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History of Madison's public schools: two articles from MMSD's Staff news.

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History of Madison's Public Schools

**(Two articles from MMSD's
Staff News)**

By John Daly



STAFF NEWS

September 16, 1988

A Celebration Is In Order

by John Daly, Department of Curriculum and Staff Development

"Happy birthday to you,
Happy birthday to you,
Happy birthday dear Madison schools,
Happy birthday to you!"

1988 is a significant year. It is significant because of the many fine activities that are being planned, both in individual schools and at the District level. It is significant because of the students, staff and parents who work very hard to contribute to the quality learning environment in our schools. And it is significant because the Madison Metropolitan School District is having a birthday.

Are you ready for a local history lesson? Well, here goes...

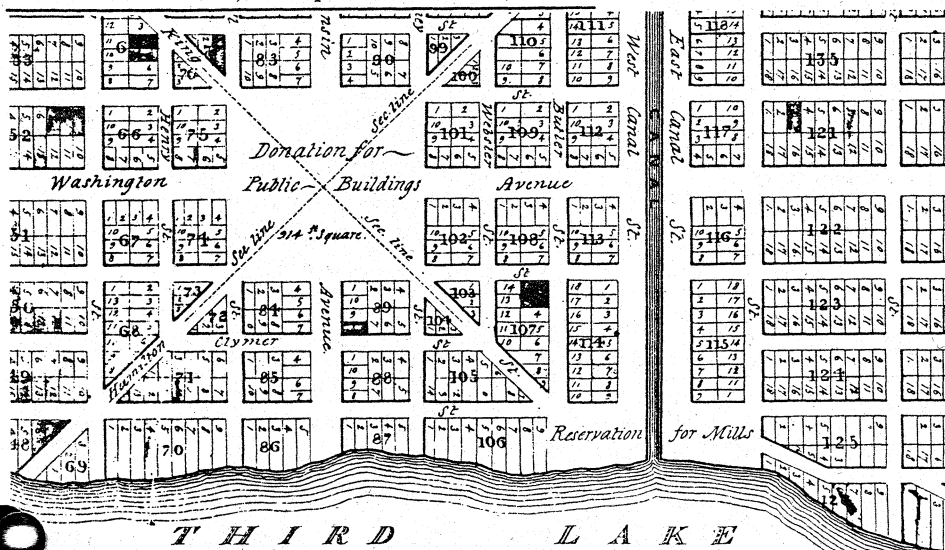
"How old are you?
How old are you?
How old are you?
How old are you?"

Madison's first classroom was not in a school house but in the log cabin home of Isaac Palmer, the first private residence in the Village of Madison, located on the corner of King and Clymer streets.

The State Historical Society's archives say that the first known school in the Wisconsin territory was started in 1823. Not until the Spring of 1838, however, did the first school open its doors to the dozen or so young citizens in the village of Madison--yes, schools in Madison have turned 150 years of age! This is quite significant when one considers that two years earlier, in the summer of 1836, there were, according to written records, only five resident non-Indian families in the territory we now identify as Dane County.

PLAT OF MADISON, the Capital of Wisconsin, 1836

Continued on page 4



The building where Madison's first classes were held was located across the street from the present-day GEF II building, at the corner of King and Clymer streets. The name of Clymer Street was later changed to Doty Street, and Morris was re-named Main Street which is why this map differs from one which would be produced today.

Minority Student Achievement Establishes Framework

by Virginia Henderson, Chair

Student achievement, especially minority student achievement, is not just a local concern. Low achievement by minority students represents a national trend of serious proportions. The Districtwide Committee on Minority Student Achievement at the Elementary Level was formed last year to address the issues surrounding this problem as it exists in our schools.

The committee met three times during the summer. The group has been charged to accomplish the following tasks:

1. Define "achievement" as it relates to this issue;
2. Develop a framework for school and classroom characteristics which are appropriate to improving minority student achievement;
3. Describe those classroom and school characteristics which are counter to this goal.

Once a framework has been established, the District will provide planning grants for at least six schools to begin implementing the plan during the 1989-90 school year. The committee recognizes that the District already has many programs which have a similar focus, and committee members are eager to work in coordination with those programs.

