

The

Slate

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Spring 2016



Cook School: Heart of the Community

Grosse Pointe Woods

By Rochelle Balkam

The 2016 Michigan One-room School Association conference will be a departure from those of previous years. Three sites will be highlighted: Cook School, the Provencal-Weir House and the home of Edsel and Eleanor Ford.

The Cook School will be the centerpiece

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President's Column

By Tom M Johnson

When I decided that I would write a review of the book, "Rural Schools of Eaton County" by the Eaton County Historical Commission, a 350 page tome, as the Chair's Column I thought I would do it as I would have in high school. Back then I would have read the first few pages, the last pages and skipped through it, reading a page here and there. For certain books I would buy a classic comic to get the gist of the story.

I started in and after reading the first four or five pages and learning several things, I decided to continue reading. I ended up reading the whole book! It is a wonderful resource for people interested in one room school houses. I learned a great deal.

A group of volunteers worked together to create this book. All 226 schools that existed in Eaton County are identified and a summary of any available information on them is included. Having had experience putting together information like this, I celebrate these individuals who gathered a massive amount of information and made

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Cook School

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of the conference. Fractional District # 9 opened in 1890. Within ten years, the population had expanded from 60 to 75 students, thus a 10 foot extension was added. In 1922, the school system was consolidated into the Grosse Pointe Agricultural District # 1, thereby closing the school. Over the years the building served in many capacities; several church congregations, private residences, a music studio and a business facility. In late 2006, the carefully preserved school was moved to Ghesquiere Park. The restoration has been completed with attention to detail and care. It is currently used for a variety of community events.

The Provencal-Weir House (circa 1823) is believed to be the oldest residence in the community. Originally built by fur trader, Pierre Provencal, near Provencal and Lake Shore Drive. It was moved to its present location on Kerchival in the early 20th century. A hidden treasure is the schoolroom on the second floor. The original wide plank floors are still visible in the front section of the house.

The Edsel and Eleanor Ford home on the shores of Lake St. Clair was designed by Albert Kahn, inspired by the cottage architecture found in the Cotswolds in England. The magnificent estate showcases the art and design influences of Eleanor Ford. The grounds were designed by the landscape architect Jens Jensen. Mrs. Ford's generosity has created a legacy for the community.

President's Column

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it available in a very logical and interesting format.

The book is well organized. The first section contains an article about how schools were established, board business conducted and a short snort about student life. Next were the 1864 rules and regulations for the governance of public schools including 33 rules governing teachers, advisory suggestions to teachers, 16 rules governing pupils, advisory suggestions to pupils and 13 miscellaneous rules. Also included in this section was a sample of a teacher contract from 1866. This section ends with a four page essay, "Attending a One Room Country School." It brought back many pleasant memories of my time at the Chapman School in Novi Township.

The main body of the book is organized by the 16 townships in Eaton County. Each township's section contains a map with the location of every school (school buildings still standing are identified) that existed in that township, a short history of the township and any other relevant information regarding the township schools. Then each school in the township is presented with the information and photos that were obtained by the committee. Many of the photos of the schools and children are so clear that you really get a feel for the time and place. The Mason Rural School on page 195 is especially complete. Generally the schools started out as log schools, became too small and were replaced with frame structures. The state rules to establish a Standard School are outlined in this section. All of the schools were often used for other purposes, such as township or community meetings, church, Grange meetings and

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President's Column

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funerals. When available, the *eventual outcome* of each school is presented. The majority have been made into homes or businesses, some have become garages or storage buildings and others have burned. Three in the country are still being used as schools. The Strange School is the last operating one room school in Eaton County and one of only 20 in the state. Another is a private pre-school and one is an Amish school.

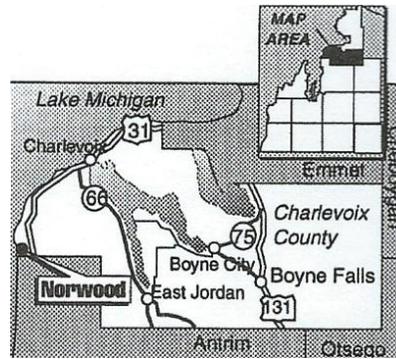
To fill a page they often used songs, verses, vignettes, famous quotes, nursery rhymes, etc. I found this to be a delightful addition. One that I particularly enjoyed was, "If you don't do wild things when you are young, you will have nothing to smile about when you are old."

The final section is a long list of those who contributed to the project and a list of their resources. This information was valuable for me in my search for information regarding The Branch School, our local school.

Finally, the book contains a DVD which has a wealth of information, oral histories, pictures, reminiscences, etc.

