

The Slate

Vol. XXX Issue 2

Fall 2022

The Chair's Column *Dr. Tom Johnson*

It has been 45 years since I gave up any semblance of patient care and entered the world of medical school administration and accreditation. During that time, I believed in the 8-10-12 rule, which is when you are an administrator after 8 years you ought to think about stepping down and at 10 years, you should just leave. And if you are still around at 12 years, they should ask you to leave. I came close when I was at the University of North Dakota from 1977 through 1988- eleven years.

I have been responsible for MORSA for 12 years, having begun in August of 2010. Now, due to my age and age-related infirmities, I must step down. I have enjoyed the past 12 years, collaborating with the outstanding members of the MORSA Board, but it is just time. I have participated in the planning of our meeting in October and will attend, but Rochelle Balkam, our Vice Chair, will be in charge. It will be up to Rochelle and

the Board to determine who is the next chair.

After writing the above, I have been thinking about why, after spending only two years (2nd and 3rd grades – eight and nine years old) at the Chapman School, I remember so much about those two years – much more than any other time spent in school. I have no explanation for it.

* * * *

Thank you Tom for all your work, enthusiasm and leadership over the last twelve years. You will be missed!

With love from The MORSA Community

* * * *

Branch School District #4 1861-1963

Williamstown

Ingham County

Tom is key to its maintenance. This picture is from 2018 when MORSA visited.



Susan Webb Will Speak on Rosenwald Schools at MORSA's Fall Conference.

by Myrna Grove

For our October 1, 2022 MORSA Conference in Allegan, Michigan, we are honored to host Susan Webb from Birmingham, Alabama, as a featured speaker. Nationally known as "America's Traveling Schoolmarm", Susan was a charter member of CSAA (Country Schoolhouse Association of America) and has served on its board of directors since 2006.

Susan enthusiastically shares her knowledge on a number of one room school-related topics. These include Noah Webster, William McGuffey, Rosenwald Schools, recitation exercises, reenactment lesson plans, and early school texts, to name a few.



For the fall conference, Susan will concentrate on Rosenwald Schools. Her program is titled, "Cast Down Your Bucket Where You Are: The Rosenwald School Legacy Begins". Between 1912 and 1932, the Rosenwald School project was responsible for construction of over 5,000 school structures in the South, primarily for the education of African American children.

Susan was first inspired by her mother who taught in a one room school. Throughout her life, Susan has lived in several areas of the country steeped in the history of country schools. Thus, she acquired a passion for the study of early American education.

With undergraduate and master's degrees in education, Susan has taught all levels, kindergarten through high school, in six states. With twenty years experience as a classroom teacher, a background in theatrical productions, and expertise in research, she has developed entertaining, unique, and informative one-room school societies, conferences, and presentations. She has given programs in sixteen states to libraries, civic groups, and historical museums.

The idea for Rosenwald Schools was developed through the shared ideals and partnership of two men, Booker T. Washington and James Rosenwald. Booker T. Washington was an educator, intellectual, and prominent African American leader. He had been principal of the first Normal School for Colored Teachers which later became Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. And, Julius Rosenwald was a German-Jewish immigrant and clothier who became part owner and president of Sears, Roebuck and Company. Rosenwald accumulated vast wealth which he generously donated to philanthropic causes.

The need for the school building project arose because Booker T. Washington wanted to confront substandard schools and chronic underfunding of public education for African American students in the South. Washington knew that education was the key to black Americans rising up from oppression. By the early 20th century, blacks had become disenfranchised as second class citizens in a system of Jim Crow laws. At the time, black children were required to attend separate, racially-segregated schools. Some black schools were just crude shacks with inferior supplies.

By 1917, Rosenwald and his family formally established the Rosenwald Fund. The school building program was its largest project. For the project, a model was set up based on matching funds to encourage the commitment and participation of local communities. Rural black communities readily raised funds, and white school boards agreed to operate and maintain the schools. Six small schools in rural Alabama were the first such schools built, and they opened in 1913 and 1914.

