

CHERRY VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER, 2011

We have good news!! We are on the Cherry Valley Library's web site as a link. You can reach us by www.cherryvalley.lib.il.us/historicalsociety.html. Click on *research*. We also have a telephone and an answering machine -- 815-332-5200. Please keep in touch. We will be updating the link often.

Fred Johnson, who is retired, has been a great help with teaching our guys how to digitally photograph hundreds of pictures that we have of Cherry Valley. Our books include citizens, downtown, church, school, fires, mill, interurban, trains, country, and miscellaneous. They will be eventually be posted on the above site.

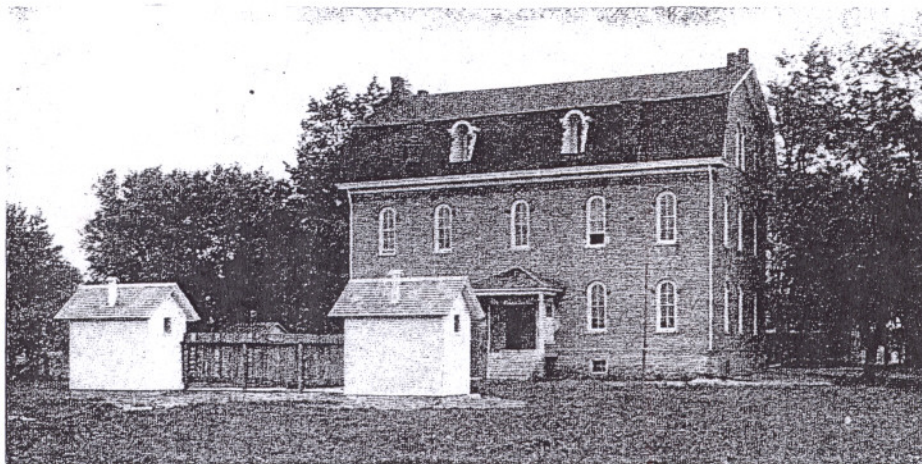
We need folks to help with many different jobs at the museum. We are always short of volunteers. Please contact us if you would be willing to give an hour or two now and then to help us. We would very much appreciate it.

Mary G. (Reagles) Mrs. Duane Nolley 82 passed away on July 12, 2011.

A Cherry Valley and Dr. Klontz story sent to us by an unknown author: "In January, 1938 while the streets of C. V. were under two feet of Kishwaukee River water, Dr. Klontz delivered me into this world. Mom & I spent the first week of my life in Swedish American Hospital. My older sister stayed with our grandma in the village that week & our father would drive his farm tractor into the village to visit her.

I went to first grade in 1943 at the very large, and imposing brick school in C. V. A second grade boy showed me around the school on my first day and gave me my first kiss! (Strange what we remember!)

I had a long walk home on a gravel road. One day a big, dark car stopped and an older man offered me a ride! I knew NOT to take rides from strangers and I told him just that! He went on his way and when I arrived home, here was that same car!! Dr. Klontz and mom had a good laugh--on me."



CHERRY VALLEY SCHOOLS: The first school, built by the settlers in 1848, was located on the west side of the Kishwaukee River near the village's concentration of homes. The building, furnished with round tables which served as desks, became known as Brown School. Some of the first teachers, who arrived early each day to fill the potbellied stove with legs, included Adeline Hall, Charlotte Hayden, Louise Hayden, Peggy Godon, and Mrs. Marshall Pritchard.

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

During the 1860's the Cherry Valley settlement expanded and the area, like the remainder of Winnebago County, was divided into public school districts for the first time. Cherry Valley Common Elementary District #112 was established and responsibility for the education of Cherry Valley youth fell upon a district board of directors elected by the voters.

In 1868 Cherry Valley voters authorized the board of directors to construct an \$18,000 brick school which would accommodate all the elementary grades. After a minimum of controversy regarding the site of the new school, the board voted to erect the building on property where the present Cherry Valley School stands. Principal Mary Dietz opened classes in the building's three completed rooms in September of 1869.

While carpenters and brick masons labored to complete the building, 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.

By the 1880's a major railroad was serving Cherry Valley, attracting many workers and prompting a decade of rapid growth. The new residents joined with the village's older families in recognizing the need for some kind of secondary instruction. School records indicate that Lillian Sandborn and Nellie Hartman were the first graduates of Cherry Valley's high school program in 1889, when O. J. Kern, who was later elected county superintendent of schools, was serving as principal. These girls probably received three years of high school training, although in later years the district's secondary program was reduced to two years and promising students were encouraged to complete high school in Rockford. High school classes at Cherry Valley were discontinued after 1941.

