

HISTORY OF TIPPECANOE VALLEY SCHOOL CORPORATION

Compiled by Roy E. Meredith, Akron, Indiana

November 1985

I. BACKGROUNDS OF SCHOOLS

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP

(By Roy E. Meredith)

Beaver Dam School goes back as far as 1838. Before that it was undoubtedly a subscription school. In 1838, the township trustees took official charge of schools.

About 1852, the new Constitution of Indiana gave the Trustees power to tax the patrons for the support of the one room district schools. Patrons of each district school elected school directors at the annual meeting of each district.

In 1859, the three township trustees were reduced to one by the State General Assembly. In 1865, power was given to the Trustee to levy taxes to erect school buildings. It was from 1865 to 1890 that the red brick schoolhouses were built. Beaver Dam had one such school carrying the name of District #10.

In 1881, a three room brick school was constructed on the site of the old Beaver Dam School. This building was used until 1909 when it was demolished and a new consolidated school (other district schools had been abandoned and had merged with Beaver Dam) was erected. Because the new building was not completed by September 1909, the school was housed for part of the school year in the old brick Petry Saw Mill building. The school building with a 1928 addition was used until it was destroyed by fire in 1968.

When the 1881 building was erected grades were introduced. The district schools had been ungraded to that date. Later, high school courses were

offered. The school had no high school graduates until 1914. The class of 1914 had four graduates. Austin Blue was Township Trustee and Mrs. O. Trevis Martin was Principal.

Alumni pride is very great, especially after the Beaver Dam High School basketball team went to the State Basketball Tourney in 1933 and 1934.

## HENRY TOWNSHIP - AKRON SCHOOLS

(By Willis Bowen)

Akron High School was first organized in the mid 1890's and the first class was graduated in 1897. There were 8 members in the class. There is no record of a class in 1898. The class of 1899 had 3 members and in 1900 there was one graduate. From then on the numbers gradually increased and by 1909 there were 17 graduates in the class. Up until the new High School Building was constructed in 1912, the entire school, both grade and high school occupied one building which was located about 3 blocks south and east from the center of town. The new building, which was a 3 story structure including a small basement gymnasium, was first occupied in 1913. The building was enlarged in 1926 with one story wings added to either side and a new gymnasium at the back. This gym was later enlarged in the late 1940's.

Basketball became an important sport at Akron High School back in the early teens soon after the new building was occupied. The following is quoted from a letter written by Roy Jones, who was coach at the time, to W.B. Shewman, who was then teaching at Rockport, Indiana, and later became principal at Akron.

"Am rather proud of our Basketball record. The only game we lost in 1913-14 was the New Richmond game at Bloomington. We play Thorntown Jan. 15 and New Richmond Jan. 22 and Rochester Jan. 27. If we can get by on these games I believe we can win in this District March 5 & 6."

Enrollments increased after the new building was occupied and the class of 1915 had 26 members. From then on the high school enrollment became rather stable with minor fluctuations from year to year and a very gradual increase.

Getting back to basketball, the school first won a sectional tournament in 1929. Another interesting observation on sectional tournaments before consolidation occurred in 1948 - Akron, Beaver Dam, which is 3 miles north of Akron, and

Gilead, which is 5 miles south of Akron, all played in the finals of 3 different sectional tournaments - Winamac, Warsaw, and Peru respectively - and all three lost.

The following is a list of principals of Akron High School. It is accurate as far back as 1918 up to the time of consolidation. Prior to 1918, I was able to find the names of 3 principals, Cherry Templeton, a Mr. Neil and a Mr. Knight, but no dates as to their tenure:

1918-1919	W. B. Shewman
1920-1922	J. L. Tombaugh
1923-1925	Roy Jones
1926-1927	Dessa Fultz
1928-1934	S. Earl Rouch
1934-1940	Frank Stephens
1941-1951	Roy Meredith
1951-1963	Granville Deaton

(Mr. Meredith was on leave of absence from 1944 through 1946. During his absence, Dwight Gallipo served 2 years and Daniel Shambarger, 1 year.)

NEW CASTLE TOWNSHIP - TALMA SCHOOL

(By Mrs. Joe Peterson)

Roy Jones was Assistant Principal of the old school about 1894 to 1904. The old building burned in the night, November, 1915. I was in the 8th grade. We finished the rest of the year in the old Gleaner's hall above the Hatfield Store which was heated by a stove in the front of the hall. I was cold all winter.