(continued on page 4)



Garfield School, est 1904, now at Heritage Village, Sidney, Michigan. Moved here from the northeast corner of W Almy Rd and N Amble Rd, near Howard City, Michigan

You Can go Home Again- Howard City, Michigan

By Rochelle Balkam

When the president of MORSA, Tom Johnson, sent a request in response to a plea for a program speaker at the Timothy Reynolds Hauenstein Township Library, in Howard City, I gladly accepted. I made contact with the program director, Cricket Stevenson, and a date was set.

It was a special journey for me, having been born in Lakeview, just a few miles from Howard City. Entering the library, one is welcomed by colorful displays and informative posters. The major funding for the library expansion was the result of a tragedy. The grandson of Ralph W. Hauenstein, community leader, was killed in an auto accident in 1981.

The facility hosts a wide variety of programs and on this occasion, one – room schools was the focus. Although limited in number, the audience was engaged and anxious to share their own stories. Included were two women who had been one-room school teachers and others who had attended a one-room school. In this case, as in many others, I learned from them, as they learned from me. A bonus: two new one-room schools have been added to my slide show. One is especially appropriately named: the Close School.

Membership Application/Renewal Form for 2022 Dues

_____ \$25 Member
_____ \$20 Senior or Student
_____ Donation (Thank you)
_____ **Total**

Name of Member:

Street Address:

City, State, Zip:

Phone: _____

Cell: _____

Email:

Please make check payable to MORSA
and mail to:

Jane S. Johnson, 4815 Barton Road,
Williamston, MI 48895

Dave and Bette Thompson and Dana
Kenneth Johnson, my sincere apologies
for name mess-ups in last Spring's issue
of *The Slate*. *The Editor*

Rosenwald Schools-continued from page 2

Professors at Tuskegee Institute were responsible for designing state of the art architectural plans, often with two-room designs and specific criteria. The buildings were also intended for use by the community. Altogether, \$4.7 million was given by Rosenwald, and rural communities matched it with another \$4.8 million.

This amount financed 4,977 schools, 217 teacher homes, and 163 shop buildings in 883 counties throughout 15 states across the South. This included eleven former Confederate states along with Maryland, Kentucky, Missouri, and Oklahoma. These buildings were in use until the 1950s and 1960s when school integration fully took place.

One-third of all African American children were educated in Rosenwald Schools. Research has revealed that the black children who attended the schools experienced significant improvements in school attendance, literacy skills, years of school attendance, and cognitive test scores. Some well-known alumnus of Rosenwald Schools include Civil Rights leaders Medgar Evers and Congressman John Lewis as well as writer Maya Angelou.

In 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education* that race-based segregation in schools was unconstitutional. Over time, Rosenwald Schools began to consolidate with white schools, and most structures were lost. According to the National Trust of Historic Preservation, only 500 survive today. Some have been adapted to different uses. At least 60 former Rosenwald Schools are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and they are considered to be national treasures.

Myrna Grove is a retired public school teacher in Ohio. She is on the MORSA Board and also on the CSAA board of directors. She has authored several books including "Legacy of One-Room Schools".

Allegan County Historical Society's Jewett School

You could say the Jewett School is still going strong 93 years after it closed. It continues to welcome 6000 visitors a year! Between the student groups who come and experience a taste of what it was like to go to a one-room school in the late 19th- early 20th century, and the Allegan County Fairgoers -it continues to resonate with young and old alike.

The Jewett School a white clapboard formerly known as the Brownell School, moved to the Fairgrounds' Historic Village in 1971. There it received the bell tower transferred from Millgrove School, which had also been considered for relocation to the Village but was deemed structurally unable to make the journey.

A unique feature in the classroom, found behind the blackboard when the 'new' blackboard was taken down, is a list of students' names in beautiful cursive written by the teacher on the 'old' blackboard in 1904. Also a poem you might remember, that begins,
"When the goldenrod is yellow.,
And the corn is turning brown..."

