

# Bidding farewell to Glenside Elementary

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The lobby of Glenside Elementary School was packed with former students who came to say farewell to their alma mater June 23.

The goodbye ceremony was for the building, which stood for more than half a century, where generations of students got their academic beginning.

"Both of my children went here. I brought my grandson with us so we could get pictures and he could see where his daddy went to school," said Dollie Leeds of Glenside.

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Kathy Hawkins, left, has a good laugh when she finds a picture of a relative in a Glenside Elementary School yearbook. With her are her daughter, Alison Hawkins, right, and Sarah Keeny.

# Community bids farewell to Glenside Elementary

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The ceremony was a reunion of sorts for the many years of Glenside graduates, with bulletin boards of class pictures filling the school gymnasium.

Gwen Punchard, a graduate of the first class at Glenside, stood in front of her first-grade picture, naming each member of the class.

"We came here from the old school. It was like state of the art when we got here. We loved it. The kindergarten rooms had fireplaces. It's homey," Punchard said.

Alumni reflected on their memories of the school, while running into former classmates they hadn't seen in years. They gathered around the class pictures and took pictures of their own to remember the school. For those without cameras, prints of a pastel portrait done of the school by a local artist were for sale.

The 53-year-old building is not long for this world, as plans to tear it down and build a new school in its place are under way. According to Glenside teacher Cindy Goldberg, the new building should be open in about two years.

Reflecting on the change, Principal Bruce Williams said, "We're happy about the plans for the new building that will serve the community for many years to come. But it's certainly not easy to say goodbye to this building, built in 1956, and has been part of the community



Glenside Elementary is set to be torn down.

ever since."

A picture of the tree planting that took place on the school's first Arbor Day hung on a wall of the gymnasium. Leeds and her husband were part of that event.

"My husband Chuck is a horticulturist. He brought the trees to plant, these little trees. Now they're 50 feet tall," Leeds said.

Some who were not as far removed from Glenside still came to the event. Sean Sweeney, 26, still goes to the school to vote on Election Day. However, he came to the goodbye event to see former teachers and classmates.

"I loved it here. It's such a great community, with lots of great people. I have a lot of memories from this place," Sweeney said.

"It looks exactly the same as I remember it."



Visitors wander the halls of Glenside Elementary School.

Teacher Angela Schell suddenly finds herself at a loss for words as she tries to write a farewell message.



Former students Jemma Kuhl, right, and Josie Baldwin, and Art Drescher, whose sons went to the school, look at memorabilia in the lobby of Glenside Elementary School.



Teacher Cindy Goldberg, who organized the event, makes some comments before handing the microphone over to Principal Bruce Williams.



Susan Boner, speaking to the crowd, entered second grade at the school when it was built in 1956, and is leaving the school as a second grade teacher.



Current and former teachers get together at the final walk-through of Glenside Elementary School.



Dahlia Laban, a former student, and her father, Terry Laban, leave farewell messages.

Photos by **Bob Raines**