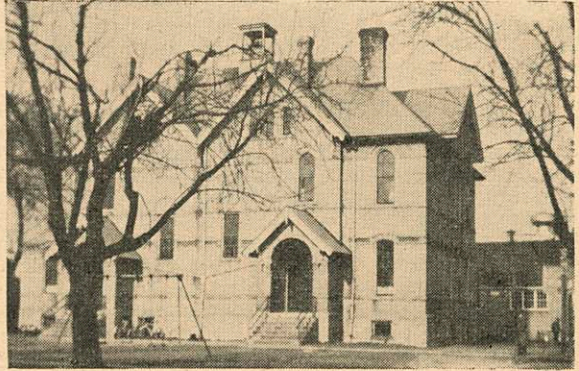


REEDSVILLE SCHOOL

Violet K. Laack

The present Reedsville grade and high school has long been known as the Reedsville public school. The original school district was formed in 1861 by order of John Cannon, town superintendent of schools of the town of Maple Grove. The new school district included areas in Maple Grove and Rockland which originally were parts of Rockland 6 and Maple Grove 3. The new district was then known as Maple Grove joint district No. 10. It remained joint district 10 until 1892 when Reedsville became an incorporated village. Then the school district was designated as Reedsville Jt. 1, embracing land in Reedsville, Rockland, and Maple Grove. In 1931, the areas outside of Reedsville village withdrew due to above average taxes and formed the new school districts of Rockland 1 and Maple Grove 5. The Reedsville village school was then designated the Reedsville school district.



Evidently the first school site was leased to the school district for it was not until July 5, 1889, that lot 13 and so much of the south end of lot 10 as lies east of so called Mud Creek in Block No. 52 was purchased. On July 8, 1891, J. E. Schultz sold to the district the S½ of lot 11, Block 52, and on Feb. 26, 1946, Herman Boettcher sold to the district the north part of lot 10, Block 52.

The first school was a frame building located on the site of the present public school. It was a long rectangular building with the usual windows on three sides. Goff Morrissey, who taught in this school, describes it as a one room structure. The school was furnished with the usual "blackboards", crude seats and desks, benches, water pail, dipper, and wood box. The heating plant consisted of a box stove. Some of the older residents remember how the boys had to saw and split the firewood. After that school had served its purpose it was remodeled and is now used as a drug store by L. A. Busse.

During the 1880's the little frame building was constantly over-crowded. Records in the county office show that in 1884 there were 128 pupils enrolled for the year. Enrollments of above 100 were common up to 1890. Because of the over-crowded conditions and because the first school was badly in need of repairs, the voters at the annual school meeting in 1890 introduced a resolution to appoint a committee composed of James Noble, Jos. Dumas, and Louis Falge to investigate the advisability of a new school building. This committee must have recommended favorably for in 1891, a new two room brick building was erected at a cost of about \$4,400. Fred Blum was the building contractor. The part built at that time was the west half of the present school. About 1903 the east half of the present four room building was erected for about \$6,000 by Emil and August Berkholtz.

After the establishment of the high school in 1916, the school was continually being remodeled in order that the increasing enrollments might be properly housed. A room in the attic was fitted up for a classroom, while the basement was partitioned off so that indoor lavatories could be installed. On March 30, 1917, a special meeting was called for the purpose of approving a loan of \$12,000 to pay for an addition to the school. The vote was 122 against, 73 votes for, and 13 votes defective. Up to 1940 the village and Legion halls were used for the school's basketball games. On May 27, 1940, a special school election was called to vote on the question of a school gymnasium and a village community hall. The vote was favorable and building construction began on August 16, 1940, and was completed December 1, 1940 at a cost of about \$22,000. The general contractor was Furton Construction Co. of Menominee, Michigan. The gymnasium is 59 x 104 feet; the auditorium proper 57 x 79; and the stage 18 x 32 feet. The building was dedicated March 21, 1941.

High school education for every eighth grade graduate was becoming a common policy after 1935. To make high school education possible for the eighth grade

graduates in the Reedsville area, a program of expansion and service was inaugurated by the district after 1943. First, bus service was offered to eighth grade graduates living outside of the Reedsville area. Then, in 1945-1946, the district realized the need of providing vocational courses for the farm and village students. The problem of providing classrooms for these added classes and instructors of vocational courses was met by voting a \$25,000 bond issue to begin the first unit of a new high and grade school building to be built around the new gym. Building plans and operations are now in the preliminary stages.

