

BROADSIDE

Fall 2002

WEST WINDSOR'S EARLY SCHOOLHOUSES

The first schools in West Windsor were log cabins built by the able-bodied men of the community. Most of the earliest schools were "pay schools," which meant that the head of each family paid a stated amount toward the teacher's salary for his children attending the school. In addition, funds were allotted by West Windsor Township. (3)

In 1890 there were four schools in West Windsor Township: Penns Neck School at the Mount Farm on Route 1 (now the owner's house at O'Neill's Kennels); the Parsonage School on Clarksville Rd.(next to the Maurice Hawk School); Edinburg School (called Assanpink) on Old Trenton Road; the Dutch Neck School on the edge of the village.

In 1917 the Dutch Neck schoolhouse was moved to Village Road West. Later, the building was cut into two parts. One portion became a residence and the rest garage/workshop. (2) & (3).

The "one-room" schools handled Grades 1 through 8. The number of students in each class varied with as few as one student in a class occasionally. Students started in D class and worked up to A. Boys who lived on farms went to school during winter only. This meant some farm boys continued in school until they were as old as 25 years of age.(3)

The schools were heated by a stove. On Monday morning, the teacher would build a coal fire which



Class of 1890 Edinburg one-room schoolhouse. The adults seen in the photo just happened by and joined in the photo as was the custom in those days when photography was a relatively new invention. Photo courtesy of Annabelle Hawke Jantz.

the boys would keep going until Friday. Students in the earliest days used a slate blackboard writing with lump of lead. There was only one text, the Primer, which contained material we would now expect to find in our Sunday schools. (3)

Old maps show schoolhouses in Dutch Neck, Penns Neck, Edinburg, Clarksville and Princeton Junction (called the Parsonage School), but there is no record of a school in Grover's Mill. It is supposed that Grover's Mill students would have to walk or be driven by wagon to the closest school, probably the Parsonage School on Clarksville Road.

Dutch Neck School



Records show a log cabin was used as the first one-room schoolhouse when Dutch Neck was founded. The first building was located at the rear of the cemetery of the Dutch Neck Church. This building burned in 1850 and was replaced.

The four-room nucleus of the present brick and stone Dutch Neck school was built beginning in 1917. It held 200 students and handled Grades K-8. Ten years later two rooms were added. In 1952, the front wing was built adding six classrooms, an auditorium/gymnasium and bathrooms. In 1956, the back wing was added including the East Entrance.

In 1962, Dutch Neck became a middle school for Grades 4-6. In 1974, the Media Center was built filling the courtyard which had existed between the front and back additions. The Cafeteria and a three-room Kindergarten wing were also built.

In 1985, a "temporary 4-room "quad" became a permanent addition to the school. In 1990, Dutch Neck became a primary school again, handling Grades K-8.

Penns Neck School

Here again, the first one-room schoolhouse was built by the men of the community. It was a large building made of huge timbers and used as a residence as well as a school. There were three different locations for the Penns Neck School: the first on the Jewell Farm on Route One near Washington Road; the second near what was called the "Penn 'Stop' station" which must have been near the "Dinky" tracks at Alexander Road on Route One and the third on the Hendrickson Farm on Route One. When the school's location was moved, the building materials were also moved and re-used at the new location.

The third school was later purchased by William Mount and converted into "a modern bungalow," which was occupied by Bernard Mount at the time "Old Princeton's Neighbors" was written during the 1930s.

In 1859 there was an effort made to build a new school. The community raised \$800 to purchase land and build a new school on it. However, the money was used to pay bounties to Civil War soldiers in 1862 and 1863. (1)

Teachers at the schools seemed to be local women. Several of them are listed in "Old Princeton's Neighbors" as still living in Penns Neck in the 1930s. Those listed are: Margaret Hall (Mrs. Liscomb Beaumont Reed); Marcia Higgins (Mrs. Cleve Warren) and Miss Annie Hendrickson. (1)

The four-room brick and stone Penns Neck School was built on the northwest corner of Route One and Alexander Road in 1917. It was the twin of the Dutch Neck School. The larger school handled students from the years 1917 to 1967. The building was sold in 1973 and used as offices. The building was demolished in 1995 when the Alexander Road overpass was built.



Penns Neck School, Route One and Alexander Road. Photo courtesy of Bernt Midland.

Georgiana Hauck was principal and taught 7th and 8th Grades at the Penns Neck School from 1922 to 1964. In an interview with Miss Hauck, she told us that there were 130 students at the school with only between four and six teachers. The school handled First through Eighth Grades. Students then went to Princeton High School or Trenton High School. There was a State Examination given in 8th Grade which students had to pass before they could continue into high school.

Many students during Miss Hauck's time as principal were farmer's children who helped their families run the family farms after graduation from school. There were also students who were interested in going to college, but this was difficult during the Depression of the 1930s. By the time Miss Hauck retired in 1964, the community had changed and many students went to college.

Edinburg School

Located in front of 1676 Old Trenton Road, the building has long been demolished.



