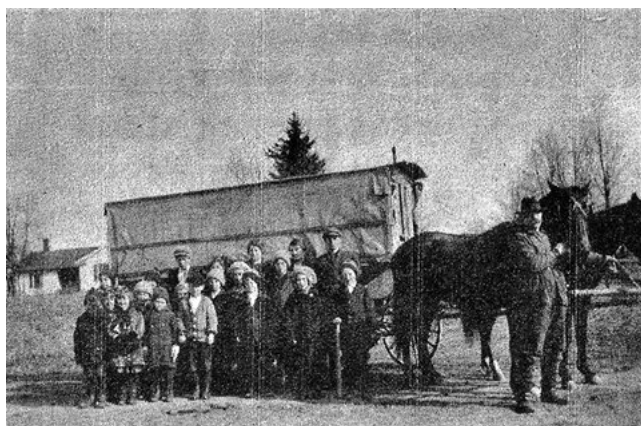


The

Slate

Vol. XXII, Issue II

Fall 2016



AN EARLY SCHOOL BUS, DRIVER AND PUPILS, Used to Transport pupils to and from a county school near Scotts in the early 1900's. The conveyance was operated by Allen Kline. The two-horse power vehicle was commonly called a "Brat Wagon."

Early School Bus Carried the Name "Brat Wagon"

*Source: St. Joseph Valley Leader
Flowerfield Township
4/2/1975*

The school bus came to a halt and the driver waited patiently for the children to tumble pell-mell down the lane, or dawdle reluctantly, whichever action suited their mood. The kids clambered into the conveyance and the driver signaled to his horses to move on.

The time was the early 1900's ...about 1911,

(Continued on page 2)

About McGuffey

President's Column

By Tom M. Johnson

As I wrote a few issues back, the one room Branch School in Williamstown Township, which I help maintain, was fortunate enough to obtain on loan a McGuffey "curriculum box." The box contains a number of charts that appear to be the complete curriculum for a one room school. They were published in the 1880s and it is my assumption that they were not commonly used because of its cost. The previous owner told me that they are rare, but that the McGuffey museum at Miami University had one on display. I visited the museum website and found that the museum is located in McGuffey's former home in Oxford, Ohio on the campus of Miami University.

Wanting to know more, my wife Jane and I planned a trip to Oxford, Ohio to see if we could learn more about the "curriculum box" and McGuffey. Since I am in the process of restoring a 1925 Model T roadster pickup, it didn't hurt that the Model T Ford Club of America's annual meeting was being held that weekend in nearby Richmond, Indiana.

We found the campus at Miami University to be absolutely beautiful. The McGuffey home, a brick structure built in 1833, fits in perfectly. We had made an appointment and

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Brat Wagon

(Continued from page 1)

according to Mrs. Maude M. Castle, Howardsville, who relayed the following information to our publication:

The bus was one of the first school buses in use and was affectionately termed "The Brat Wagon," by everyone concerned. The driver was Allen Kline, of Scotts, Michigan, uncle of Mrs. Castle and grandfather of Harold Gearhart, Pleasant Lake.

Kline was a mustachioed gentleman, extremely patient with his passengers when they became fractious, and therefore much loved by them. He had a quiet way about him and could quickly settle any of their difficulties.

The brat wagon was driven daily during the school months to the country school near Scotts. Actually, it was a flatbed wagon with the sides built up so seats could be installed. The seats were nothing more than long boards.

At first, the "brat wagon" was enclosed with canvas, which was later replaced with boards. This made the interior a little warmer, but during the frigid weather, Kline spread straw on the floor to keep the students' feet warm. He also used a small portable oil stove to provide extra heat. This stove frequently became a source of trouble when it smoked, since everything, including the children would become covered with soot.

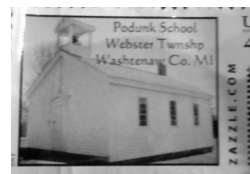
One particularly cold morning, Kline lit the stove early so the wagon would be heated by the time he and his morning chores completed to leave on his rounds. The wagon not only heated, it filled with smoke and Kline had to quickly replace the straw and clean off the seats. Even so, many of the children arrived at school that day with soot on them and their clothing.

