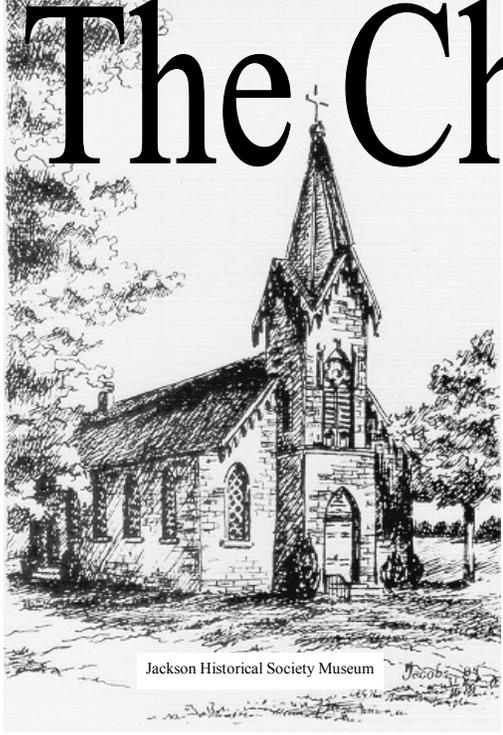


# The Church Mouse



Jackson Historical Society Museum

Volume 20 Issue 3 Jackson Historical Society November 2015

## ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSES—WHERE IT ALL BEGAN Education in Wisconsin, Washington County, Jackson

Many Jackson folks began their education in one-room schoolhouses or know someone who did. Whether church or government established, they were located throughout the community. But why one-room schoolhouses and why so many?

One-room schools were once commonplace throughout rural portions of many countries, including Prussia, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Ireland and Spain. Considering that many immigrants arriving in the United States brought with them their experience of being educated in one-room schoolhouses, it is logical that education in our area followed a similar path.

Prussia was among the first countries in the world to introduce tax-funded and generally compulsory primary education for boys and girls. The state sponsored system was introduced in the late 18th century and has had widespread influences around the world.



One-room school Prussia 1773

When the large group of Pomeranians emigrated to Jackson in 1843, they not only brought their Pastor, they brought their Teacher. Education was important to them and was already a part of their life in Pomerania so they brought it with them to their new home in Jackson.

However, the basis for the educational system that we have in Wisconsin began with an Ordinance passed by the Continental Congress in 1787. The Ordinance of 1787 or Northwest Ordinance, specified four principal things. First, it authorized a provisional government for the vast Northwest Territory. Second, it provided a method for making new governments out of that territory. Third it guaranteed a bill of rights to inhabitants of the new territories and prohibited slavery in them. And fourth, it outlined a way to survey and identify the new lands.

The most powerful effect of the Ordinance of 1787 on Wisconsin education came from the last provision concerning the surveying of public lands. The ordinance called for teams of surveyors to hike across the land measuring it into six-mile squares called townships. They then subdivided each township into thirty-six mile-square sections of roughly 640 acres each. The Ordinance of 1787 had set down provisions for the development of the township system of government.

The Ordinance of 1787 further stated that knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged. To further that ideal, Section 16 of each town was to be retained for educational purposes. This meant that the funds from the sale of this land were to be set aside for ed-

*(One-room schoolhouses continued on page 2)*

### MEMBERSHIP DUES

Your annual **\$15** dues cover a calendar year starting in **January**. The current year for your membership is shown on The Church Mouse address label to the right of the zip code.

Your dues include a subscription to the Church Mouse and help us preserve Jackson history.

### JHS MEETINGS TIMES

The Jackson Historical Society meets the 2nd Monday of every other month, Jan/Mar/May/Jul/Sep/Nov, at 7:00pm.

JHS meetings are held at 1860 Mill Road, Jackson, in our restored, Karl Groth log home. Visitors are welcome.

### JHS OFFICERS

- Royal Natzke—President
- Jerry Prochnow—Vice President
- Lenore Kloehn—Treasurer
- Jim Kliese—Secretary

### BOARD MEMBERS

- JHS Officers, Bonnie Embertson,
- Russ Hanson, and Elmer Kloehn



*(On -room schoolhouses continued from page 1)*

ucational use.

School Districts were set up based on population rather than location. An 1836 Act of Congress set up a school code to be followed in the territories. A clerk, director, and treasurer were to locate the school, hire teachers for at least three months and levy taxes for the support of the school. Annual meetings were held on the third Monday in July. In 1839 the Act was revised to make families rather than electors the basis for school organization. Every area with at least ten families was made into a school district and required to provide a competent teacher. There was a county wide tax to raise money to build and support schools. School districts were about four square miles. This meant there was a school about every two miles. In Washington County there were seventy-two one room schools in operation.