Continued on page 6



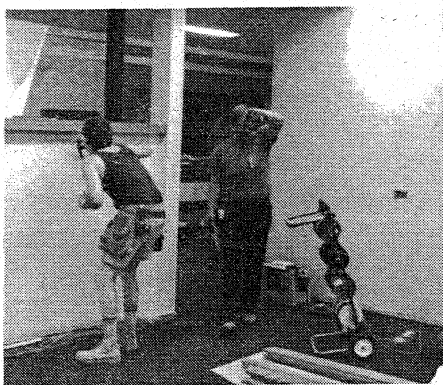
Virginia Henderson chairs MMSD's Minority Student Achievement Committee.

Thoreau Remodelling Completed

Preparations for an additional 100 children to be enrolled at Thoreau Elementary included a major remodelling of the school's interior.

A planning committee, which included both teachers and parents, decided to include in the remodelling the construction of interior walls, along with the creation of additional classroom space in the school's lower level. Returning students may be surprised that the "school without walls" looks quite different. Classrooms are separated from one another by permanent walls which, while not floor to ceiling, create autonomous rooms instead of the totally open construction which has characterized Thoreau since it was opened.

According to custodian Ira Taylor and art teacher Joan Kuypers, who were at work on a hot August day, everyone in the Thoreau community will be pleased with the results.



Workers put the finishing touches on the remodelling of Thoreau Elementary.

Students Earn Precollege Scholarships

Superintendent E. James Travis announced that 75 MMSD students received precollege scholarships administered by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. The students represent seven middle schools and all four high schools.

The competitive scholarships are awarded to minority group students in grades 6 through 12 who show the desire and ability to succeed in college. Applicants must obtain a recommendation from a teacher, counselor, or principal, and scholarship recipients attend courses which reinforce basic skills and attitudes necessary for success in college and employment; information on financial aid and career guidance; and classes in computers and various academic areas.

Travis said, "The minority scholarship program was designed to increase the enrollment and retention of minority group students in college. I am pleased by the initiative these students exhibited by applying for scholarships and attending programs that will shape their futures."

CELEBRATION (Continued from page 1)



How things change...here is the site of Madison's first school as it looks today.

The family names of Bird, Palmer, Peck, Pierce and Stoner have graced the pages of community history as the earliest settlers to reside in the Madison area. Many of our third graders will share with you the various reasons for their decision to settle here, most of which appear to be linked to Judge Doty and the selection of Madison's isthmus as the second location for the territorial capital. That story is fascinating in itself, but our narrative is focused on the public schools.

So that you have as accurate an account as possible of the first Madison school, the dusty cracks of community history have been critically reviewed to find an accurate reflection. The excerpt which follows is from a report prepared for the Madison school board in 1886 by Reuben G. Thwaites, a well-known local historian of the time. Thwaites tells us that:

Miss Louisa M. Brayton, sister of Lavina, came to Madison to teach the first school...The salary, two dollars per week, to be raised by popular subscription, was agreed upon between them, before leaving the farm. Miss Brayton boarded in the family of A.A. Bird, who lived in a story-and-a-half frame house on the south corner of Wilson and Pinckney streets...For this accommodation she paid one dollar per week--fifty per cent of her allowance.

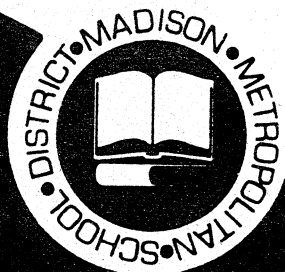
Nearly hid in the thicket, two blocks away, was the first little school-room, the front end of Isaac H. Palmer's log dwelling-house, on lot 5, block 105, south corner of King and Clymer streets. Mr. Palmer, who had arrived in Madison during the summer of 1837, gives the following history and description of the primitive building occupied by the first school at the territorial capital:

My house, on the corner of Clymer and King streets, was the first private residence built in the city of Madison. I built it and lived in it, the summer of 1837. It was 18 x 26 feet, one and one-half stories high. The two floors were made of the first lumber sawed in Madison, used for building purposes...I cut the logs, hauled them and built the house alone, even to rolling the logs, which I did with rope and oxen. Miss Louisa Brayton taught a school in the front end of our house, my wife and I living in the other end.

