderson
Sue Worrall (Sec)

Ring 4

Grayson Rowan Casey
Knowlton Cockett
Mary Hildebrandt
S.H. Shapka
Leslie + Robin Ng
The Lawrence Family
Joel Crichton
The Osadetz Family
The Wyvill Family
Appleyard's 1986-99
The Fellows Family
Shanna + Nola Daly
Duncan Shuett
Elissa Schuett
Sonia Edworthy
The Urness Clan!
Chelsey L. M. Taylor
Stephen Froese E.C.S.
Dylan + Tanner Chen
Louise Frame
Erika Janz (ESL)
Alexander J.A. Smith
Hawthorn Family
Dr Coffin Staff 92
The Gifford Family

Ring 5

Yibin Guo (Love)
Paul, Jen, Mike Love
Anna Burrowes
Amy Barbaro
The Gummo Family
M. Van De Sande
Miyagishima Family
Steven Bardwell
Ruth McMurdo
Low Family
Herberts (4)
The Rae Family
Caitlin Tanner
Joni Evans 91-93
Holden Family + Kids
Lisa + Mark Mahadeo
Sam and Rob Moore
The Moores 1982-96
Sarah-Dawn Work
The Nasim Family
Gordon Donaldson 93
Takahashi
Sandra Morrison
Natalie Sawyer
Ryan Sawyer
Drew Beausoleil

Ring 6
 Jackie Seidel
 Leslie + Robin Ng
 Shultz Family
 Michael Johnson 93
 Alyson Johnson 93
 Garrett Roberts
 Ted W. Bachman
 Don Morrison
 Valda Harris-Keyte
 Shirley Green
 Lindsay Barbaro
 Ponton McCuaig
 T. Makarchuk Family
 Margaret Becker
 Jennifer Arends
 Allison Arends
 Cathleen Kimmel
 Mandana Mosenzadgan
 Simon + Victor Wong 93
 Sowinski Kids
 Mrs. Sharon Kimmel
 Ian Burgess
 Tyler + Kevin Goudie
 Alison Kydd
 The Leland Family
 The Lore Family
 Alexandra Morrison
 Shawn Eldridge
 Kevan Eldridge
 Ryan Eldridge
 Patrick Eldridge

Ring 9
 Heidi Swanby 1996
 Madison Swanby 2001
 Nicola Swanby 2004
 Isabella M.F. Chua
 Pricilla M.J. Chua
 Michelle Mathias 90
 Elysia Mathias 2001
 The Pidkova Family
 Alexander Tanner
 Andrea Christensen
 Bonnae Anderson
 Joan Dean 1994-1999
 Caitlin Bennett
 Ethan Bennett
 Rachel Daigle
 Brittany Daigle
 Jeremie Daigle
 Sarah Johns
 Emily Johns
 The Hogg Family
 Christina Chase
 The Barham Family
 Heather Altenhof
 Gail Oxtoby 1996-98
 Irene Smith 1991-98
 Mrs. Barbara Mann 98

Ring 7
 Spencer R. Buck
 The Daigle Family
 Pendree. T. + L.
 Gaisford Family
 J. + I. Chung
 The ECS Class 92-93
 Jarrad Laird
 Erin + Kim Runnalls
 Georgia Lee-Edgar
 Mrs. Shirley Gaura
 Barbara Bannon
 Ann Trussell
 Jonathan Chui
 Dr. + Mrs. Edworthy
 Jennifer Megill
 The Weirs-1985-1996
 Guillaume Noblet
 Patricia Minor
 Katherine Larking
 Bruce Gale 1987-91
 Tamara Lynn Tanner
 Jeremy Daniel Ng 93
 Owen Kydd
 Alexander Todd
 Nicholas Todd
 Harold J Foong
 P. + T. Wardell
 C. + J. Den Haan
 Michael Maiani
 The Chivers Family

Ring 8
 Ms. L. Zapp '96
 Mrs. R. Graham '96
 Ms. P. Farwell '96
 The Raleigh Family
 Fraser Wright
 Periwynne Whittaker
 Peter Rillstone
 Zoya Lynch 1995-96
 Evens, John + Jane
 Marilyn Collins '96
 The Ostrom Family
 Geoffrey Whittaker
 David N. Hall
 Andrew J.A. Hall
 Coast 2 Coast Pizza
 Emily O'Hearn 1995
 Lauren Tanner
 The Dance Family
 Carmine Maruska
 O'Hearn Family
 David + Susan MCW