In the early years, children went to school for three months in winter. This was increased to five months and by 1880 a six month term was common. A compulsory school attendance law was passed in 1907 requiring all children, ages 7 to 14, who lived outside of cities, to attend school for at least twenty-four weeks per year. If a family was more than two miles from a school the law did not affect them. In 1925 the nine month term became standard.

It was not uncommon for schools to have had two teachers during a year. Often a teacher would work the winter term but move on by summer and a new teacher would have to be hired. It was a common practice to hire men for the winter term and women for the summer. The pay per month in some districts included room and board provided by various district families. The pay per month varied from \$30-\$50, with men usually being paid more. In the late 1960's a salary schedule for teachers was adopted.

The very early schools were family homes, or one room buildings constructed of logs or fieldstone. The buildings were located on a needs basis rather than by ordinance. Later as the county was settled these early buildings were often replaced with brick or wooden frame structures. The bathrooms were outhouses. Water was carried from a nearby farm and wood for heat was supplied by the parents of the pupils. The duties of the teacher included lighting the fire, removing ashes, sweeping the floors and carrying water. These duties were often stated in the teacher's contract.

Two recesses and lunchtime became part of the average school day. Recess activities included games like "Run My Good Sheep Run", "Tag", "Drop the Hankie", "Captain May I", "Red Rover", "Pom Pom Pull Away", "Anti Anti Over", "Fox & Goose", "Jump Rope", "Marbles", "Hopscotch", and "Baseball". In winter snow fights, sledding and skating were enjoyed.

Playground equipment varied by school but swings, merry-go-rounds and a ball diamond over time became common. Each school had a flagpole and the flag was flown when the school was in session,

The school was very often the center of social activity for the community. Town meetings, church services as well as all school functions took place in these buildings. The Christmas programs and end of the year picnics were a must and everyone came from grandparents to babies to enjoy these events.

According to a state law passed in 1849, each school was required to have a specific name and district number. In Jackson, Jt. District No. 1 was Sunnyside/Evergreen School; District 2 was Thiel School ; Districts 3 & 4 was South Center School; District 5 was Maple Lawn School; District 6 was Elmwood School; District 7 was Jackson School; District 8 was Kirchhayn School; District 9 was Jackson Center School ; and District 10 was Groth School. The David's Star Christian Day School and Immanuel Lutheran School were early schools in the Town of Jackson.

In 1875 an act was passed in Madison that stated: the district board in any school district could use the school buildings for religious meetings. There are several places in Washington county where public and parochial schools shared buildings and teachers.

As our history unfolded, it became apparent that formal education needed to be available beyond the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. In 1947 a state statute was adopted that all school districts needed to be part of a high school district. Also at this time many of the schools needed to be modernized. As a result of districts trying to meet these changes many schools closed and students were transported to larger districts. Tuition was paid by the individual school districts for the education of these students. State Graded Schools were enlarged and five high school districts

*(One-room schoolhouses continued on page 5)*



**THE FIRST TEACHER**

Esther C. Weckmueller passed away at the age of 89 in April, 2004. Included in her estate was a diary kept by her father, Christopher Weckmueller. Chris grew up in our area. He began teaching at the age of 16 and at 26 was hired as the first teacher in the new District 7 school in Jackson.

Christopher Weckmueller was born on April 16th, 1868 on a 40 acre farm in Section 6 of the Town of Jackson. At the age of 4, his parents moved to a farm in Section 3 of the town of Jackson. At the age of 8, his parents sold the farm and bought an 80 acre farm in Section 12 in the Town of Polk. Chris attended the Mayfield school until the age of 16. During the spring term of 1884, he attended West Bend High School and in the fall attended the County Teacher’s Examination, earned a Third Grade Certificate and was licensed to teach in Washington County. He taught at Joint District 8&9 in Polk and earned \$35 per month. Ten years later he began teaching at the District 7 school in Jackson. Here are excerpts from his diary in his own words.