Edinburg One-room schoolhouse, Old Trenton Road. Photo courtesy of Frank Rogers.

Clarksville

The hamlet of Clarksville was located on both sides of Quaker Bridge Road from the D&R Canal to about where the Quaker Bridge Mall is located today. This meant that Clarksville was a part of both Lawrence and West Windsor Townships and its students came from both townships.

The Clarksville School was located just about where the entrance to the Quaker Bridge Mall stands off Quaker Bridge Road. The building burned in 1937.



The one-room Clarksville School once located at the present entrance to the Quaker Bridge Mall. The school burned in 1937. Photo courtesy of Winona Nash, Lawrence Township historian.

Parsonage School (Princeton Junction)

No one seems to know why the school was called the "parsonage" school.

The Parsonage School was also transformed into a private house, located next door to the Maurice Hawk School on Clarksville Road. In 1994, the house and land were sold. The new owners did not want the house, but allowed it to be moved onto the Schenck Farmstead in Zaitz Park on Southfield Road.

The building still awaits restoration and immediate stabilizing before it disintegrates beyond repair. The schoolhouse will be a key element in the tours by school classes and others to see what schools were like 100 years ago.

WEST WINDSOR'S EARLY SCHOOLHOUSES

The first schools in West Windsor were log cabins built by the able-bodied men of the community. Most of the earliest schools were "pay schools," which meant that the head of each family paid a stated amount toward the teacher's salary for his children attending the school. In addition, funds were allotted by West Windsor Township. (3)

In 1890 there were four schools in West Windsor Township: Penns Neck School at the Mount Farm on Route 1 (now the owner's house at O'Neill's Kennels); the Parsonage School on Clarksville Rd.(next to the Maurice Hawk School); Edinburg School (called Assanpink) on Old Trenton Road; the Dutch Neck School on the edge of the village.

In 1917 the Dutch Neck schoolhouse was moved to Village Road West. Later, the building was cut into two parts. One portion became a residence and the rest garage/workshop. (2) & (3).

The "one-room" schools handled Grades 1 through 8. The number of students in each class varied with as few as one student in a class occasionally. Students started in D class and worked up to A. Boys who lived on farms went to school during winter only. This meant some farm boys continued in school until they were as old as 25 years of age.(3)

The schools were heated by a stove. On Monday morning, the teacher would build a coal fire which



Class of 1890 Edinburg one-room schoolhouse. The adults seen in the photo just happened by and joined in the photo as was the custom in those days when photography was a relatively new invention . Photo courtesy of Annabelle Hawke Jantz.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE HSofWW - FALL 2002

Barn

At this time, the foundation of the barn has been completed and work has begun on repairing and replacing the frame timbers. New Jersey Barn Company predicts that the framework, protective roof and siding will be complete by the end of 2002. They are planning an old-fashioned "barn raising" some time soon. We hope to receive enough advance notice to let members and others know when it will take place.

Donations & Acquisitions

The following items have been donated to us since our last newsletter: Wooden cradle-Jeanne K. and Richard H. Gustafson; Clippings and photos of Bryan Singer, Hollywood screen writer, and receipts from various local businesses-Ruth Finkelstein; Watercolor of the Schenck House by Jackie Wouwenberg; Two 1940s pencil boxes and 100-page scrapbook of HSofWW publicity since 1982- Joan and Scott Parry; Butter press and reel hand lawn mower-Joan Eddinger. Many thanks to all of you.

New Members

We are pleased to welcome the following new members: Edith Perrine Sprague, Steve Goldin; Barbara and Anthony Weinfeld; Alice Martch, Barbara A. Beneditti (Flock) and the Allentown County Library, Ft. Wayne, Indiana .

Milestones

We are deeply saddened to report the deaths of four long-time members: Marguerite (Peg) Smith Roszel, Jean LaSelle, Dorothy C. Mather, and Dorothy C. Tindall. Our condolences go to their families.

Memorial/Honor Donation Cards

In answer to many requests, we are preparing Memorial/Honor Donation Cards for those who wish to make a donation in honor of someone's special event. If you want to make such a donation, please send your check to Kay Reed stating the name of the person to be honored/remembered, and the name and address of the person to whom the notification card should be sent. The donor will receive a letter acknowledging their donation.

Membership Dues

Enclosed with the Broadside is our new membership form for 2003. Note the dues have not been increased, but we have added two new categories: Patron -\$50 and Sponsor-\$100. Also, you may pay dues in advance for future years. Be sure to indicate this on your membership form. Finally, for those who have not paid for 2002 or earlier, please bring your dues up to date. We hate to remove members from our list.

Schenck House Opening Days-Sunday, October 13th and November 10th from 1 to 4 p.m. the Schenck House will be open to visitors. Docents are needed.

2002 Holiday House Tour

of the "Castle", 96 Bear Brook Road

Sunday, December 8th from 1 to 4 p.m.



To benefit The Historical Society of West Windsor

Tickets at the door: Adults - \$6; Members,
Senior Citizens 65+-and Students - 6-18 - \$4

For further information: 452-8598