In these limited quarters, in March, 1838, Miss Brayton assembled her little flock of some dozen or fifteen scholars, the first students in Madison's first school. From that class taught at the Brayton house, to the first building constructed for the sole purpose of education one year later (Spring, 1839), to the formal recognition of the school district in Madison by the territorial government (December, 1841), the schools have continued to change and grow.

Several times this year STAFF NEWS will feature a history lesson about the school district. Future topics will include a time line of key dates in the early history of the District, locations of some of the earliest schools and stories about individuals who played important roles in the growth of Madison's schools. Hopefully, through these articles we can all participate in the celebration of our 150th birthday.

If you have interesting information in your files about MMSD and/or your own school's history which you would be willing to share as part of the birthday celebration, please contact John Daly in the Curriculum and Staff Development Department at 266-6000. For information about resources dealing with local history which are available in the Educational Reference Library, call the ERL at 266-6188. Two annotated bibliographies have been prepared--call for your copies today!



STAFF NEWS

January 27, 1989

Educating Children With Mental Retardation: What Does The Future Hold?

In Madison, as in schools across the country, changes are occurring in the education of children with mental retardation, as they are in the education of children with other exceptional educational needs. These changes can be viewed as part of a continuum which began 35 years ago when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled, in *Brown vs Board of Education*, that separate facilities are inherently unequal.

With the closing of Badger and Lapham schools, which once housed programs for children with physical and/or mental disabilities, MMSD pioneered the concept of placing children who have disabilities—both physical and intellectual—in special education classes located within regular schools. Today we are facing a new question: to what extent do ALL children benefit from the integration into regular classes of children with exceptional educational needs?

MMSD is currently in the process of developing long-range goals for children with mental retardation which involve integrating these children as fully as possible into regular education classes. There is no master plan as yet to dictate how or to what extent this integration will occur; instead, staff at various schools are experimenting with ways to accomplish integration without undue drain on human or financial resources.

During the next few months the STAFF NEWS will feature a series of articles looking at the kinds of integration activities which are taking place in the District now and at how these activities are viewed by teachers, parents and students at both the elementary and secondary levels.

Where were those early schools? Map right shows the locations of some early Madison school buildings which are no longer in existence.

Madison's Public Schools--The Early Years

by John Daly, Curriculum Coordinator

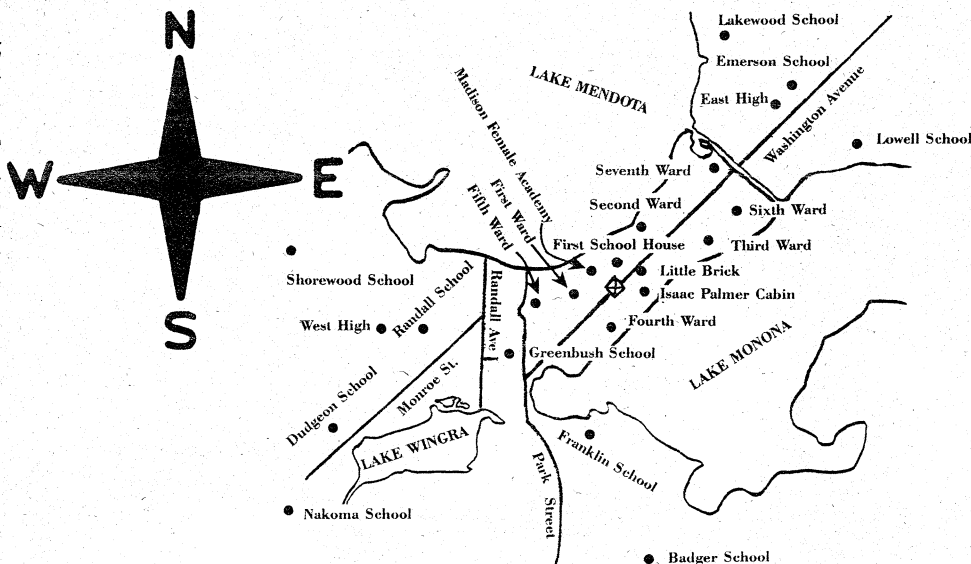
This article is the second in a series on the history of the schools in Madison. The publication of these articles in the STAFF NEWS is one way we acknowledge and celebrate the fact that public education is 150 years old in Madison. An article in September shared information about the first settlers in the Village of Madison, the first teacher, Miss Louisa Brayton, and the original classroom located in the Isaac Palmer log home.