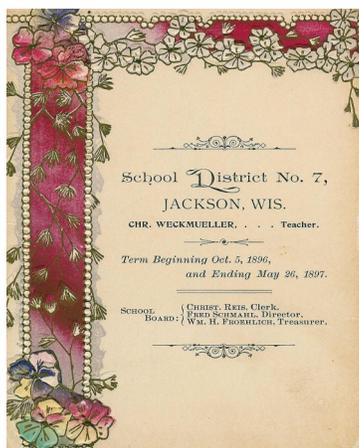
“During the summer of 1894, the school district at Jackson built a new school house.” “The position of teacher was offered me and I accepted.” “In October, the building was dedicated with appropriate exercises and I began my labors.” “I had charge of the school five years in succession—from 1894-1895, 1895-1896, 1896-1897, 1897-1898, 1898-1899.”



Class Picture District 7 School about 1895



New District 7 School in Jackson—1894



Program from School Year 1896-1897

Names of Pupils.	
Albert Gunn,	Isabelle Lausy,
Frank Gunn,	Henry Krueger,
Wilbert Gunn,	Ella Krueger,
George Jenner,	Ernestine Krueger,
Eddie Jenner,	Philip Mayer,
Elsa Jenner,	Walter Mayer,
Frieda Jenner,	Arthur Mayer,
Hattie Herman,	Willie Mayer,
Harvey Herman,	Anna Zillsdorf,
Oreida Herman,	Estella Herman,
Emma Weckmueller,	Amalia Froehlich,
Willie Weckmueller,	Flora Frank,
Annie Krueger,	Esther Frank,
Johnny Krueger,	Idella Prochnow,
Edwin Krueger,	Alma Humbert,
Hugo Reis,	Elvira Herman,
Fredie Schmahl,	George Holl,
Minnie Schmahl,	Oscar Klimb,
Adelia Schmahl,	Willie Krenz,
Theodore Ziegler,	Edwin Barenz,
Hannah Ziegler,	Hortense Graebe,
Edna Ziegler,	John Froehlich,
Alfred Ziegler,	George Krause,
Johnny Lois,	Samuel Krause,
Albin Hold,	Arthur Krause,
Edward Held,	Louisa Prochnow,
Alvin Jung,	Rosa Blank,
Katie Blank,	Fredie Frank,
Annie Blank,	Rosa Frank,
Laura Quade,	Henry Mayer,
Jennie Quade,	Henry Mayer,
Maggie Schoenbeck,	Clarence Hagedorn,
Clara Schoenbeck,	Alfred Hagedorn,
Lily Schoenbeck,	Alfred Held,
Arthur Lausy,	



Mr. & Mrs. C. Weckmueller & Herbert, Jackson

Chris courted and married Miss Bertha Martin, second youngest daughter of Andrew Martin of Jackson.

“At the close of the school year 1896-1897, we made preparations for our marriage.” “The happy event took place Aug. 25, 1897, with ceremonies in the Evangelical Reformed Church, Rev. F. P. Leich officiating, and a

*(The First Teacher continued on page 4)*



## SOUTH CENTER SCHOOL 1913-1966

In the 1880's Jackson was apportioned into 10 school districts, with each district to establish a school. The school built for District 3 of the Town of Jackson was South Center School, located at the northeast corner of Highways G and T. It was constructed on a half acre of land purchased from Mrs. Wilhelmina Prochnow for \$175. The school was a white clapboard building with circular cement steps (good for taking class pictures). Separate outdoor toilets were built for boys and girls, but there was no well on the property so water was carried from St. John's Church across the street.

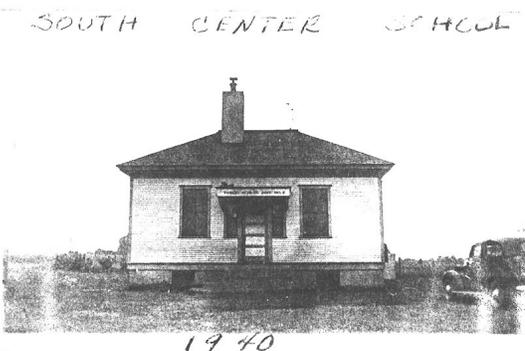
Students were called to class with a hand bell which they loved to have a chance to ring. There was a cloakroom, a main school room, and a small storage room. The school was heated with a "big black stove" with "all kinds of pipes coming out of it", as it was described. It burned coal which was kept in the basement. Original lighting was by oil lamps. Electric power made possible "white schoolhouse globe" lamps after May 1926, and the stove was replaced by a furnace between 1927 and 1934. In March 1957 an acre of land north of the building was purchased, a well was drilled and a septic system installed. The cloakrooms were changed into restrooms.

The school was run by a school board, whose job was to hire the teacher. Attendance was better each year after the harvest. Regular attendance was not required, but the number of students reached 30 in the early years. It had fallen to 3 in the 1933-34 term. The students did their part for the war effort in World War II. They brought scrap metals and old tires from home, gathered milkweed pods for parachutes and learned how to knit and made an afghan (picture to right) for a soldier.