The new school was built in 1916 at a cost of \$332,000. It was late before it was finished so we had to make up lost time by going on Saturdays the rest of the year.

I started my freshman year in the new building. We were proud of the new school because it had a gym. The grades were on the first floor and the high school was on the second floor. We had a girl's basketball team in which I played guard for four years. We played at all of the towns and schools around us.

Lloyd Ehernman was Principal in the new high school. The first World War was started and ended November 11, 1918. I was a junior at the time. I graduated in 1920 with 10 others. All have died except Tural Fore Kessler and myself.

The last high school class graduated in 1963. The high school was sent to Tippecanoe Valley and all the building was then used for the grades until April 1973, when a tornado ruined the building.



HARRISON TOWNSHIP AND THE FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP PART OF MENTONE

(Taken from the Tri-County Gazette, April 30, 1903 and written by D.C. Heffley, 1903)

"Like all other organizations, our public schools have a history. Up till 1883, the school building of this immediate vicinity was located on the present site of Marion Heighway's residence. In appearance the building resembled the rural district school house of that time. As far as I am able to learn Miss Dora Gochenour and Mary Uplinger were the last teachers of that school.

In the spring of '83, since Mentone had increased in population, the old building was no longer large enough to accommodate the pupils. So after some discussion, Mr. Rickel and Mr. Everly, the trustees, decided to build a larger building where the school house now stands.

The construction was soon begun and in the fall was finished. It was a large frame building, heated by stoves, and unlike our present building, it was surrounded on the north and east by woods and a rail fence.

Frank Cretcher, assisted by Miss Anne Melick, taught the first term in the new building. Following these were: O.A. Harding, Miss Effie Brindley, Mr. Boggess, Mr. Porter, Mr. Gunder, Mrs. Poffenberger and Mr. Sloan. The High School was first established by Mr. Gunder and more thoroughly organized by Sloan, the last teacher in the old frame building.

The history would not be complete if I did not mention one peculiarity of Mr. Sloan. He was not satisfied with the diligence of the teachers of the lower rooms, in observing the discipline of the school and consequently holes were bored in the doors of the different rooms. Through these holes the gentleman often took a birdseye view of the rooms and many times the unruly youngsters were surprised by the appearance of the professor with a hickory paddle. You know what followed.

In 1893 our present school building was built by the architect A.L. Kramer,

under the supervision of the trustees, A.G. Wertenberger, L.P. Jefferies and C.F. Doane. It consists of six rooms, well lighted, heated and ventilated. It also has all of the latest improvements for the comfort of the pupils.

The instructors of the schools since the construction of the new building are as follows: O.H. Bowman, Mrs. Beldon, Miss Esther Martin, W.I. Fish, Miss Mary Otis, Miss Leona Blue, O.E. Goshert, C.E. Hudson, I.A. Meredith, Miss Alice Jennings, Miss R.C. Cretcher and W.H. Davis, our present principal.

While the public has always been back of the school, as a matter of course, the officials to whom have been entrusted the administration of affairs, are largely responsible for the growth or decay of any system of schools.

Among the persons who have served on the Board of Education, and have very materially assisted in the progress of the schools, are the following: C.E. Doan, A. G. Wertenberger, L.P. Jefferies, J.W. Dunlap, Dr. E. Stockberger, M. Heighway, Dr. J.W. Heffley, W.A. Forst, D.W. Lewis and E. M. Eddinger.

As a whole we are very much indebted to the teachers and officers named above, for our schools at the present time, are in an excellent condition - a condition, that indicates growth in the past and a bright outlook for the future.

Our schools are such as insure good instruction, sanitary surroundings and all that is inviting to persons in pursuit of learning. It is thought that in the near future, another year will be added to the high school and then our officials can present you with a registered diploma on the completion of the course. With this improvement, ours would certainly become a model of public schools."

The present Mentone Elementary School was built in 1930 with additions thereto in 1953, 1958 and 1967.

SEWARD TOWNSHIP - BURKET SCHOOL

(By Roy E. Meredith)

Around the turn of the century a school for grades 1 to 12 was built at Burket. For several years, due to lack of transportation, high school students in the southern part of the township could go to either Silver Lake High School or Beaver Dam High School and some elementary students went to one room schools and later to Franklin School and Seward Central. As transportation with school buses was established, all Seward students came to Burket.