Once he had deposited his charges at the school, Kline went to his drayman's job, which occupied him until the end of the school day. By the time he had returned the youngsters to their homes, it was supper time. Chores and studying took up the rest of the evening, with bedtime set at 8:30 p.m.

There was, Mrs. Castle concluded, little time left for mischief.

Schoolhouse Stamps for Sale

MORSA continues to offer schoolhouse stamps for sale. The most recent stamp is of the Podunk School of Dexter, MI, winner of the 2016 Wm. Winglar Schoolhouse of the Year Award.



The cost is \$25 for a sheet of 20 stamps.

Contact Larry Schlack:

Email: lawr@net-link.net

Phone: 269-388-9136;

Mail: 2906 Woodgate Lane

Kalamazoo, MI 49008

*Grosse Pointe Woods Welcomes the 2016
MORSA Conference*
By Rochelle Balkam

The 2016 MORSA Conference was a perfect blend of school and community. The gathering featured the presentation of the historical context of the Cook School and its role in the community along with dramatic move to the present site in Ghisquiere Park. John Parthum provided details of the restoration. Rochelle Balkam presented the story of one room schools in Michigan in a slideshow entitled “ Primer, Chalk and Bells” to a receptive audience that shared their own one-room school stories. It was a time for net-working and creating new bonds among the attendees.

The Podunk School in the Webster Township historic site received 2016 William Winglar Michigan One-room School Award. The award was accepted by Dr. Daniel Chapman and Martha Zeeb, members of the Webster Historical Society. Doctor Chapman related the origin of the name and several anecdotes from the history of the school. Podunk School is the centerpiece of the park. It has been carefully restored to its nineteenth century purpose.

At the completion of the program, the participants were bussed to the historic Provencal-Weir Home, built in the early 1800s. The tour of the house was narrated by docent, Isabelle Donnelly. She brought the era alive with stories about the residents who lived there over the centuries. The highlight of the tour was a schoolroom on the upper floor, complete with schoolbooks, hats and bonnets.

Rounding out the day was Suzanne Kent’s insider tour of the magnificent Edsel and Eleanor Ford Home on Lake St. Clair. The design by Albert Kahn was inspired by the cottages in the Cotswolds in England, with the grounds designed by landscape architect, Jens Jensen. Mrs. Ford’s legacy is a treasure for the community.

MORSA extends its thanks to Mary Kaye Ferry, John Parthum, Suzanne Kent, Isabelle Donnelly and the Grosse Pointe Woods Historic District Commission.

*MORSA to Sponsor
Seventh Annual
Schoolhouse of the Year Award*
By Larry Schlack

One of MORSA’s most significant activities is sponsoring the annual Schoolhouse of the Year Award.

The award gives the recipient schoolhouse a cash prize of \$250 and a plaque designating the school as the William Winglar One-Room Schoolhouse of the Year.

MORSA began giving the award in 2011 and the first winner was Stone School at 2600 Packard Road in Ann Arbor. Succeeding awards have gone to:

- Quincy School in Branch County, 2012
- Hart One-Room School in Frankenmuth in 2013
- School Section School in Richmond in 2014
- Branch School in Williamston in 2015
- Podunk School in Dexter in 2016.

The award is limited to one-room schoolhouses that have not been converted to other uses such as homes or businesses.

MORSA urges those interested in applying for the 2017 award to look at and submit the application form on pgs. 6-7 in this issue of The Slate.



School House Reflections,”

by Cheryl Vatcher-Martin, M.A.

Michigan One Room School House Association is a premier organization that works hard to inform educators, museum curators, students and the general populace on the importance of preservation of one room schoolhouses and the artifacts when possible.

Sometimes the wrecking ball pummels a structure and the memories that lie within; but the reminders for some are the country school teacher’s bell, historic ledgers, photographs and diaries. Housing these items can be a challenge when the school house or other historic structure is demolished. As some preservationists may be looking for items to add to the authenticity of their one room school house, one may find needed items where a school may become a part of the dust. If there is one piece of a demolished school to be salvaged, at least that is a piece that continues on.