You can tell that I am very impressed with this book, both for the information it contains and the resources for research that are identified. I was only disappointed in one fact. Nowhere in the book could I find where a young boy on a dare, froze his tongue to the pump handle. I did and it hurts. For me, the work that this group did is truly amazing. In my opinion, for anyone with an interest in one room school houses, it is well worth the purchase price of \$25. For those interested in purchasing this book, you can call (517) 543-6999 or write to:

*Courthouse Square Museum
100 W. Lawrence
Charlotte, MI 48813*



*Norwood School,
Charlevoix Co., Norwood Michigan*

Norwood, Michigan, situated on a bluff overlooking Lake Michigan, is today a sleepy little village with century old houses and immaculate lawns.

Lying 8 mile south of Charlevoix at the mouth of Grand Traverse Bay, it was once a Native American Indian village. Norwood was important to the Indians because they found there their source of chert, a type of stone from which they made knives, arrows and spearheads. Their "chert mine" was a two mile stretch of beach where the stone is found abundantly.

In 1867 a dock and a sawmill were built there and the lumber town of Norwood had its beginnings. The first school was also established that same year, with Jasper Adams as the first teacher. The present school building, which was built in 1890, is owned by the United Methodist Church and serves as a community building.

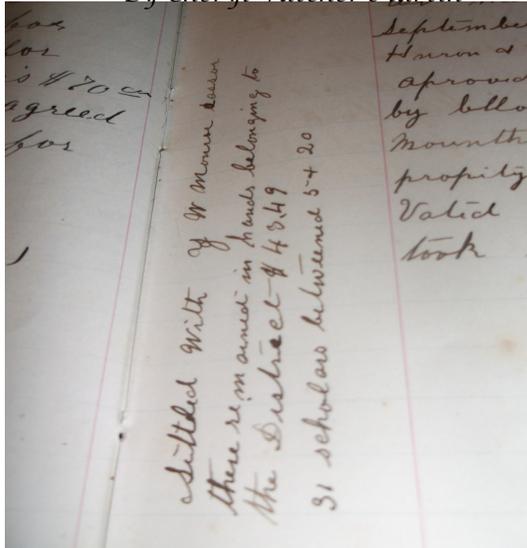
~ from Ghost Towns of Michigan, Vol. II



*Norwood School,
Charlevoix Co.,
Norwood, MI*

Ledger Recordings from the Past

By Cheryl Vatcher-Martin



Mount Pleasant Original Ledger, Photograph by Author Cheryl Vatcher Martin, M.A. 1-3-16. Sep 4 1893

As the Ledger recordings of various one room school house meetings take place during the 19th century, each entry is unique and has no set rule as how each meeting note is written, or the details contained therein. As the above pictured entry showcases, the original ledger is written on the correct side of the page, from top to bottom. Then, on the side of the ledger is this entry, as well as another similar one for the next year's entry. There are not a lot of entries like this one and the one that follows it, but, it is a part of the history of this ledger. In the records of Highway Commissioner notes from the same time period, record keeping of the legal writings and maps and other dialect is also written from top to bottom as well as on the left side of that ledger.

The margin on the right reads: *Settled with Y. W. Monroe assessor their was in hands (\$44.80) Jasper Moore, Director of school District No 5 fract Romulus Dated Sep 4 1893*

The entry that is written proceeds with these words:
At a regular school meeting held at the school house sep 4 1893 the meeting was called to order by the moderator the report of the officers was read and approved the meeting proceeded the the election of assessor, by ballot Y.W. Monroe received a majority of all the votes cast and was declared Elected Voted to have seven months school taught by a Female teacher Voted to purchase 10 cords of wood

hard 2 feet long the contract was let to Jerome Voil for one dollar & ten cents (1.10) per cord Voted to raise sixty Dollors for the benefit of the school voted to adjourn Jasper Moore Director

In 1894, The Mount Pleasant School Ledger records the following: *At a regular school meeting of school District No 5 frac of Romulus, Huron and Van Buren sep 3 the 1894, the meeting was called to order by the Moderator the report of the officers was read and approved the whole amount of money received was \$158.99 Jasper Moore was Elected Director for the term of three years Voted to have seven months school Voted to buy ten cords of wood fitted for the stove Richard Gitry took the contract at ninety eight cents per cord Jasper Moore Director. On the side margin, Settled with Y. W. Monroe assessor their was \$43.49 in his hands belonging to the District Jasper Moore Director*

One item that we should address to younger readers and students is the importance of keeping history alive for decades to come and further on into the century, and saved and recorded in some manner. In order to do this it is imperative that one learns cursive writing, and the ability to study English as it was written in the previous centuries. With the short cuts of penmanship and the onslaught of everything mechanical, the verbiage, and handwritings, and stories that can outlive us need to be preserved and appreciated by future historians and researchers. Educators should strive to at least let students know about cursive and how to study it so that they can appreciate history, and the one room school house experience.

For those interested in my historical works, both fiction and non-fiction, please contact me at Peroinc5@gmail.com, beau5522@yahoo.com. Two of Cheryl Vatcher-Martin's work include, "Haiku For You With Some One Room School House History" and my historical time travel, Time Travelers, Suzanne's Journey, with one room school house history as part of the story line. My facebook page is quite active, please stop by and check it out at Michigan One Room School Houses.



