

**Class of 1961  
Palmer Elementary School  
By  
David Patton  
Palmer Town Historian**

**Back Home**

If I had the power to turn back the clock,  
Go back to that house at the end of the block-  
House that was "home" when I was a kid,  
I know that I'd love it more now than I did.

If I could be back there at my mother's knee,  
And hear once again all the things she told me,  
I'd listen as I never listened before,  
For she knew so well just what life had in store.

And all the advice that my dad used to give-  
His voice I'll remember as long as I live;  
But it didn't seem really important then;  
What I'd give to live it all over again.

And what I would give for the chance I once had  
To do so much more for my mother and dad;  
To give them more joy and a little less pain;  
A little more sunshine – a little less rain.

But the years roll on and we cannot go back  
Whether we were born in a mansion or shack;  
But we can start right now – In the hour that's here,  
To do something more for the ones we hold dear.

And since time in its flight is traveling so fast,  
Let's not spend it regretting that which is past;  
But let's make tomorrow a happier day  
By doing our "Good unto others" ---Today.

Author Unknown

**Class Roll**

Don Boyd  
Ann Braden  
June Britton  
Jimmy Carpenter

Linda Layne  
Danny McCullough  
Johnny McDonald  
Sandra Morrison

Glenn Cleek  
Annetta Coffelt  
Joan Crabtree  
David Creighton  
Betty Fults  
Sharon Garner  
Judy Gholston  
Gail Green  
Sue Hammers  
Rush Hampton  
Bonnie Henry  
Jerry Kilgore  
Donna Rose Landon

Wanda Partin  
David Patton  
Wanda Patton  
Larry Pocus  
Delia Rogers  
Doris Sanders  
Carolyn Scissom  
Roger Scissom  
Tony Summers  
Phyllis Tate  
Bobby Turner  
Dennis Wideman

### **Class Officers**

President--- Carolyn Scissom  
Vice-President--- Doris Sanders  
Secretary---Sharon Garner  
Treasurer---David Creighton  
Reporter---Judy Gholston

### **Class Honors**

Valedictorian---Donna Rose Landon  
Salutatorian---Carolyn Scissom  
Most Popular Student---Bobby Turner  
Class Colors---Purple and White

### **Graduation Exercises**

Monday, May 8, 1961, 7:00 P.M.

Ushers (From Seventh Grade)

Danny Creighton  
Beverly Flynn  
Allen Garner  
Sheila Henry

James Jacks  
Suzanne London  
Robena Smith  
Dwight Tate

**Processional** –“Largo” Mrs. Everett B. Roberts, Sr.

**Invocation** – Rev. Roy Partin, Pastor of Palmer United Methodist Church

**Salutatory** – Carolyn Scissom

**Presentation of Class Colors** –Ushers

**Parting Charge to the Seventh Grade**—Wanda Partin

**Reading of Class Will** – Bobby Turner

**Special Song – “A Perfect Day”** Sharon Garner, June Britton, Doris Sanders, Wanda Patton, Rush Hampton, Dennis Wideman

**Valedictory** – Donna Rose Landon

**Awarding of Roberts Medal** --- Suzanne London to Valedictorian Donna Rose Landon

**Presentation of Class** --- Mr. A. J. Layne, (Principal and Eighth Grade Teacher)

**Awarding of Promotion Certificates** – Mr. Glenn Bonner (Superintendent of Grundy County Schools)

**Class Song** – Eighth Grade Class

**Awarding Attendance Certificates** --- Mr. Albert Nunley (Palmer’s Member of the Grundy County School Board)

**Benediction** – Rev. Roy Partin

**Recessional** – “Largo” Mrs. Everett B. Roberts, Sr.

Class members that have passed away include: Ann Braden, Jimmy Carpenter, Annetta Coffelt, David Creighton, Judy Gholston, Jerry Kilgore, Linda Layne, Wanda Partin, and Bobby Turner. Danny McCullough, David Patton, Larry Pocus, Carolyn Scissom and Dennis Wideman are the only ones still living in Palmer. Larry still lives in the home he lived in when we graduated.

“Like sand through the hourglass, so goes the days of our lives.” How true that is, and it doesn’t seem possible that 50 years have passed since we hit the stage to receive our diplomas on that Monday night of May 8, 1961. Linking the past with the present, the old school and the very same auditorium and stage are still there to welcome another graduating class in May 2011.

Just a few months before graduating, we sat in the Eighth Grade classroom and watched on a little portable TV with Rabbit Ears as a new President was sworn in on a bitterly cold January day in Washington, D.C.

In November 1960, Senator John f. Kennedy became the first Roman Catholic elected President despite much opposition in Grundy County and across America because of his religion. It was said that if elected he would have to take orders from the Pope, and one woman still living in Palmer remembers a group of men from her father’s church coming to his home trying to talk him out of voting for Kennedy because he was a Catholic. That combat veteran of World War I, Scott Cannon, stood his ground and voted his conscience.

The “Space Race” between the United States and the Soviet Union (Russia) was a defining moment of that era and some thought that mankind was trying to play God, that God ruled the universe and would never allow men to venture to places like the moon.

In one of the great inaugural addresses in American history, President Kennedy vowed to promote the cause of freedom around the world and promised that before the end of the decade the United States would land a man on the moon. He challenged every American with these stirring words: “Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country.”

Palmer School has stood as a witness to history many times, and now the graduating class of 2011 will hit the auditorium stage as another barrier has crumbled, with President Barack Obama as the first black man to become America's leader.

What changes will the Class of 2061 see? Surely, it won't take that long for the first woman to be elected President. The old school and I will be watching and wondering about the road ahead and what lies around the next bend.

Sincere thanks to Donna Landon Lovelace, Secretary of the Grundy County Historical Society, for her assistance in bringing you this story.