



PO Box 54, Washington, IL
(309) 444-4793



CHRISTMAS TOUR
Tuesday, December 11th



I HAVE A STORY TO TELL
March 25, 2019- 7:00 pm

2019
ANNUAL MEETING

ANNUAL MEETING
April 22, 2019- 6:30 pm

NEWSLETTER

www.washington-historical-society.org

Washington Historical Society's
2018

Christmas Tour of Homes

Tuesday, December 11
1 p.m. to 4 p.m. & 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

DINE FOR HISTORY:
Blacksmith Steakhouse will donate 10% of their pre-tax sales on the Day of the Tour to the WHS.

Christmas Tour of Homes

Tickets go on sale November 7th. Tickets in advance are \$17 and available for purchase at Kimpling's, Studio 901, Homespun, Chamber of Commerce or on the WHS website with PayPal through December 9th.

Tickets will be \$20 on the day of event and only available at Zinser house (cash or check).

Zinser House will be open 10:00 to 9:00 on the day of tour with refreshments being served during tour hours.

Tour Checklist

- ___ The Goken & Ellis House - 116 North Elm St.
- ___ The Sparks House - 300 Dieble Rd.
- ___ The Gross House - 201 South Main St.
- ___ The Hamilton House - 110 North Elm St.
- ___ The Ripley House - 410 South St.
- ___ The Dement-Zinser House - 105 Zinser Place

Dement-Zinser House open 10 a.m. Dec. 11 as ONLY location for tickets (\$20). Cash or check. Refreshments at Dement-Zinser House through 9 p.m.

Tickets \$17 at Kimpling's, Studio 901, Homespun, Step Back in Time and Chamber of Commerce through Dec. 10th

DINE FOR HISTORY
Blacksmith Steakhouse will donate to WHS for sales on the Day of the Tour

Breakfast & Lunch 8-2
Dinner 4-9

101 Washington Square



"Amen Corner" Augusta 16 X 20 Photo



*Holiday
Lantern*



*"Lone Cypress" Pebble Beach
16 X 20 Photo*

Christmas Raffle

The Washington Historical Society board is very excited about some upcoming restorations/repairs to both buildings in 2019! All proceeds go toward WHS house restorations/repairs. Please watch for details in the months to come...

The drawing will be held on December 11th. Contact WHS at 309-444-4793 (leave message) or contact a board member for purchase.

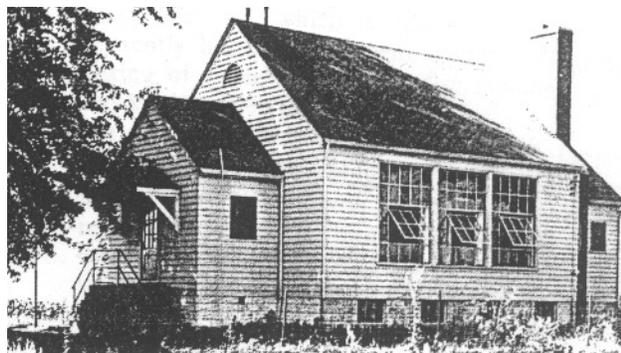
*Tickets are
\$1 each or 6/\$5*

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CENTRAL GRADE SCHOOL, DISTRICT 51—EARLY HISTORY

The early recorded history of Central Grade School is virtually nonexistent except for the memories of those having received their early education there. Located on the corner of the now Wilmore Road and Dallas Road, the rural one-room structure was reportedly old in 1880; documentation exists that a subscription school was taught by John Berry in a log house located at that site in the 1830's and called the "West-Side" school house. Parents paid to send their children to the school, the teacher could choose those students he/she wanted to be in the school, and the teacher was boarded with families of the school children. In the early 1900's the student population climbed to 40 with attendance being rather erratic as the boys would leave school to help with the harvest in the fall and planting in the spring. Schools at that time were generally open

eight months of the year. Pupils were classified by the reader, speller or arithmetic book they used rather than by grade level. Ida Parsons, one of the teachers in the early 1900's, taught all age levels at Central School.

One of Ida Parson's students, John Willhardt, served on the Board of Directors



in the 1920's. He recalled the visits by the County Superintendent of Schools (BI Martin: 1919-1927) who directed the supervision of schools and was responsible for achievement testing in Tazewell County at that time. He was reminded of the

County Superintendent's journey from Pekin to Washington by train and his visits on a hired rig of horse and buggy to get to the schools.

Later, in the decade of the 1920's, the enrollment dropped sharply due most likely to economic conditions during that era. The school became increasingly costly to maintain and was consequently closed for a period of 10 years.

Mr. Bill Ebert attended Central School from 1933 to 1940 after attending a private school surrounded by many different flowers located on the current library property taught by Mrs. Mary Etlein. Most

children would either walk or ride a bicycle to the school. He fondly recalls, Mrs. Florence Mette, who was his teacher in grades three through eight, and recognizes her as a "great influence" to him. Attendance in the school varied. There

were about six students at Mr. Ebert's grade level in 1935-1936 with a total of 17 to 28 students attending school at any given time. He recalls the coal room located the NW corner of the basement and the heat register near the center of the single room to provide heat to the classroom. The property had a hand pump and outdoor well that provided water. The water was brought into the room in a pail with students sharing a common dipper. The restrooms were located on either side of the main entrance after walking up four or five steps. The restrooms have been identified as outdoor toilets located indoors. The teacher had her desk on the east side of the room with a long, recitation bench separating individual student desks on the west side of the classroom. The individual student desks had the opening for an ink well but no one reported pig tails being dipped in ink. A piano was available and played by Mrs. Mette to the enjoyment of her students.

