

CHERRY VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2009

Our float in the Cherry Valley July 4th parade turned out very nice thanks to all who helped to assemble it. Also, thanks to James Duncan for loaning us his jeep (used in Vietnam War) for pulling the float, Dave Doig for making all the signs for the float and jeep, and Mark Zumbragel for the use of his farm wagon.

These former service men rode on the float making it very special: Leonard B. Keller (Vietnam-army), Ron Janecek (W.W.II -navy), George Teslik (W.W.II-army), Lyle Wilt (W.W.II-air force), Glen Lewis (W.W.II-army), Ian Yehling (Desert Storm-navy), Kenney Olson (Korean war-army), and Dan Loyson (presently in service in the army in Iraq). He walked in the parade with his wife and two sons.

Our flower beds of many colors of impatiens, white alyssum, plus flower boxes of red geraniums and licorice vines were very lovely this summer in front of our museum. We received many compliments. My thanks to the village for installing a spigot in front of the museum. This helps the watering to be so much easier.

Our dear member Winton Page had suffered a stroke in the spring, and is confined to a rehabilitation center. His address is Home Bridge Center, 1701 Fifth Ave., Belvidere IL 61008. I know he would welcome visitors or a card. He is 89. The sign on the building says Biltmore which is the original name.

We held a bake sale on September 18th & 19th when Cherry Valley had their rummage sales. We had such a delicious assortment of homemade baking, and we made a very nice profit. It is always so enjoyable to get to visit with those whom we haven't seen in a while.

There were no deaths to report since the last newsletter. The 2010 calendars will be available by the end of November. They make a very nice Christmas gift. Our cemetery work is going very slow this summer. We need more volunteers.

The following information was taken from Our Memories Are Warm book: "The first C. V. School was built by settlers in 1848. It was built on the west side of the Kishwaukee River near the village's concentration of homes (N. Ulster St. now). It was known as Brown School.

By approximately 1860, the population increases dictated the need for additional classroom space in C. V. Villagers decided to erect a second school near the present site of the ball diamond on the east side of the river. Primary children started classes in the new building, which became known as White School. The intermediate and upper grade classes were held in the old Brown School across the river.

During the 1860's the C. V. settlement expanded and the area was divided into public school districts for the first time. C. V. Elementary District #112 was established. In 1868 C. V. voters authorized the board of directors to construct an \$18,000 brick school which would accommodate all the elementary grades. Principal Mary Dietz opened classes in the building's three completed rooms in September of 1869.

Miss Dietz and teachers Hattie Johnson and Mrs. Charles Center Case conducted classes for the district's nearly sixty students. The school, completed a year later, boasted a third floor auditorium and stage used for assembly programs, school activities and graduation ceremonies."

There is much more information about C. V. School in the Our Memories Are Warm book. This book sells for \$50 and makes a very nice Christmas gift.

The following stories are true that these folks experienced while attending C. V. School:

John Larson -- "Thorton Bauman and Charley Kehoe would set fire to the grass in back of the school during the noon hour so they could get out of school to put it out.

There was a large silver gong on the east stairway of the second floor leading to the third floor that the principal would ring to start classes. One noon I put a roll of caps under the hammer and school started off with a bang.

Reuben Kittle slid down the banister from the second floor and didn't get his feet up in time, and knocked the newell post off."

Judy Seiler -- "C. V. Grade School was a great memory. The 1950's were a time when moms stayed home. We were a small village and we knew the names of every family in town and all of our classmates' names. The class I remember the most was Miss Rowley's fourth grade class. She made me put my gum on my nose -- "never chew gum in her class." Some had to sit in the corner with a dunce hat on, and just a few of the boys got the wood paddle on their behind out in the hall. One thing for sure, we learned a lot in her class.

Eighth grade was fun. I think I learned a lot but I remember having a lot of fun. At lunch we would dance on the stage in the gym to the latest tunes and of course, we were getting ready to graduate.

I do remember the spelling bees we had every year. I never made it to the end, and I still can't spell, but they were a lot of fun. Do you remember the poodle skirts and rolled socks, and how about those saddle shoes? I was so glad when I went to high school and I didn't have to wear them anymore.

Our eighth grade class trip was a disaster. The boat cruise on Lake Michigan crashed into the cement pylon. No one got hurt which made our parents happy. We ended up going to the Milwaukee Zoo.

Back then school was fun. I liked school and learning new things. You didn't miss a day unless you were real sick. I didn't pull pranks like the boys did, so can't speak on that... Well, my memory is fading!!!"

Beverly Oberg: "Miss Shamberger, age 19, taught the first and second grades when I started school. I thought she was such a sweet teacher. I remember one time we made little figures out of clay, and the principal came to our room and looked at every clay figure and commented on each one.

Miss Pansy Rowley taught the third and fourth grades. She was very strict I didn't dare misbehave, as I saw the punishment she gave some, of slapping with a ruler on a hand and adhesive tape over the mouth for talking. I learned a lot from her.

And then there were the Halloween parties. We lined up and climbed the fire escape to the third floor in the dark. The lights were out, so we stumbled over and around the stationary seats in the old auditorium. Then a few more steps and down we slid on a board (placed over steps) and ended up on a mattress (I think). Then we saw the light to the new gymnasium. There we sat in circles blindfolded while someone passed around worms (cooked spaghetti), and eyeballs (peeled grapes) for us to feel and scream. Also, many other things that I can't remember anymore. And, of course, we received treats.

Mr. Paul Heck was my fifth grade teacher. The boys loved to 'get his goat'. They would throw erasers at him or anything they could get their hands on. He, in turn, threw them back. So, with all of this going on, it's a wonder we learned anything that year. Our sixth grade teacher was Mr. Horn. He was very strict and we learned a lot.

All of us kids really enjoyed the round, iron merry-go-round. We always filled it with boys and girls. Some of the boys would get it going fast and then jump on. Also, the boys loved to tease the girls by pushing it against the center post. It made such a loud clang. Everyone squealed with excitement!!

Miss Johnson taught our 7th and 8th grades. She was also the coach for the boy's Sports. She was very young, pretty, and the boys were 'sweet on her'.

Mrs. Norman LaGrande was our freshman and sophomore teacher. Very pleasant and strict. Mrs. Chloe Dailey taught our freshman and sophomore classes also. Also, she was the school's principal.

I always enjoyed school, but when it came to History, I could have done without it. Now, I'm just the opposite. I especially liked science. Even the dissecting! Algebra wasn't difficult, but if it wasn't for Mrs. Dailey, I would never have mastered Geometry. She would go over and over each theorem until everyone got it!

I enjoyed the Friday night “rec” nights in the gym. Some danced to the old 45’s, some joined in a cake walk, some shot baskets, etc., etc. There were snacks and other things to do. Also, there were “donkey basketball games” on other nights. Our folks knew where we were.

I could go on and on. It was quite an experience. We all knew each other and many lived close that we could play together after school, evenings, and on weekends. I wouldn’t trade my childhood and school experiences in Cherry Valley for anything. Wonderful memories.

Your newsletter reporter,

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