Teaching in a one-room school was an "awesome responsibility" according to Betty Falter who was hired in 1955. She had thirty students and had to do everything for the students as well as take care of the building during the day. She taught all subjects to eight grades with the older children often helping to train the younger ones.



(Left to Right) Erwin Krause, Kenneth Miller, Clara Mae Miller, Maynard Marth, Winifried Wiechmann, Lucille McKee (Teacher) Elvira Marth, John Prochnow (picture taken in 1942)



South Center was closed in the spring of 1966 and was used for a time as a residence. It stood unused until May 1970 when the building was sold and dismantled. Students still remember Halloween parties in the basement, valentine parties, marbles matches, folding the

flag, moving the desks aside for square dancing, Friday night spelling bees, and other good times.

A reunion of former students was held July 27, 1997.

This article was provided for the March 1998 Church Mouse by Winnie Schilling

*(The First Teacher continued from page 3)*  
celebration at the bride's home." "We made a wedding trip to Kilbourn, visiting the "Dells", from there to Janesville, thence to Chicago and back to Jackson, where a cozy home awaited us." "By this time it was again time to begin my school duties."

"May 28, 1898 we were blessed with the arrival of a little son." "May he grow up to be a good and useful man."

However, his years at Jackson were to be his last for a while as a teacher. His story continues.

"During the winter of 1898 I made preparations to take the Civil Service Examination for the Customs Service at the Port of Milwaukee." "August 4th I was informed that my name was first in order on the eligible register, having attained an average of 91.85." "There did not appear to be much of a chance to secure an appointment, and as my name would be stricken at the end of a year, that is, after Aug. 4, 1899, I determined to take another examination." "This was to be held June 20." "My school at Jackson had closed the week before." "Instead of taking another examination, I was handed my appointment as Deputy Collector and Inspector of Customs, by Chas. B. Roberts, Collector of Customs at Milwaukee." So ended Chris Weckmueller's five years as "First Teacher" at the "new" District 7 school in Jackson.

Paul Gumm and Lorna Waechter provided JHS with a copy of this historic diary.



(One-room schoolhouses continued from page 2) were available for enrollment: Germantown, Hartford, Kewaskum Slinger, and West Bend. All school districts had to make a decision on which of the five available districts they would be sending their 8<sup>th</sup> graders to. In some districts the decisions were difficult and created heated debate and caused divisions in districts for many years.

As you can see, the development of our school system remains a work in progress. However, what was set in place in the early years was the recognition of the need to educate our children and the means to do so. The effort continues.

Much of the content for this article was excerpted from the book *EDUCATION IN RURAL WASHINGTON COUNTY* by the Retired Educators of Washington County. This excellent work was edited by Shirley Walters and is available for research in the West Bend Library and the Jackson Historical Society.



'Twas the night before Christmas when all through the house not a creature was stirring not even my uncle Fritz, who was asleep in front of the warm fireplace!

*Merry Christmas 2015*

**TODAY WILL BE HISTORY  
TOMORROW!**

**HELP THE JACKSON  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
PRESERVE YOUR  
YESTERDAYS.**



**RASPBERRY FESTIVAL A GREAT SUCCESS  
ON SEPTEMBER 13th**

Our fall Raspberry Festival was held on a sunny afternoon, Sunday, Sept. 13th, 2014, on the society's grounds, 1860 Mill Rd.

The Festival Trio provided music entertainment for our arriving guests.

Our silent auction inside our historic Immanuel Lutheran Church Museum drew a large crowd of treasure seekers.

Delicious raspberry pie and a scoop of our Honey Grove ice cream served by Rob and Mike Mielke was a real treat. Pie, Brats, and hot dogs were served. Add an ear of hot buttered sweet corn for a nice meal. If you wanted some fresh vegetables, Eickstedt's offered a good selection. They also had their bees working overtime to provide Honey Knoll honey for our festival.

Many new vendors joined us this year offering products and crafts.

Oliver Schowalter's Miniatures were on display.

Lee Bernard provided appraisals for antique items brought to the festival.

Antique cars from the Kettle Moraine Model T Ford and Vintage Car Club were on display.

A rousing, musical concert was provided for our guests by the Young Patriots of Washington County.

After the concert, folks continued touring our restored church, 2-story log home, and joined teacher Doris Koeller for classes in our one-room schoolhouse.