Michigan One-Room Schoolhouse Association

Spring Conference
May 21, 2016



Cook School
Grosse Pointe Woods, MI

Michigan One-Room Schoolhouse Assoc.
Spring Conference
May 21, 2016
Registration Form

(Meeting Place: Historical Commission offices in the Grosse Pointe Woods City Hall at 20025, Mack Ave., GPW. The Cook School is on the site at Ghesquiere Park)

Name(s): _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____ / _____ / _____

Daytime Phone: (____) _____

Cell: (____) _____

Registration Fee: (____) Person(s) @ \$30 ea. _____

(Includes: Coffee, lunch and trolley ride to Provencal-Weir home)

Edsel and Eleanor Ford Home tour: \$8 _____

(1/2 regular fee of \$15)

2016-17 Membership Dues: _____

Total _____

Retiree/Student: \$10
Individual: \$15
Organization: \$25
Life-Time: \$100



Please make check payable to MORSA and mail to:

Larry Schlack

2906 Woodgate Ln.

Kalamazoo, MI 49008-4815

(See lodging listing next page)

Lodging within 15
minutes of
Grosse Pointe Woods

Best Western Georgian Inn
31327 Gratiot,
Roseville, 48066
586-294-0400

Hampton Inn
33680 S. Gratiot,
Clinton Township 48035
586-792-1500

Holiday Inn Express
31900 Little Mack,
Roseville, 48066
586-285-5800

Teacher's Exam

This is the grammar section of a teacher's examination from 1886. After successfully completing all sections of the exam, the new teacher was rewarded with a teacher's certificate.

- 1) Define grammar. How is it usually divided?
- 2) Define declension and conjugation.
- 3) What is tense? Name and define the tenses.
- 4) Name the classes of pronouns. Decline a personal pronoun.
- 5) Correct the following sentences and give reasons for the corrections: Who did you sent for? They that help us we should reward.
- 6) Classify sentences according to structure and give an example of each class.
- 7) Write a sentence having for its predicate the potential, present perfect, third plural form of the verb "write."
- 8) What parts of speech admit of comparison? Compare a word from each.
- 9) Give five rules for the use of capital letters.
- 10) Write a sentence containing an adjective clause.

~from *Good Old Days Remembers the Little Country Schoolhouse*, Edited by Ken & Janice Tate, pg.69

*Schoolhouse
Stamps for Sale*

MORSA continues to offer schoolhouse stamps for sale. The most recent stamp is of the Cook School in Grosse Pointe Woods.

The cost is \$22 for a sheet of 20 stamps.

Contact Larry Schlack:

Email: lawr@net-link.net

Phone: 269-388-9136;

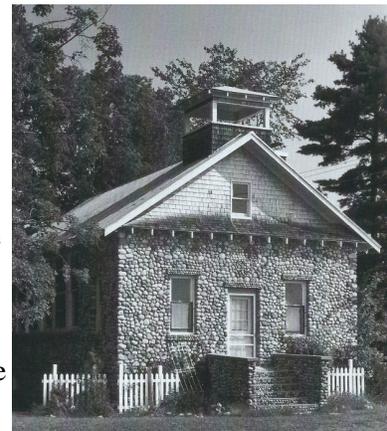
Mail:

2906 Woodgate Lane
Kalamazoo, MI 49008



**Valley School
Leelanau Co.,
MI**

“While the renovation of a schoolhouse into a private home can cause the building to lose its character, this was certainly not the case with the Valley



School on Otto Rd.

“The cobblestone building has been kept in its original condition—down to the cedar shakes and cupola. All of the stones that make up the building were originally collected from the shores of the Leelanau Peninsula, which is surrounded by the waters of Lake Michigan.”

~from *Michigan One-Room Schoolhouses*, Mary Keithan,

Red or White?

By Lucille Howe

The little country schoolhouse
Of which so many write
Was always painted red, it seems,
But mine was painted white.

There's where I learned the three big Rs,
Plus several Ps and Qs,
And miscellaneous other things
That in my life I'd use.

That tiny, old, white schoolhouse
Was replaced by another;
That one, though new and larger
Was white, like the other.

Then I started teaching school,
And, as you may have guessed,
The buildings that I taught in
Were white, just like the rest.

So, sing of your little red schoolhouse,
And of your mem'ries write;
Someday I'll write a tribute
To the schoolhouse that was white.

~from Good Old Days Remembers the Little Country Schoolhouse, Edited by Ken & Janice Tate

Michigan One-Room Schoolhouse
Association
2015/2016

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Membership Dues:

\$10 Senior (62+) or Student
\$15 Individual,
\$25 Organizations
\$100 Life

Website Address:

<<http://www.one-roomschool.org>

Michigan One-Room Schoolhouse Association
c/o Greenmead
20501 Newburgh Road
Livonia, MI 48152-1098
Att: Suzanne Daniel