The school has many of Allegan County's teachers' pictures framed and mounted around the classroom.

This picture is from 1909, and is Lelia Boyce who taught at Babylon School in Allegan Township.



Please join us on October 1st and see this jewel, the Jewett School in Allegan!

Michigan One-Room Schoolhouse Association
William Winglar One-Room Schoolhouse of the Year Award Application

Section 1— Ownership Date _____
Schoolhouse Owner (s) Address _____
Name of School _____
Address of School _____
Nominated by/Contact Person: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____ E-mail _____

Section 2—The Schoolhouse
1. Date of construction and builder, if known: _____
2. Type of construction _____
3. Years used as a school _____
4. After closure, how was the building used?

5. Outline any structural/architectural changes from the original to present

Section 3—History of the School and its Restoration
1. Please write a short history of the schoolhouse, including any features that distinguish it from other schools. (Attach an extra sheet if necessary.)

2. Discuss the restoration of the schoolhouse and how it's used at present. Has it been moved from its original location? If so, to what location?

3. To which specific time period is the schoolhouse restored? _____
4. Please attach at least two interior and four exterior photos.
5. Is the building open to the public? Does it serve an educational function?

Please send the completed application to: Rochelle Balkam
222 Wildwood Ave.
Ann Arbor,, MI 48103
Phone: 734-668-6294
Email: Balkamhp@gmail.com

Deadline is August 31, 2022
The award will be given only to schools that have not been converted to other uses, such as homes or places of business. These criteria have been adapted with permission from the Country School Association of America. Thank you.

Iddles School Celebrates 95th Reunion
By Clare E. Adkin, Jr.



Chuck Stennett, Clare Adkin, Sally Stevens and LeRoy Hogle along with Linda (Stennett) Wauchek

It is the third Sunday in July, the traditional day for the Iddles school reunion. Since 1928 the graduates of this tiny one-room red brick country school have been meeting every summer and this year marks the 95th consecutive gathering. The youngest alum present is sixty-five and another claims to have attended the 1950 reunion.

The school began in 1859 when a yeoman farmer, Thomas Iddles, built a one-room log cabin as a school for his three children as well as children from the surrounding area. Eight years later the log cabin was replaced by a frame schoolhouse and then in 1901 by a brick building. The brick schoolhouse still stands on the south side of 109th Street three miles west of Pullman, MI. Once the pride of the surrounding community, it is crumbling and mostly reclaimed by Mother Nature.

Mary Ann (Iddles) Litts, led the organization of the first reunion, July 1928, held in front of the school named in honor of her father. A potluck meal was laid out on her son's truck bed; meal to be followed by a short program. Those in attendance, approximately 100, revel in the fellowship the event provided and immediately agreed to meet the following year. *And the rest is history.*

This year's gathering marks our 95th and is held

in reunion president Chuck Stennett's spacious barn, a setting most appropriate since Iddles has always been at the center of an agricultural community. To this day there are alumni who remember being held out of school when the farm demanded attention.

President Chuck calls the reunion to order with a few short announcements followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. LeRoy Hogle offers a blessing before all enjoy the bountiful potluck spread. As always, a few recipes are exchanged with a seasoning of happy memories. Memories are stimulated by a short questionnaire—name, years enrolled, teachers and number of family generations that attended Iddles. Most claim multiple generations; three claim four. If Sally Stevens is allowed to claim the school's builder, she can claim five!

As the dining winds down, reunion secretary Sally Stevens reviews the minutes of last year's meeting—approved. By acclamation reunion officers and reunion venue remain the same.

Clare Adkins reviews the struggle for survival as an independent district. By 1955 all Iddles graduates starting in the seventh grade were going on to high school for which the district had to pay their tuition. Tuition was going up each year along with school maintenance and teacher expenses. The Iddles district was either going to raise taxes or annex to one of the surrounding school systems, i.e. South Haven or Fennville. To annex or not was a contentious issue that had to be addressed. Ultimately, the district voted to annex to Fennville. All Iddles students who wished to apply and enroll in another school district could do so at their personal expense.