Ring 10
 Iris Chang-Korea
 Kaleb/Sabree Canuel
 Leah Schwesinger
 Elizabeth J. Diggon
 Alex Tanner
 Reed Scholz 2000
 Nicola and Mairead
 Anima Jahan Sawyer
 The Kirkland Family
 Kayleigh Szott
 C + S Henderson
 Jacqueline Jumaga
 Grannie Magnusson

Gathering Native Plants

The quest for native grasses and plants begins as parents and children gather together at the Carma Development area in Edgemont.



Digging plants



Native plant search



Parents gathering plants



Children gathering plants

Gathering Wildflowers for the Sun Circle

by Karen Gummo



*We have built our own Sun Circle.
What should we plant there?
What would grow best there?
In that sun-baked circle,
That windswept circle,
Bricks upon asphalt — no easy water there.*

*What plants could grow in our new garden?
What else but hardy natives that thrive on Nose Hill.*

*But, we can't dig up the wild ones that grow in the park!
What about the hills where they're putting up houses?
Those wild plants will die
When they plough up the land.*

*Why don't we rescue the beauties,
Bring them to our garden to be cherished and admired!*

Yes, yes!

*The prairie anemones, the three flowered avens,
The harebells, the golden beans,
The sweetgrass, the fescue,
The yarrow, the northern bedstraw,
The sage and the saskatoons.*

*Now take a peek
At the circular planters
The Northwest, the Northeast, southwest and Southeast.
Did you know? Did you know?
There are treasures that hide there,
Under the grasses that grow so very tall.*

*These are the cousins of plants on our prairie,
A wee postage stamp of what grows on Nose Hill.*



Celebration

On Thursday, 17 June 1993, the 220 elementary students launched a project cooperatively designed and built by parents, teachers, staff, and students:

THE SUN CIRCLE

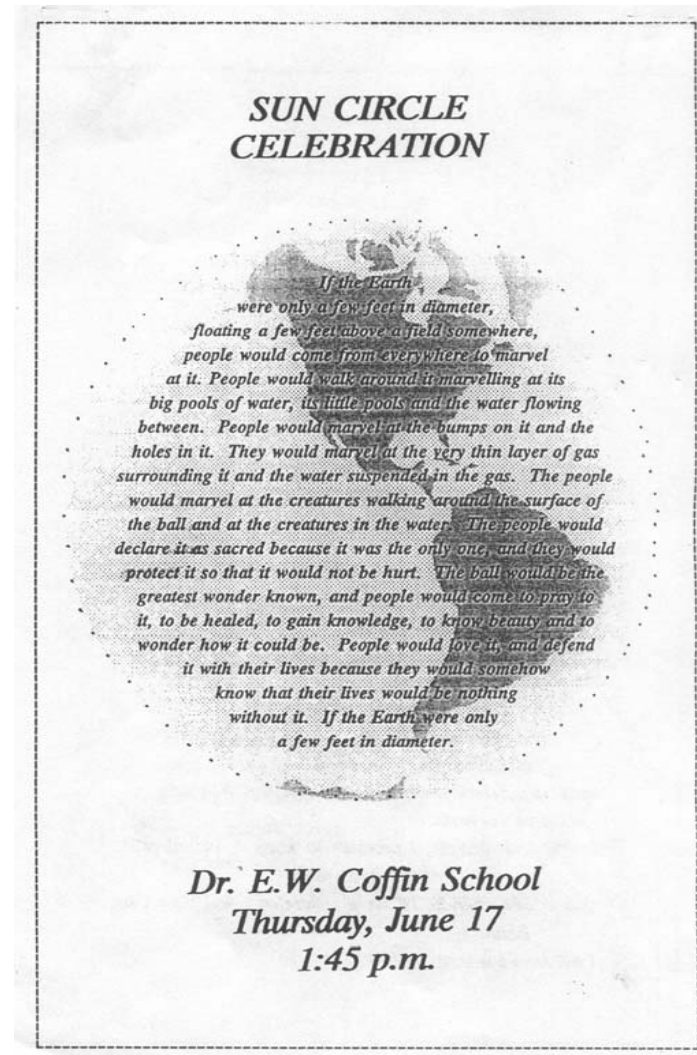
A reclaimed outdoor environment classroom

