Who was Robert Hodge Down?

(Information obtained and written by Mr. Anderson’s Fourth Grade Class in 1993)

Robert Hodge Down was born on January 26, 1882, in New Idria in the county of San Benito, California. When Robert was 12, he moved to the county of San Jose, where he obtained his early education from the San Jose Grammar School and San Jose High School. Mr. Down obtained a degree from Stanford University and later took graduate courses at Stanford and UCLA.

Robert Down’s first teaching position was at the Mount Jackson School in Sonoma County, where he taught all eight grades. In 1904, he moved to New Almaden, California to teach at the Hacienda Public School. He was paid $65 per month. Then, Mr. Down moved to Los Gatos, where he obtained his first job as a principal.

Robert Down was tall, slender, and dark-haired, and he has a “fierce, black moustache” which he shaved off when he became principal. Some people called Mr. Down, “Fuzzy” but after he shaved his moustache, his nickname was “Bobby”.

Robert Down was principal of the Pacific Grove Grammar School from 1914-1945. Mr. Down died on March 9, 1952. People started referring to our school as “Robert Down School” and it has stuck to this day.

At Robert Down School, it is the people (the staff, students, and families) which make us so special. It seems fitting that we should be named after one good person who gave so much to our school. Thank you, Mr. Down!