When the one room school house in Redford Township, Michigan was demolished, the plan was to put a bench or something along that line to recognize the fact that the school stood there through three different centuries. In my recent short historical book titled, “One Room Schools –Vanishing One Room Schools”, I capture some of the essence of it in my fine art photography, as well as pertinent information regarding same. Even though this one room school was one that was in the Metro Detroit area, I wasn’t aware of its history, until a few years ago. I knew that the only way I could preserve some of its history was through my new short book, and also I incorporated a couple of other one room schools that are still standing. One of them is the District No. 1 School House in Romulus, Mi. that is open for a few hours on Sundays for researchers and visitors. Another school pictured in my book has an uncertain future. My hope is that more schools and the contents therein can be saved.

I needed to go back to where the Redford School once stood and reflect on what was there, and find out what was done to at least recognize its historic significance. The original historical designation marker that was placed there in the 80’s, was not removed from its spot, which was a relief to me. That part of history had been undisturbed. Surrounding the historic marker was a monument dedicated to its existence, complete with the original brick that showcased the year that it was hand hewn by bricklayers of the day in the 1800’s, who probably were the parents and others who had a personal interest in building the edifice for the scholars to attend. On the marker



Photo by Cheryl Vatcher-Martin, M.A. April 2016.

were pictures of the school, which gave it adequate homage; considering its ultimate disposition as an important landmark in Redford. I want to personally thank everyone on the MORSA Board for what was done to try to save this school. Even though the school is no longer, I find the marker and the contents on it a testament to the fact that those who decided its fate realized that the greater good would be accomplished by preserving a tidbit of it. I’m glad I was a part of this fine group fighting to save it. My take away is that we brought awareness to others, and in the process we learned a lot about the value of this school, and how we are doing the best we can to preserve history of the one room school.

For those who are interested in learning about my books, One Room Schools – Vanishing One Room Schools, Haiku For You: With Some One Room School House History, and others, by author Cheryl Vatcher-Martin, M.A., please contact me via Peroinc5@gmail.com.



Photo by Cheryl Vatcher-Martin, M.A. April 2016.

About McGuffey

(Continued from page 1)

the docent we saw was very knowledgeable, but did not know much more about the “curriculum box” than we did and had no suggestions for where we could obtain more information.

Over the past several months I have done several extensive on line searches and can find no additional information about the box. I have, however, learned a great deal more about McGuffey. He appears to be a fascinating individual with a photographic memory and was respected as a teacher, academic administrator and a humanist.

William Holmes McGuffey was born in 1800 and died in 1873. His parents had emigrated from Scotland and brought with them a strong belief in the value of education and were Calvinistic Protestants. He received his initial education at the Old Stone Academy in Darling, PA. At 14 years of age he began teaching school as a “roving” teacher in both Ohio and Kentucky to students who were both younger and older than he was. He continued his education during off periods and in 1826 at age 26 he graduated from Washington College. He was subsequently appointed to the faculty of the new Miami University where he spent ten years. During his last two years there he wrote the first four graded McGuffey readers. Actually he was asked to do this by a small publishing company in Cincinnati, Ohio. His name had been recommended to them by his friend Harriet Beecher Stowe. For his efforts he was paid \$1,000.

McGuffey spent the rest of his career in higher education, first as president of three different institutions and then from 1845-1873 as chair of Mental and Moral Philosophy at the University of Virginia.

It is interesting to note that his brother Alexander actually wrote volumes 5 and 6 and in 1879 they all were revised by others to become less moralistic and more secular. William McGuffey had nothing to do with these revisions.

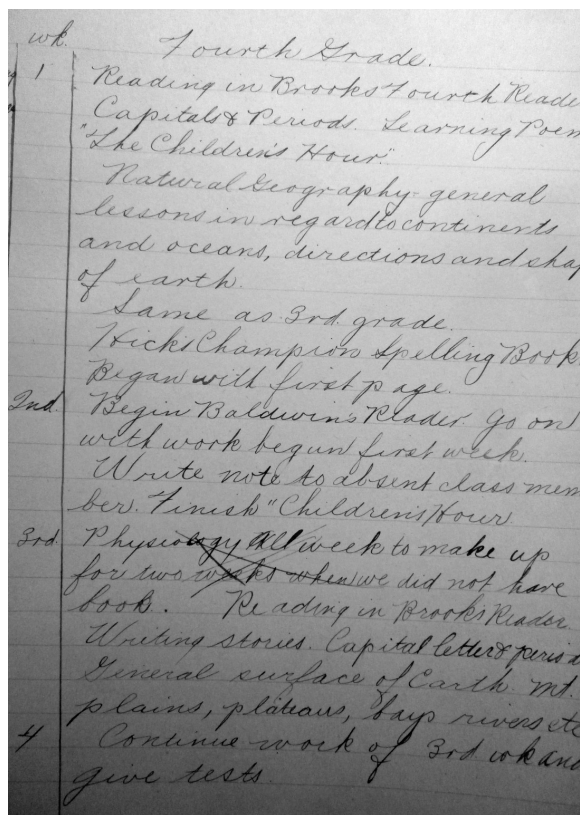
To me, one of the more amazing facts I learned is that McGuffey readers are readily available and are being used today in some home schooling and in