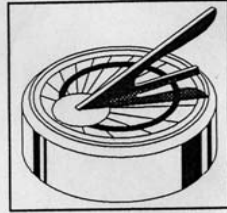
June 17th was a special day to:

Unveil a sundial created for Calgary's latitude

Sow seeds and cultivate native plants in reclaimed brick planters

Celebrate, with song and drama, the beginning of a hands-on environmental classroom





A G E N D A

1. *Oh Canada/Salute the Flag*
2. *Environmental Play - Year 3-4*
3. *Introductions & Acknowledgements*
 - Barbara Bannon, Principal, Dr. Coffin School
 - Louise Frame, Asst. Principal, Dr. Coffin School
4. *Presentation*
 - Roger Brundrit, V.P. of Exploration, Shell Canada
5. *"Circle Song"*
6. *Dedication*
 - Carol Barwick, Parent, Dr. Coffin School
7. *Unveiling of the Sundial*
8. *"Save the Earth" Song*
9. *Benediction*
 - Carol Barwick, Parent, Dr. Coffin School

* * *



Mrs. Bensler begins the music, as guests, parents, staff, and students form a circle around the Sun Circle



The celebration begins with a drama presentation

Chapter 6

Special and Honorary Guests, many of whom volunteered their time or made generous donations to our school, include:

Shell Canada: Roger Brundit, Vice-President
Anvil Island Forge: Jennifer LeBlond and Perry Lang
IXL Industries: Bob Chapman
Pro-Built construction
Calgary Board of Education; Maintenance Department
Honorable Pat Black, M.L.A.

Special thanks to the many, many families who made our dream come true!

Special recognition is extended to four women
who worked tirelessly on our behalf:

Karen Gummo
Margaret Leland
Kathy Fedori
Jeanne Sheldon



Barbara Bannon, Principal, Dr. Coffin School, was instrumental in seeing the Sun Circle Project to fruition



These grade 3 and 4 students created their own script



Although the skies looked threatening, it did not rain a drop until after the ceremony

"CIRCLE SONG"

*Clouds to the North
Clouds to the South
Wind and rain to the East and the West*

*Babies are born in the circle of the sun
in the circle of the sun on a birthin' day*



Carol Barwick, a parent, provides a beautiful dedication and benediction as she weaves together the circles and cycles of life and nature



Students singing, which appeared on television. The media coverage was extensive. We had every television station at our celebration as well as the Calgary Herald and CHQR 77 Radio

The Vice President of Shell Canada (Exploration), Roger Brundit, presents two beautifully crafted birdhouses to our school

Sundial Dedication

by Carol Barwick

*To everything there is a season
And a time for every purpose under heaven*

We gather together to celebrate a wonderful creation: our Sun Circle. In the centre of it is a sundial. The sundial was the first watch that allowed us to measure time. It is easy for us to believe that time is created by the movement of the big and little hands on our watches. But if we lose our watch or it gets broken, time still goes on. This sundial reminds us that time is measured by the changes in nature; days are created by Earth's rotation, and years by Earth's orbit around our Sun. The sundial reminds us to look up, to lift our heads, to stop looking at our toes and our watches and our technology, and consider the larger meaning of time.

Our Sun Circle shows us how closely time is connected with life around us. We can see the shadow of the day pass around the sundial. We can watch the seasons. The plants that we will plant in the planters will sprout and blossom and decay with the seasons, a living example of the cycle of time — the minutes and hours and seasons and years in our lives.

We are glad we can join together to celebrate the Sun Circle, to express how we are all part of a circle within circles: our families, our school, our communities, our city, our province, our country, our world, and our universe. Each a circle within another larger circle. And we all belong.

Many of us see time as a straight line. We start at ECS and progress straight on to grade 6. The Sioux see time differently. They believe that all of time is a circle. They believe that all of life is a circle within a circle.