Questions and comments follow, cut short by a voice from the back, "Move to adjourn!"

"Wait! Wait! We need a group picture!"

(See page 8 for the group picture.)



Michigan One-Room Schoolhouse Association
Fall Conference
Saturday, October 1, 2022,
9:00 A.M.-3:00 P.M.
Allegan, Michigan

REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Registration Fee is \$35 and **must be received by September 17th**. It includes a Lunch Buffet prepared by the Congregational Church. The menu is baked chicken, mashed potatoes, vegetable (green beans), fruit, bread, water, coffee, hot water for tea. A vegetarian alternative will be provided, if necessary.

Please make check payable to MORSA and mail to:
Jane S. Johnson, 4815 Barton Road,
Williamston, MI 48895

Schedule for MORSA Allegan Conference October 1, 2022

9:00-9:30 Registration:
Coffee, Tea, Danish
Congregational Church 323 Cutler St.

9:30-9:40 Welcome & Introduction
Rochelle Balkam, Vice Chair

9:40-10:10 **Mark Lovett**, President
Allegan County Historical Society
Welcome

10:10-10:30 Break & Discussions

10:30-11:30 **Susan Webb**, Historian,
speaks on Rosenwald Schools

11:30-12:00 **Dave Thompson**, Co-author
of One-Room Schools of Allegan County

12:00-1:30 Sumptuous Lunch,
Schoolhouse of the Year Award, Sharing of
Conference participants on “What Brought
You Here?”, brief business meeting.

Silent auction of donated school treasures.

Afternoon **Tour of the Jewett School**,
Allegan County Fairgrounds



*L. to R. Tom Johnson, Jane Johnson,
Dave Thompson, Bette Thompson*

Optional Tour of the Allegan County Historical Society’s Old Jail and Sheriff’s Residence

113 N. Walnut Street Open until 4
(see photos page 8)

**Michigan One-Room
Schoolhouse Association**

2022 Officers:

Dr. Tom M. Johnson, Chair
Rochelle Balkam, Vice Chair
Treasurer: Jane S. Johnson

Board Members:

Kathy Brundige
Marie Charnley
Dr. Lyn Farquhar
Tamara Gady
Myrna Grove
Dr. Thomas Gwaltney
Lauren Harris
Jill Marcusse
Judy Shehigian
Claudia Throop, Consultant
Suzanne Daniel, Emeritus

The Slate Newsletter:

Jill Marcusse, Editor

Membership Dues:

\$20 Senior (62+) or Student
\$25 Member
\$25 Organizations

Website: <http://www.miorsa.org>
www.facebook.com/michiganoneroomschoolhouseassociation

*Michigan One-Room Schoolhouse Association
c/o Jane Johnson
4815 Barton Rd.
Williamston, MI 48895*



Iddles School 95th Group Picture

L-R LeRoy Hogle, Linda (Stennett) Wauchek, Earlene (Osman) Frahm, Mary Ann (Adkin) Schlack, Clare Adkin, Sherry (Flora) Grigg, Kay (Kuney) Brush, Barbara (Latchaw) Perrin, Christine (Hogle) Heyn, Dora (Ransom) Young, Sally Stevens, Rose (Ransom) Merriweather, Lu Ann (Rainey) Winfrey, Nora (Dailey) Drew, Robert Osman, Sue (Adkin) Asher, Craig Osman, Sharon (Jerue) Kuiper, Gary Flora, David Hensley, Russell Latchaw, Chuck Stennett, Dian (Schlack) Leipe, and Tim Stennett. Attending but not pictured Barbara (Van De Wiele) Criffield.

Story of their 95th Reunion on page 6

***Don't miss the MORSA Allegan
Conference on October 1st!***

*Great and varied assortment of historical
artifacts in the old Allegan Sheriff's house
and Jail!*



Judge's Bench



Jail cell