After World War I, a wooden frame gym was built west of the school. 4-way basketball tourneys were held in this gym. (Burket, Beaver Dam, Mentone and Etna Green.)

In 1960, a new Burket Grade School was built and the high school students were sent to Mentone. The old building was demolished in 1964.



II. FORMATION OF THE TIPPECANOE VALLEY SCHOOL CORPORATION  
(From The Comprehensive Plan for the Reorganization of the School Corporations of Kosciusko County, Indiana, by the authority of the Reorganization Act of 1959, Chapter 202)

The Tippecanoe Valley School Corporation shall be composed of the following townships in the south-west portion of Kosciusko County plus one (or more) townships located in Fulton County as follows:

- a. Harrison Township, Kosciusko County, in its entirety.
- b. Franklin Township, Kosciusko County, in its entirety.
- c. Seward Township, Kosciusko County, in its entirety.
- d. Henry Township, Fulton County, in its entirety. (This township having legally petitioned and being duly released by the Reorganization Committee of Fulton County.)
- c. If at a later date New Castle Township of Fulton County, in its entirety, should be certified to the Kosciusko County Reorganization Committee, it will be accepted and placed with the above townships as a portion of the Tippecanoe Valley Corporation as herein described. (Note: New Castle Township of Fulton County was annexed and merged into the Tippecanoe Valley School Corporation on August 26, 1963.)

The members of the Board of School Trustees shall be elected by the registered voters of the complete corporation, as follows:

- (1) For purposes of this election the corporation shall be divided into five (5) school board members districts, as follows:

- 1st District - Harrison Township, Kosciusko County, in its entirety.
- 2nd District - Seward Township, Kosciusko County, in its entirety.
- 3rd District - Franklin Township, Kosciusko County, in its entirety.
- 4th District - Henry Township, Fulton County, in its entirety.
- 5th District - In the event that New Castle Township, Fulton County, in its entirety, should become a part of this corporation, that township would then become the fifth district. (If New Castle Township does not become a part of this corporation, then this fifth district shall be considered a "District at Large", comprised of the full corporation.

In a special election, the voters of the corporation ratified the new corporation with an 84% vote in favor.

### III. HISTORY OF THE CORPORATION

Tippecanoe Valley School Corporation was established July 1, 1962, under the Reorganization Act of 1959, Chapter 202. This reorganized school corporation consisted of Henry Township in Fulton County and Seward, Franklin and Harrison Townships in Kosciusko County. At this time, the following schools were established: Grades K through 6 and 9 through 12 at Akron and Mentone, 7 and 8 at Beaver Dam, and K through 8 at Burket. Discussion also began at this time concerning a new centralized high school.

New Castle Township was annexed and merged into the Tippecanoe Valley School Corporation on August 26, 1963. This annexation included the school at Talma. The old Burket school building was sold and dismantled in 1964 and extensive repair was done on the Akron, Beaver Dam and Talma buildings. Grade levels were set at K through 5 and 9 through 12 at Akron and Mentone, K through 5 at Burket and 6, 7 and 8 at Beaver Dam and Talma.

On January 23, 1968, the Beaver Dam Junior High School Building was extensively damaged by a fire and was subsequently demolished. Pupils were redistributed with the Beaver Dam 6th grade being moved to the Akron Elementary Building, the 7th grade to Talma and the 8th grade to the Akron High School.

After many years of discussions concerning a new centralized high school and several motions for two high schools, one, or none, a decision was finally made to build a new centralized high school on May 8, 1972.

On April 3, 1974, the Talma Junior High School was destroyed by a tornado. Children were redistributed to churches and community buildings throughout the corporation.

On January 20, 1975, students were moved into the new Tippecanoe Valley High School. The formal dedication of this new facility took place on November 16, 1975.