The Circle of Time

by a Lakota Sioux

*The Sioux symbol is the circle, the hoop.
Nature wants all things to be round.
The bodies of human beings and animals have no corners.
With us the circle stands for togetherness
of people who sit with one another
around a campfire.
Relatives and friends united in peace
while the pipe passes from hand to hand.*

*The camp in which every tipi had its place
was also a ring.
The tipi was a ring in which people sat in a circle
and all the families in the village
were in turn circles
within a larger circle,
part of the hoop
which was the seven campfires of the Sioux,
representing one nation.
The nation was only part of the universe,
in itself circular and made of the earth,
which is round,
of the sun which is round,
and of the stars which are round.
The moon, the horizon, the rainbow-
circles within circles
with no beginning and no end
ASODA (it is good)*

The Sun Circle is a special gift we give each other. The idea was conceived and nurtured by 3 special mothers: Margaret Leland, Karen Gummo, and Kathy Fedori. They managed to infect the rest of us with their dream, their energy, and their enthusiasm. They drew us into their circle.

Their idea began like a circle, like the ripples that extend from a stone thrown in the water. They were inspired by their love of nature and their environment. They found a concrete (or rather brick) way to express their respect for nature.

They gave us not only a sundial, but also the gift of watching an idea take form and become real.

They have shown us that dreams and feelings and beauty are also part of the circle. They have given us a common goal to work together toward. And we thank them.

And now comes the time to share our gift with each other and the world.

Let us join our hands in a circle of friendship and turn our eyes to the centre of the circle, to lift the covering from the sundial.



The Unveiling. A vibrant parachute flies as the children and special guests unveil the sundial, a symbol of how the earth thrives in its cycles of time

In a circle, it is very difficult to tell the beginning from the end. T.S. Eliot wrote: what we call the beginning of something is in fact the end and the end of each thing is a new beginning. As we leave the circle, we leave behind the memories of exploring and developing and planning and work. Yet this is also the beginning of something new. We look forward to the future, to watching the changes that mark the passage of time. We look forward to the learning opportunities within the circle of our school and community and the world.

There are some ECS students who will be coming to begin school in September. There are grade 6 students who will be leaving us this year. They will be ending their time in Dr. Coffin and beginning a whole new circle in junior high. They will be the first class for whom the Sun Circle can connect them with their past as beginning learners to their future as growing learners. We wish them well as they enter their new circle. May the sunshine of our memories and experiences warm us as we each journey on the circles of our lives.



Students plant symbolic plants in each planter



"KIDS FOR SAVING EARTH PROMISE SONG"

*The Earth is my home,
I promise to keep it healthy and beautiful.
I will love the land, the air, the water, and all living
creatures.
I will be a defender of my planet, united with friends.
I will save the earth.
United with friends, I promise to keep it, united with
friends, I will love the land.
United with friends, I'll be a defender, I will save the
Earth.
I will save the earth.*

Kids unveil sundial project

Elementary students help transform concrete patch into special circle

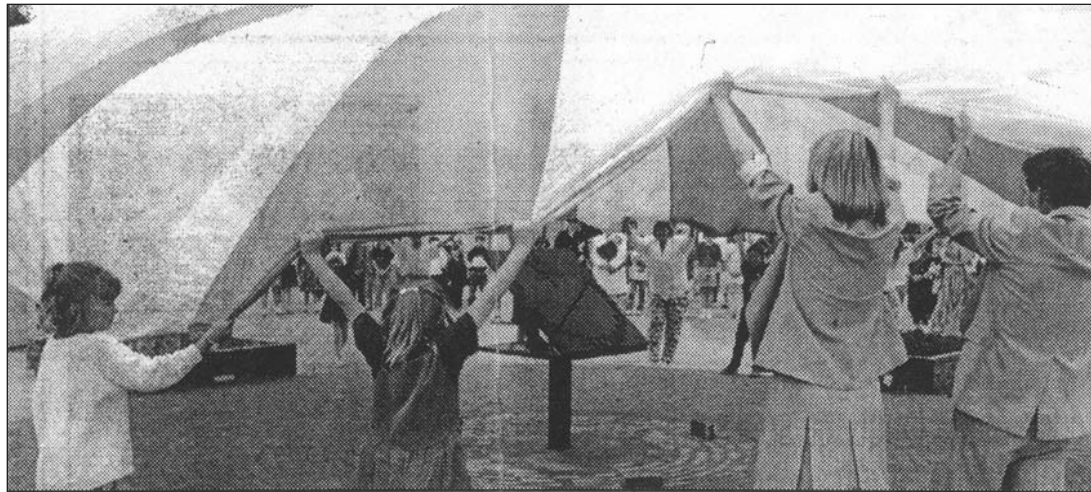
By Chris Knight

Students at Dr. E.W. Coffin elementary school in north-west Calgary unveiled their new school project Thursday. Or maybe un-parachuted would be a better term.