Information from a collection of primary sources was used to document the construction of Madison's first school buildings as described below.

In the spring of 1839, the County of Dane was organized for judicial and legislative purposes. The territorial government was now ready to collect taxes on a county-wide basis for the purpose of building school houses. James Doty, governor of the Wisconsin Territory, gave permission for the village of Madison residents to build a structure for the "sole purpose of education" on the north corner of Pinckney and Dayton Streets. It was a one story building, standing 18 x 20 feet with oak shake siding, at a cost of \$70.00. The amount was collected through donations of the local citizens. All of the furniture except the teacher's chair was made of wood planks. As the school population grew larger, a shelf, on which the smallest children sat, was put up across one end of the room. A ladder was provided for them to climb up and down. This crude school house was often used for public meetings, social events and religious functions. It was in this building that the first Sunday school classes were held. The building was used as a school from 1839 to 1845 when it was sold and eventually torn down.

In 1845 a brick building was erected at Washington Avenue and Butler streets, funded by the new county tax. The two-story building cost a total of \$1,200. Citizens were very proud of the building. The school records continuously refer to it as the "Little Brick". This structure was soon over crowded and once again the residents of the village were looking for additional space to house their "young scholars." In 1847 a female academy was built on the present site of Madison Area Technical College, Wisconsin Avenue and West Johnson Street. It was in this building that the first classes of the University of Wisconsin were held in 1848. (While this was not originally a public school building it was later purchased and used as the first high school in Madison.)

(Continued on page 3)



EARLY YEARS (Continued)

During the next decade, 1847-1857, there were many economic struggles within the school system. It was not until 1856, when Madison was incorporated as a city and the first board of education was organized, that a plan for a more systematic approach to providing schools was adopted. The population of Madison was divided into four (4) wards and the schools' first superintendent, Damon Kilgore, was appointed to oversee the building of structures and to manage the educational program. His task in 1857 was to embark on a building program that would enroll and house the city's 1,865 school-age children, only 934 of whom were registered due to the lack of building space and commitment of their parents to education. Superintendent Kilgore worked energetically to establish a construction timeline and modernize the capital city's public educational system.*

*Author's Note: For further information about Damon Kilgore and the first schools in Madison see the MMSD "In Profile" supplement to the October 2, 1988 issues of the Wisconsin State Journal. (Contact the Public Information Office for copies.)

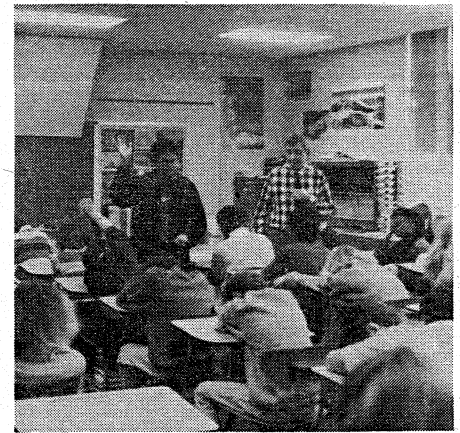
PARTIAL HISTORY OF MADISON'S SCHOOL BUILDINGS

School	Date Occupied	Date Abandoned	Location/ Street(s)
First log school (part of Isaac Palmer's log cabin home)	March, 1838	Several months later	King & Doty (south corner)
First school house	Spring 1839	1845	Pinckney & Dayton (north corner)
The "Little Brick"	1845	1887	East Washington & South Butler
The Madison Female Academy	1847	1872	Wisconsin Avenue & West Johnson
First Ward School (Old Washington School)	1857	1901	West Johnson & North Broom
Third Ward School (Harvey School)	1904	1857	Jenifer & South Brearly Streets
Greenbush School	1858		"Probably" on present Longfellow site
First High School building (originally The Madison Female Academy)	1858	1872	Wisconsin Avenue & West Johnson
Northeast District School	1859	1902	"Probably" on present Hawthorne site
Fourth Ward (Doty School)	1866	1905	West Wilson & South Broom
Second Ward (Old Lincoln)	1867	1915	East Gorham & North Blount
Fifth Ward (Draper School)	1870	1940	West Johnson & North Park
Sunnyside	1882	1968	3902 E. Washington
Sixth Ward (Old Marquette School)	1894	1940	Williamson & South Baldwin
Seventh Ward (Old Lapham School)	1900	1940	East Dayton & Thornton Streets