Early in 1950's, when classroom instruction at the school, was directed by Principal Philip Powers, the board began deliberations regarding a new school plan. A three phase building program to replace the old brick school facilities that had served the district since 1869 was chosen.

The first section of the new building was completed on the old brick school site in 1955, during Ray Melody's first year as principal. By the time the third phase of the construction project was completed in 1961, Mrs. Janice Gustafson had replaced Mr. Melody as head of the Cherry Valley Faculty.

The development of both a science laboratory and a central library began in 1964. The school year of 1969-70 was a historic one for Cherry Valley School. Mr. James Walsh, a long time highly respected principal of Rockford's East High School, became principal here. The school also became a part of the Rockford District #205. This was the last eighth grade class to graduate from the school. Cherry Valley now became a kindergarten through sixth grade school.

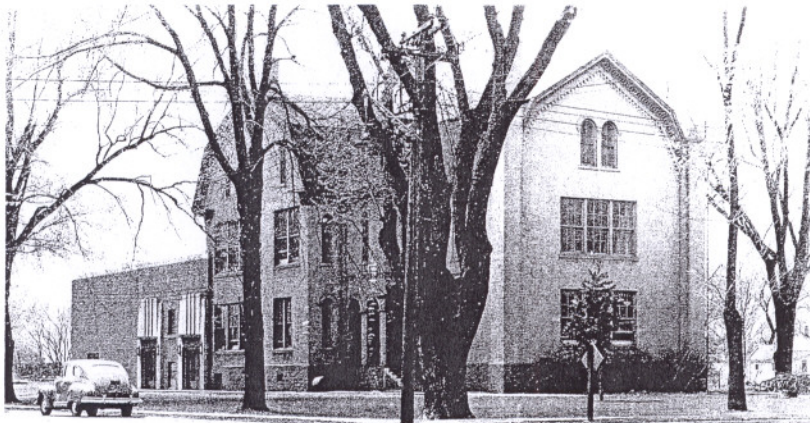
Because of moving the seventh and eighth grades to Rockford, and a decreased enrollment in other grades, Cherry Valley School had room to accommodate more pupils. In 1974, the children were brought in by bus from the overcrowded Vandercook area. The plan worked well. Under the able direction of the present principal, Mr. Jerald Norquist, and his fine staff, the groups blended together to take advantage of the high quality of education the people have come to expect of Cherry Valley School.

The above school information was taken from "Our Memories Are Warm" book. There is much more information about our school also in this book. This was published in 1976, at which time the school served more than 345 students. Today there are three fourth grades, three fifth grades, and three sixth grades in Cherry Valley School. Most of the students are bused in from many areas.

We have old school newsletters dating back to the 1930's in our museum. Also, there is one from 1926. If you would like a tour to check these out, please call the above number. Also, "Our Memories Are Warm" book has 374 pages mostly about Cherry Valley, and would make a very nice Christmas gift.

Your newsletter reporter,

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C.V. School. 1939

THE CHERRY VALLEY SCHOOL

(By Pee Wee (Ronald) Hollembeck)

In 1944, that's when I first darkened her door,
that yellow brick building that I adore.
With her high valleys and peeks,
me and my classmates the education we seek.

She was old, with an illustrious past,
with many nooks and crannies.
With walk-through cloak rooms too,
she was more like a castle to me than a school.

She reeked of learning and discipline to it didn't take long to learn the rules,
there was 10 grades when I first arrived,
but when I graduated, only 8 survived.

First grade was taught by Miss Green,
she named by Pee Wee which was fitting, so it seems.
We learned about Dick and Jane,
then went to second grade without much pain.

Mrs. Reynolds carried the learning torch throughout the year,
then it was on to third grade without much to fear.

Mrs. Roberts was a young boy's dream,
good looking like peaches and cream.
She taught us well,
and we went into fourth grade feeling swell.

Pansy Rowley, a legend in her time,
Johnny Larson and all of us learned that discipline was her line,
but she taught us well and we got along fine.

In the next three years,
(5 through 7) Gertie Wilson taught me and my peers.
She was strict and went by the book,
but you learned by hook or crook.

Philip Powers taught us through the eight,
our class trip and play were really great.
A championship basketball team was also our fate.

The old yellow school is a thing of the past,
but all great things really last.
Now I shut my eyes and let my mind slip back in time,
to that old school house of mine,
and know that life has turned out fine.