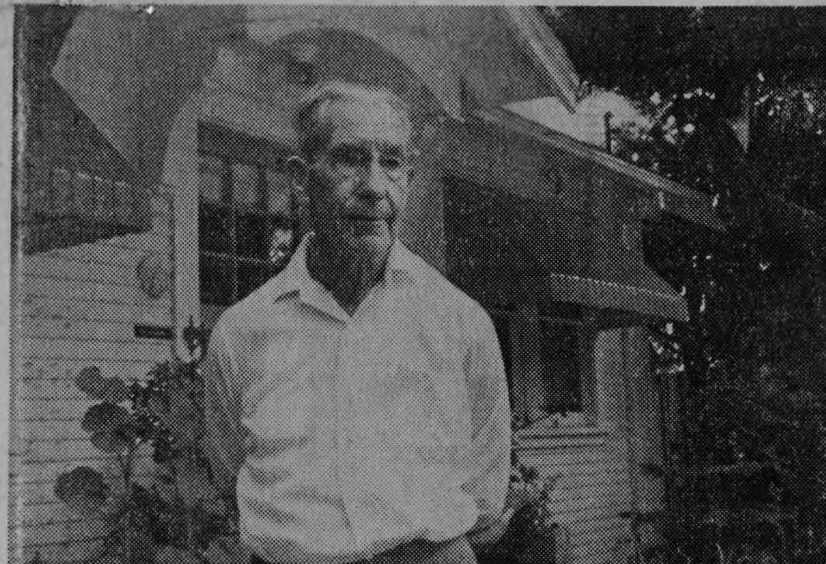


# Alumni celebrate a rural past



Times Tribune photo

Former principal Roy Liddicoat will be the special guest at a reunion of Ravenswood Grammar School alumni who attended the school between 1919 and 1945.

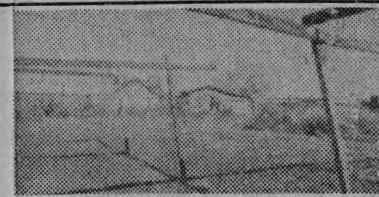
By Jane Ayres  
Special to the Times Tribune

In 1919, the Ravenswood Grammar School opened its doors to the country children of the chicken ranches, vegetable farms and berry fields of East Palo Alto.

Charles Weeks, the charismatic founder of the agricultural utopia he named Runnymede, gave the 3-acre parcel of land to the community when the one-room schoolhouse on Oak Street in North Palo Alto burst its seams from the crowds of students.

Several conditions were attached to the deed. First, the land

A two-part series on "Rural Roots: Runnymede and the beginnings of East Palo Alto" begins today in Living.



had to be used for school purposes, and the district had to bond for \$20,000 to build a school. Then, construction of a schoolhouse had to be completed within eight months of bond issue. The school building had to contain an assembly hall for public use.

Weeks also wished to have part

of the land used for training children and others in soil cultivation, gardening, poultry raising and kindred subjects.

In 1919, with all conditions met, the new school at the corner of Euclid and Donohoe streets opened its doors. The poultry colony and utopian ideas of Charles Weeks died

out during the Depression, but the Ravenswood Grammar School continued until 1948.

Next Sunday at 2 p.m., a reunion of students who attended the grammar school from 1919 through 1945 will be held at the Palo Alto Elks Club, 4249 El Camino Real. A special guest at the reunion will be Roy Liddicoat, principal of Ravenswood Grammar School from 1925 to 1945. Now 83, he lives in Menlo Park.

Weeks had left East Palo Alto by the time Liddicoat became the principal, but he could not have

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## SCHOOL

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chosen a better educator for the young people of the Runnymede colony. Liddicoat was an enormously popular teacher whose students remember him with affection.

Marjorie Wiley Jones, one of the organizers of the reunion, said, "Mr. Liddicoat meant a lot to us. He did everything. He was the principal, he taught eighth grade — everybody had him in eighth grade."

Helen Falk Twichell, also on the Ravenswood reunion committee, added, "Roy Liddicoat is the reason many people are coming. One man told me, 'Mr. Liddicoat practically raised us after my father died.'"

Twichell chuckled, "But some of the men students say, 'Tell him to leave his belt at home.'"

The idea for the Ravenswood Grammar School reunion started in March at a Sequoia High School reunion.

"There were so many people there from the Ravenswood school that we decided to have a reunion of our own," Twichell said.

"Of the 300 people who went to Ravenswood Grammar School, about 80 percent are still in the area," Young said. "But we have received reservations from Texas, Florida and Switzerland."

Twichell, Young and Marquita Amaral Metteauer, who make up the reunion committee, all graduated from Ravenswood Grammar School in 1938.

"When we were growing up, it was the depths of the Depression," Young recalled. "In 1930, it was really bad. We were out there in no man's land, without even a streetcar. I remember walking all the way from our house on Runnymede between Clark and Pulgas to a 10-cent Mickey Mouse matinee at the Varsity Theater."