SCHOOLS WERE RENAMED IN 1904

Randall (first unit structure)	1906		Regent & Spooner
Addition to High School (Renamed Central High & Junior High in 1939)	1908		Wisconsin Avenue & West Johnson
Longfellow (Additions in 1925 & 1939)	1910		Mound & South Brooks
Old Lincoln	1916	1940	East Gorham & North Blount
Lowell (first unit structure) (addition in 1939)	1916		Atwood & Maple Streets
Lakewood	1919	1970	314 N. Sherman Ave.
Emerson (first unit structure) (addition in 1925)	1919		East Johnson
East High (first unit structure) (additions in 1925, 1932, 1939)	1922		East Washington
Franklin (additions in 1929 & 1955)	1924		Lakeside St.
Dudgeon (addition of second floor in 1939)	1927	1971	Monroe Street
West High school	1930		Regent Street
Nakoma (additions in 1923 & 1929)	1917	1970	Nakoma Rd. (entered city in 1931)

(Continued on page 4)



Wisconsin Supreme Court Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson met with students in Ken Kennedy and Marge Rosenthal's 8th grade social studies classes at Orchard Ridge Middle. As Kennedy watches, the Chief Justice asks student "judges" to cast votes in a test case.

Japanese School Internship Announced

International Internship Programs (IIP) offers elementary and secondary schools in the United States an opportunity to learn first-hand about the peoples, language and culture of Japan. Through IIP's "Japanese School Internship Program," schools are invited to host a visitor from Japan for three, six or nine months.

Participating schools have two primary responsibilities: 1) provide a structured program for the intern; and 2) identify a host family with whom the intern lives. The intern pays the host family \$150 monthly to help defray food expenses.

For more information about this program contact IIP, 406 Colman Building, 811 1st Avenue, Seattle Washington, 98104, or call 800-333-2225 and enter 937 after the tone.

Handicapped Status Information Requested

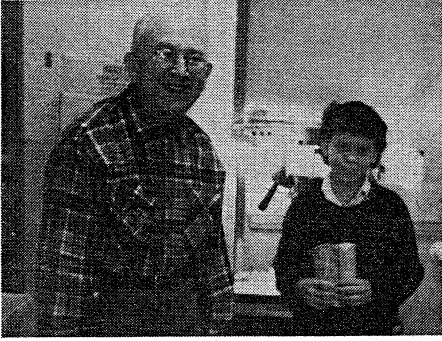
by Myron Anderson, Director of Employee Services

As part of our affirmative action plan data collection, MMSD is collecting information about employees who have handicapping conditions. An individual who is handicapped is: any person who (a) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities; (b) has a record of such impairment; or (c) is regarded as having such an impairment.

If you feel that you have a physical or mental handicapping condition, please contact Employee Services to receive a Handicapped Status Survey form. Information requested will be treated as confidential data for Affirmative Action efforts. Please call 266-6050 or write to Employee Services for the survey form.

"Grandpa" A Popular Figure

Henry Esser is an 89-year-old resident of the Schenk neighborhood who has become a fixture at Schenk Elementary School. As an RSVP volunteer "Grandpa," as Esser is known to staff and students alike, pops and bags more than 200 bags of popcorn which are sold to raise money for the PTO. His helper is Nathan Shelley, who provides assistance for half an hour each week. "We don't know how we ever got along without Grandpa," says Schenk secretary Doris Laufenberg. "He keeps us all on our toes."



Book Awards Announced

At its Midwinter Convention the American Library Association announced the 1988 winners of several prizes for children's literature.