The Reedsville school was a one room school from 1861 to 1891. After the erection of the two room brick school, two teachers were employed. The first principal was Goff Morrissey while Clara Salomon was the first primary teacher. They taught the first eight grades. About 1904, when the east addition of two rooms was erected, the ninth and tenth grades were added to the course. The three teachers then employed were Prin. O. J. Falge, Zeralda Buerstatte, and Winifred Meany. Four teachers for the ten grades were employed by 1906. The 11th grade was added in 1915, and the 12th grade in 1916. The first high school class graduated in 1918 with B. A. Delaney as principal. At present the faculty consists of a principal, five high school, and one grade teacher. Only one grade teacher has been employed since 1943.

There is no record of the enrollment in the first school before 1871, but by that year 78 pupils were enrolled for the summer and winter sessions. By 1884 there were 128 pupils attending, but then the enrollment decreased, so that by 1890 only 95 pupils were enrolled. Reedsville must have had an influx of settlers for by 1893 the village clerk's report to the county superintendent listed 145 pupils in school. Thereafter the enrollment fluctuated between 100 and 140 yearly until 1906 when four teachers were employed. By 1908 there were no parochial schools. Today the two parochial schools in the village have cut the public school attendance of grade pupils to about 20 yearly.

Goff Morrissey who taught the last years in the one-room school remembers that by 1891, the enrollment was so large that he used to send about 45 of the little primary children home at 2 o'clock so that he could do some work with the upper grades until 4 o'clock daily. For his services Mr. Morrissey received the sum of \$50 monthly.

The families of Noble Bros., Zahn, Hagenow, Schultz, Reinemann, Stelling, Rusch, Krueger, Barnard, and Novak were early residents of Reedsville. Early school board members from 1871 to 1906 were Fred Buboltz 1871, John Jance 1872-7, Wm. Bornefeldt 1877, Hugh Mulholland 1878, Peter Reinemann 1879-81. Herman Schmidt, Wm. Zahn, Fred Lawrence, Henry Noble, John Hickey, F. Maertz, Jos. Dumass, J. Schultz, Christ Hagenow, Anton Fritch, Robert Luedtke, Louis Falge, Emil Schultz, and W. C. Otto were other board members.

The largest number of children now in school from one family numbers six. Several decades ago the Novak family had 24 children while the Matt Cavanaugh family had 14 girls and one boy attending the village schools. The Cavanaugh girls became prominent county teachers and some of them are now mothers of present day county teachers. The names of others who have become prominent in the professions, business, and farming would make a long list indeed.

The list of teachers from 1872 to 1906 is as follows: John E. Garry 1872-3; Jere Lemkuhl 1873-4; John Martin 1874-5; Aurelia Lawrence 1875; J. P. Martin 1876-8; Annie Lawrence 1878-80; Emma Schneider 1882; Alice Kennedy 1885; G. M. Morrissey 1888-92; Clara Salomon (primary) 1891-93; Prin. M. H. Hewitt 1892-3; Ida Eberhardt (primary) 1893-99; Prin. Wm. O'Hara 1893-99; Prin. M. M. Guhin 1900-1902; Winifred Meany (primary) 1900-06; Prin. F. J. Seidl 1903; Prin. O. J. Falge 1904-06; and Zeralda Buerstatte 1904-06. Former teachers who became prominent were M. M. Guhin, Supt. of School in S. Dakota; J. E. Meany, a physician in Manitowoc; Frank Seidl, a prominent businessman at St. Paul; O. J. Falge, attorney at Ladysmith; and G. M. Goggins, County Judge of Calumet County.

In 1916 when the full four year high school course was instituted, the high school enrollment was around 75. The tuition rates at that time were \$1.75 for the grades and \$4 for the high school. By 1918 the high school tuition rates had increased to \$8. Today Reedsville is making every effort to make the village an educational center for the local and nearby residents. The Reedsville school became state and nationally known in the spring of 1946 when this school of 87 high school students won the state high school basketball championship at Madison under the capable coaching of Prin. John Gable.