The Sun Circle sundial sat shrouded by a green and white parachute behind the school, in what had once been an unused patch of concrete.

The area was transformed by parents, corporate sponsors and the children into the Sun Circle, a round brick platform surrounded by planters made from old bricks and sewer pipes, with the sundial in the center. The Shell environmental fund donated \$5,000 to the project, and the bricks came from IXL Industries.

The children gathered around the circle, sang songs and performed a short play about the environment before the sundial was revealed.



TIME FOR A CHANGE: Children gathered to sing songs or just think about the environment

The school plans to hold activities in the circle, including environmental art classes, planting seedlings and studying local plants and insects.

Liz Pritchard, in Grade 6 at the school, helped build the platform.

"The earth is important," she said. "You don't build this for nothing."

Grade 2 student Lorian Glatiotis was philosophical. "You can go there and enjoy the meaning of life," she said. The sundial, made mostly of recycled steel, was designed by the students and by Jennifer Lablond and Perry Lang of Anvil Island Forge. It depicts a hawk and several gophers, and was designed to show the correct time at

Calgary's latitude. However, it doesn't use Roman numerals like most sundials. Kathy Fedori, a member of the parent council, explained why.

"The children don't learn Roman numerals until the fourth grade."

Article from The Calgary Herald

Tending and Tidying, Harvesting and Hopping

Now we can enjoy our Sun Circle, and care for it, and celebrate within it. Every year and every season it looks different, as we try new things, as some plants succeed and others give in to the sunbaked, windswept conditions. But always there is growth; always there is new life as spring returns. Always we can celebrate the continuing cycles and circles of life.



Investigating spring wildflowers in the NE planter



Time for a game of cats cradle



Posing with potatoes and petunias



Potato heads (L-R)-Natalie Sawyer, Cheryl Turner, Oliver Baxter, Tracy Kechnie, Patricia Minor, Heather Gummo at the Dr. E.W. Coffin School harvest fair

*The first of several Fall Fairs, in celebration and support for Dr. Coffin School
Article from The Calgary Herald*

Fall harvest celebration

Potato creatures and pumpkin eaters joined 200 Dr. E.W. Coffin Elementary School students' fall fair to celebrate fall harvest.

A fundraising event was also put together for the school's Sun Circle environmental outdoor learning centre. the centre has been designed by stu-

dents and teachers.

"The reason for this fair was to celebrate harvest and bring students more in tune with nature," said Kathy Fedori who spearheaded a \$5,000 grant proposal for the project from Shell Canada.

The Sun Circle consisted of a sundial and planters with

benches, bird houses and a compost bin to come.

School kids and their parents planted, watered and weeded potatoes all summer to have something to sell this fall.

They also had 200 pumpkins brought in from Medicine Hat to sell. They hope to raise \$2,000 for the project.

Articles from The Calgary Herald

Pumpkin Pals



Students of the Dr. E.W. Coffin Elementary School got in the Halloween spirit a little earlier than most with their harvest fest, Oct. 21. Students grew and sold potatoes and 200 pumpkins brought in from Medicine Hat as a fundraiser for their Sun Circle Learning Centre.

Hop, hop, hop



Lorian Glatiotis and Paul Lapidis in a sack race at Dr. E.W. Coffin Elementary School

City & Life



SPEEDY SACKS: *Students at Dr. E.W. Coffin Elementary in northwest Calgary race for the finish line during a fall fair sack race Thursday. Youngsters also held a pumpkin sale and enjoyed plenty of cotton candy.*

Article from The Calgary Herald



*Karen Gummo, parent,
digging with students*



*Thinning out the sage
in the North planter*



*Polly Knowlton Cockett, parent,
consulting, with a broom*



Autumn watering



*A sweeping brigade
What time is it?*



*Three picnic tables were installed just outside the old
north foundation wall*



*Edible plants are often featured: nasturtium, onion, sage, tarragon, basil, rhubarb,
raspberries, strawberries, carrots, radishes, potatoes, and sunflowers, to name a few*



*Not forgetting the corners and edges
What season is it?*