certain Protestant religious schools.

I am going to continue my quest to find out more about the “curriculum box” which appears to have been assembled after McGuffey’s death.

Oh, and by the way, the Model T meet was helpful in my restoration efforts.

Lesson Plan



Fourth Grade lesson plan by teacher, Louise Zahn, 1918-1919., Popkins School.

“Grandma taught at the Popkins School at Plymouth Road and Earhart the last couple of years. She lived in an apartment above my Grandpa’s brother, Ed Zeeb, whose farm is now in the middle of US 23 along Plymouth Road. Before that she taught at a school on 5 mile Road.”

~Granddaughter Martha Zeeb, Washtenaw Co.

**Michigan One-Room Schoolhouse Association
William Winglar One-Room Schoolhouse of the Year
Award Application**

Date _____

Section 1-Ownership

Schoolhouse Owner(s) Address _____

Name of School _____

Address of School _____

Nominated by/Contact Person: _____

Address: _____

Phone number (s): _____

E-mail _____

Section 2-The Schoolhouse

1. Date of construction and builder, if known:

2. Type of construction

3. Years used as a school

4. After closure, how was the building used?

5. Outline any structural/architectural changes from the original building to the present

Section 3-History of the School and its Restoration

1. Please write a short history of the schoolhouse, including any features that distinguish it from other schools. (Attach an extra sheet if necessary)

(cont. on pg. 7)

MORSA Schoolhouse Award

(cont. from pg. 6)

2. Discuss the restoration of the schoolhouse and how it's used at the present. Has it been moved from its original location? If so, to what location?

3. To which specific time period is the schoolhouse restored? _____

4. Please attach at least two interior and four exterior photos.

5. Is the building open to the public? Does it serve an educational function?

Please send completed application to:

Rochelle Balkam
222 Wildwood Ave.
Ann Arbor, MI 48103
Phone: (734) 668-6294
e-mail: Balkamhp@gmail.com

The award will be given only to schools that have **not been** converted to other uses such as homes or places of business. These criteria have been adapted with permission from the Country School Association of America.

Tongue Twisters

- ◆ Big blue Beans in a brown blown bladder.
- ◆ Bloom, beauteous blossoms, budding bowers beneath! Behold, Borneas' bitter blast by brief Bright Beams becalmed; balmy breeze; breathe, banishing blight, bring bliss beyond belief .
- ◆ Betty Botter bought a bit of butter. "But," she said, "this butter's bitter. If I put it in my batter, it will make my batter bitter. But a bit of better butter will make my batter better." So Betty Botter bought a bit of better butter, and it made her batter better.
- ◆ Fanny Fitch fried five floundering fish for Francis Fowler's father.
- ◆ I never felt felt feel flat like that felt felt.
- ◆ What whim led "Whitney White" to whittle, whistle, whisper and whimper near the wharf where a whale might wheel and whirl?
- ◆ Thomas Tattertoo took taut twine to tie ten twigs to two tall trees.
- ◆ When a twiner a-twisting will twist him a twist
For the twining has twist he three twines doth untwist;
But if one of the twines of the twist do untwist,
The twine that untwineth, untwisteth the twist.
- ◆ The sixth sheik's sixth sheep's sick.

Michigan One-Room Schoolhouse Association

2016/2017

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Membership Dues:

\$10 Senior (62+) or Student

\$15 Individual,

\$25 Organizations

\$100 Life

Website Address:

<<http://www.one-roomschool.org>

Michigan One-Room Schoolhouse Association

c/o Tom M. Johnson

4815 Barton Rd.

Williamston, MI 488895