#### IV. PRESENT SCHOOLS

Tippecanoe Valley High School  
Akron Elementary School  
Burket Elementary School  
Mentone Elementary School

#### V. PRESENT AND PAST SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Mr. Cecil Miller	July 1, 1982 (Term expires June 30, 1986)
Mr. Joseph Crill	April 9, 1984 (Term expires June 30, 1986)
Mr. James Royer	July 1, 1983 (Term expires June 30, 1987)
Mr. Fred McSherry	December 13, 1982 (Term expires June 30, 1988)
Mr. John Mellott	Sept. 17, 1984 (Term expires June 30, 1988)
Mr. Richard Long	July 1, 1980 - July 11, 1984
Mr. William Rogers	July 1, 1982 - February 20, 1984
Mr. Con J. Shewman	July 1, 1975 - June 30, 1983
Mr. Vernon Meredith	July 1, 1976 - October 19, 1982
Mr. Don Snipes	July 1, 1974 - June 30, 1982
Mr. Lee Norris	July 1, 1978 - June 30, 1982
Mr. Everett Besson	July 1, 1976 - June 30, 1980
Mr. Fred A. Kindig	July 1, 1974 - June 30, 1978
Dr. Wymond Wilson	July 1, 1972 - June 30, 1976
Dr. John McKee	March 15, 1971 - June 30, 1975
Mr. Maurice Coplen	July 1, 1970 - June 30, 1974
Mr. Phillip Lash	July 1, 1970 - June 30, 1974
Mr. Richard Goshert	July 1, 1968 - June 30, 1976
Dr. Donald J. VanGilder	May 21, 1968 - June 30, 1972
Mr. David Burkett	November 20, 1967 - June 30, 1970
Mr. Mickey Eaton	July 1, 1966 - October 16, 1967
Dr. O.L. McFadden	July 1, 1966 - June 30, 1970
Mr. Whitney Gast	January 2, 1963 - June 30, 1966
Mr. Ralph Davis	January 2, 1963 - March 15, 1971
Mr. Eldon Cumberland	January 2, 1963 - June 30, 1968
Mr. Gale O. Creighton	January 2, 1963 - May 13, 1968
Mr. Edward Bucher	January 2, 1963 - June 30, 1966

#### VI. INTERIM BOARD (TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES)

Mr. Lawrence Butts	July 2, 1962 - December 31, 1962
Mr. Delford Nelson	July 2, 1962 - December 31, 1962
Mr. H. Earl Boggs	July 2, 1962 - December 31, 1962
Mr. Lowell Leckrone	July 2, 1962 - December 31, 1962
Mr. Paul Fites	July 2, 1962 - December 31, 1962



VII. SUPERINTENDENTS

Baxter W. Paige	July 21, 1980 - Present
Dr. Lloyd W. Harrell	July 1, 1975 - June 30, 1980
Robert M. Forbes	July 1, 1962 - June 30, 1975

Assistant Superintendent/Business Managers

Robert M. Forbes, Business Manager	July 1, 1975 - June 30, 1977
Roy Meredith, Asst. Superintendent	May 30, 1963 - June 30, 1971

VIII. TIPPECANOE VALLEY SCHOOL CORPORATION - ENROLLMENT

Enrollment of September 20, 1963

GRADE	BURKET	MENTONE	AKRON	BEAVER DAM	TALMA	ATWOOD	TOTAL
K		56	66			16	138
1	26	40	98			7	190
2	22	39	64		19	7	145
3	29	28	67		13	7	138
4	24	35	70		7	7	157
5	27	37	78		14	14	156
6	24	36	85		10	4	165
Sub Total	152	271	528		12	8	1,089
7				88	89		177
8				75	63		138
Sub Total				163	152		315
9		79	88				167
10		71	67				138
11		70	76				146
12		64	45				109
Sub Total		284	276				560
TOTALS	152	555	804	163	227	63	1,964

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Official Enrollment - September 13, 1985

GRADE	BURKET	MENTONE	AKRON	TVHS	SPECIAL ED CO-OP	TOTAL
K	33	51	73			157
1	22	68	72			162
2	23	60	75			158
3	20	60	64			144
4	25	64	62			151
5	27	56	66			149
6		72	76			148
Sp.Ed.			19			19
Co-op						10
Sub Total	150	431	507		10	1,098
7		86	78			164
8		106	72			178
9				166		166
10				145		145
11				148		148
12				113		113
Sp.Ed.				23		23
Sub Total		192	150	595		937
TOTAL	150	623	657	595	10	2,035

IX. TIPPECANOE VALLEY SCHOOL CORPORATION