Many visitors just enjoyed

**JHS DISPLAY AT  
WEST BEND LIBRARY**

A doll is a model of a human being, often used as a toy for children. The use of dolls as toys was documented in Greece around 100 AD. Modern doll manufacturing has its roots in Germany, going back to the 15th Century.



With industrialization and new materials such as porcelain and plastic, dolls were increasingly mass-produced.

Come visit the doll display at the West Bend Library.

The Jackson Historical Society is open by appointment only. Call Jerry Prochnow—338-8867, or Russ Hanson 677-3888, if you'd like to pay us a visit.

spending a nice warm sunny afternoon visiting with friends. The pleasant afternoon was enjoyed by all. Thanks for coming. See you next year.



Happy Thanksgiving

### AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETIES EVENTS

**RICHFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY** November 24th, Hi Horns Quartet—Music from the Civil War. December 5th, Christmas at the Mill. Mark your calendar. Please Contact [www.richfieldhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.richfieldhistoricalsociety.org) for more information on events and meetings.

**GERMANTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY** December 1st, Sinter Klausen Christmas Concert. Please contact the Germantown Historical Society at [germantownhistoricalsociety.org](http://germantownhistoricalsociety.org) for more information.

**POMMERSCHER VEREIN FREISTADT** For information on events, Contact—[information@pommerschervereinfreistadt.org](mailto:information@pommerschervereinfreistadt.org).

**WASHINGTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY** November 11th, Veteran's Day, Museum open 11-5 Free Admission after Service on Veteran's Plaza. Contact historical society at [www.historyisfun.com](http://www.historyisfun.com) and click EVENTS for more information and other events.



The Editor welcomes comments on the newsletter. Please mail all suggestions for articles, etc., to The Church Mouse, 1921 State Road 60, Jackson, WI 53037, or phone (262) 677-3888, or e-mail [jhsheritage@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jhsheritage@sbcglobal.net). Russ Hanson, Editor

### ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE ENJOYED BY FESTIVAL VISITORS

For those of you who have visited our one-room schoolhouse during our recent Raspberry Festivals you have been able to experience education as it was in the late 1800's. Visits to our historic one-room schoolhouse can also be arranged as a field trip for school classes. A visit to our schoolhouse lets you step back in time to experience what schooling was like in the era of wood for heat, no electricity, and no indoor plumbing, when slates and chalk were used and McGuffey Readers were common.

But, it was not always so. It has taken JHS a number of years, much effort and cost to restore our one-room schoolhouse.

An article in our June 1998 Church Mouse tells of the beginning of the restoration process, the residing of the schoolhouse. Under the guidance of Ray Heidtke, 4H Club members along with JHS members did the job. We received one sizeable donation, but it still depleted our restoration funds. The article also noted that the roof needed replacing, but that would not be accomplished until 2002, four years later.

A February 24th, 2002 article in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel by Mark Jaeger tells the story.

*The neighborhood raccoons that have found winter refuge in the 142-year-old schoolhouse on Mill Road will soon need to make other arrangements. The Jackson Historical Society has received a \$2,500 grant from the Greater Milwaukee Foundation to put a new roof on the one-room schoolhouse that the group maintains on the grounds of what used to be the Immanuel Lutheran Church. The site includes a church and cemetery.*

*The new roof is the latest step in efforts to spruce up the historical site about two miles southeast of the Village of Jackson, said Raymond Dausman of the historical society.*

*A museum of local history has been established in the small brick church, which was erected in 1874, replacing a log church that had been built in 1869. The building was used for worship by a German-speaking congregation, an offshoot of David's Star Evangelical Lutheran Church. The last service was held in the church in 1974. When the congregation disbanded, much of the 20-acre parcel was sold, but the buildings and cemetery were turned over to the Town of Jackson. The adjoining log school was erected by the congregation in 1860 and was used for classes until 1947.*

*In the ensuing 55 years, the log building has fallen into disrepair, Dausman said. The woods nearby host lots of raccoons, and just about every year, some break in through the roof and spend the winter inside the old school, Dausman said. The animals caused so much damage breaking through the cedar shake roof the society installed an improvised trap door this winter to give the animals less destructive access.*

*With the grant money, the society plans to put on a new shingled roof—without the trap door.*

*Volunteers have been working on restoring the two buildings for the past five years, when they were turned over by the town to the historical society.*

*We are always looking for members and volunteers," said Dausman, who said the group eventually would like to invite school groups to the site to give students an idea of what education was like in the days before computer labs.*



Since 2002, additional improvements have been made to the schoolhouse. Visits by appointment.