

BARBARA FREEMAN

o John Eaton Teacher since 1966

I began teaching at John Eaton in September 1966, so I've been here 17 years. I have found working with the boys and girls, their parents, and the staff a delightful experience.... very rewarding.

When I first came here there were about as many parents in the building each day as there were children. You could depend on parents coming in on a regular basis. But as the years have passed, mothers have gone to work, and they have stopped coming. There were a few fathers. Just as it is today, there were not as many fathers as mothers. They were here for many reasons. At that time, we didn't have a librarian, so the parents manned the library. They also worked as tutors with the students, held classes when the teacher was away for a short time, and taught art. Whatever, they were here to help us. Teachers had one hour for lunch because parents came to supervise the lunch period.

My first year, my classroom was the old library, the hallway that used to connect the two sides of the building on the second floor. That was quite an experience, because while I was having class with a combination of first-second grade, parents, who brought their babies with them when working in the school, would roll their buggies through that hallway.

Most of the children who came to this school were children who lived in the neighborhood. However, we went through a period of time when there was overcrowding in the schools in southeast Washington. Some of the children from Turner School were bussed over here. Those children stayed with us about six years. After they built new schools over there, bussing was no longer necessary. Our population dropped. We had fewer children. But now it's on the rise again. We have more children coming from out of area now than we had.

The teaching is different than it was seventeen years ago because we have the curriculum guides (Competency Based Curriculum) to tell us what to teach and when to teach it. When I first came here that was not true. We taught much of the same things, but it was a lot more fun when I had more flexibility.