The teacher would call groups of children to the long bench for instruction by subject. Mr. Ebert said he learned a great deal by listening to the instruction given the older children and credits the learning environment for helping his ability to concentrate on independent tasks in adulthood. The children used goldenrod tablets to practice the Palmer writing methods. Each child had books for their use. Students enjoyed the opportunity to learn and discipline was not a major issue. The occasional group of older boys might slip out the back window while the teacher was otherwise involved, but the variety of teacher responsibilities permitted such shenanigans.

At recess time, one of the games played often and with great relish was "Andy I Over" which involved one team yelling "Andy I Over;" then throwing a ball over the school. If a member of one team caught the ball, they would run around and try to eliminate a member of the other team by throwing the ball at them. In colder months after the school day, the children would cut hockey sticks from tree branches and play on the frozen creeks. The girls often played Jacks while

some of the boys would play marbles or mumbly peg. Often though, the girls and boys would join together to form softball teams and enjoy an informal game. Mr. Ebert mentioned the dress of the day included high topped shoes, knickers, corduroy or overall pants.

On inclement days the boys and girls used the basement as an activity area, staying clear of the coal and coal furnace used to heat the school.

"Uncle" Billy Hess, who sold sorghum and real estate, went with the school's softball team providing guidance whenever Central had a game with another school. He was not available for practice sessions. Mr. Ebert recalls parents planning and holding ice cream socials twice a year to raise money. Donated cakes, fudge, and candy were sold. Some cakes and fudge were used as prizes for the cake walk with the piano providing the music.

A 1937 graduation program shows only one student graduated that year: Ruth Sager. The graduation program was held at District 52 with their graduates and others from Jefferson School, Columbia School, Cottonwood School, Hopewell School, Stormer School, Liberty School, and Greenridge School.

The next major milestone in the history of Central School unfolded dramatically on a stormy Saturday morning in 1941. The weather was extremely warm with news reports indicating temperatures in the upper 80's. On April 19, 1941, a tornado demolished the one room schoolhouse as it tore its way across the farmlands northwest of Washington. The New York Times headline read, "Howling Storms Damage Midwest..." School was dismissed for the remainder of the year. Another building was constructed during the summer months on the same property by major Washington contractors, Henry and Willis Hett, before September, 1941. Mr. Reeves was the sole teacher in 1950 and taught all eight grades. The basement was ultimately used as a classroom when in the early 1950's enrollment increased and expanded budgets permitted the hiring of another teacher. Dave Weaver recalls being hired while a student at the old Cen-

tral School and during his eighth grade year at the new Central School to clean the classrooms, the blackboards, and to deal with the boiler. He remembers Dale Pittenger, a year older, also provided the same services for a small amount of pay. Dale may also have lost a fingertip to a paper cutter at the school.

Mrs. Nancy Bender moved to Washington in 1957 and first attended the old Central School. She was amazed, having moved from the much larger Peoria school district that a two-room school still existed. In August 1955, an attempt was made to annex Central School District 51 to Washington Grade School District 52. A petition submitted to Tazewell county Superintendent, L.L. Atteberry was denied on June 10, 1955. The annexation petition was opposed on the grounds of anticipated growth of 400 undeveloped plots in the Washington Estates and Hillcrest Drive areas which happened soon after the denial. Mrs. Griffin recalls that Angelo Karagianis was very involved with the Washington Estates development. He may have worked with Scoltz Homes, the company that built the first spec home in the Estates. Mr. Karagianis also served briefly on Central's Board of Directors. Mrs. Euphemia Schmidt and Rev. Murvel Huffstutler shared the teaching duties at Central School with 38 students enrolled in grades 1 - 8 with Mrs. Schumacher taking over early on for Rev. Huffstutler. The building that had served as Central School since 1941 was formally retired in 1958 at a public auction. Its last Board of Education consisted of three members: Mr. Wes Wenger, President; Mr. Roland Walwer, Secretary; and Mr. Ralph Brown. The building sold for approximately \$2,000.00 and was utilized as a church. Sixty-one pupils entered the new Central School building located at then 301 Eagle Avenue (later to become 1301 Eagle Avenue) on a 5.38 acre site in the Washington Estates subdivision on January 2, 1957.

to be continued...

BRICK AND MORTAR (1957-Present)

SAVE *the* DATE

March 2nd Volunteer Appreciation
Event 2:00-4:00 pm

March 25th "I Have a Story" 7:00 pm

April 22nd Annual Meeting 6:30 pm
Program 7:00 pm St. Marks

April 27th May Day Activity Dement-
Zinser house 10:00 am-12:00 pm

Activities/Programs:
September-May - Time Travel
in Trunks- D51/D52/St. Pat's
April 27th-October 5th
Dement-Zinser House & Doctor's
Museum Open 11:00 am-2:00 pm



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