Paul Fleischman's **JOYFUL NOISE: POEMS FOR TWO VOICES** won the prestigious Newbery Medal, while **SONG AND DANCE MAN** by Karen Ackerman named winner of the Caldecott Award. Walter Dean Myers' **FALLEN ANGELS** received the Coretta Scott King Award for writing, while **MIRANDY AND BROTHER WIND** won the Coretta Scott King Award for illustration. The Batchelder Award, for the best book translated into English and published in the U.S., went to Lothrop, Lee and Shepard for the publication of **CRUTCHES** by Hartling.

Randall Holds First-Ever Faculty Follies

Me-oh my! What a talented crew!
Please let me tell you about just a few.
For the first time ever we decided to try
A staff "talent show," but the name made some shy.
So, "Faculty Follies" was the title we gave
And the acts that came in really did make us rave!
There were jugglers, dancers and also some singers
Comedy, gymnastics and even bell ringers.
The Tonight Show was seen, with Johnny and Ed
With commercials we'd rather have fast forward-ed!
Skiffle band players or banjo and kazoo
Flute players, pianists and a world slide show too.
We had no idea we'd so much to give.
And to have such fun doing it, what a great way to live!
So here's to Ellen, our organizer true,
It was fun preparing our Follies for you.
And also to Bevi, who directed a few.
The dancers and ding-a-lings are grateful to you.
And also to Jim, the head of our "crew,"
The "shipwrecks" had fun singing all about you!
And, finally, to the kids—we hope you had fun.
WE had fun preparing "Randall follies"—year ONE!

Bev Haimerl, Music Teacher

HISTORY (Continued)

School	Date Occupied	Date Abandoned	Location/ Street(s)
Lapham	1940	1940	East Dayton
Marquette	1940		Thornton Street
Washington (Present site of MMSD Administration Building)	1940		West Dayton
Midvale	1951		Caromar Drive
Sherman (additions in 1935 & 1952)	1928	1979	Sherman Avenue (entered city in 1945)
Mendota (additions in 1948, 1954 & 1956)	1927		School Road (entered city in 1952)
Schenk (addition in 1955)	1953	Schenk Street	
Cherokee Heights (addition in 1969)	1955		Cherokee Drive
Hoyt (additions in 1958, 1963 & 1969)	1956	1979	Regent Street
Van Hise (additions in 1959, 1963 & 1969)	1957		Waukesha Street
Glendale (additions in 1958, 1959 & 1963)	1957		Tompkins Drive
Badger (additions in 1961, 1962, 1964 & 1967)	1957	1977	East Badger Road
Spring Harbor (addition in 1959)	1958	1979	Spring Harbor Drive
Orchard Ridge (additions in 1959, 1961, 1963, 1967 & 1968)	1958		Russett Road
Hawthorne (addition in 1961)	1959	1979	Concord Avenue
Odana (additions in 1960 & 1965)	1959	Closed by fire in 1976	Tokay Boulevard
Gompers (additions in 1964 & 1966)	1960		Wyoming Way
Lake View (addition in 1963)	1961		Tennyson Lane
Glenn Stephens (addition in 1964)	1961		Rosa Road
Elvehjem (additions in 1964 & 1967)	1962		Academy Drive
Falk (addition in 1968)	1963		Woodington Way
La Follette (additions in 1965 & 1969)	1963		Pflaum Road
Lincoln School	1965		Sequoia Trail
Huegel School	1966		Prairie Road
Kennedy (addition in 1967)	1966		Meadowlark Drive
Memorial High (additions in 1968 & 1971)	1966		Gammon Road
Muir	1968		Inner Drive
Lindbergh	1968		Kennedy Road
Sandburg	1968		Donald Drive
Sennett	1968		Pflaum Road
Leopold	1968		Post Road
Jefferson	1970		Gammon Road
Thoreau	1971		Nakoma Road

Special thanks to Mr. Ray Singel for his help in documenting this chronological list of school buildings.



"The Shipwrecks" (a.k.a. Wilma Johnson, Bev Haimerl, Ruth Gunderman and Carroll Heideman), led by "Captain" Jim Griffin, entertained students at the Randall Faculty Follies.