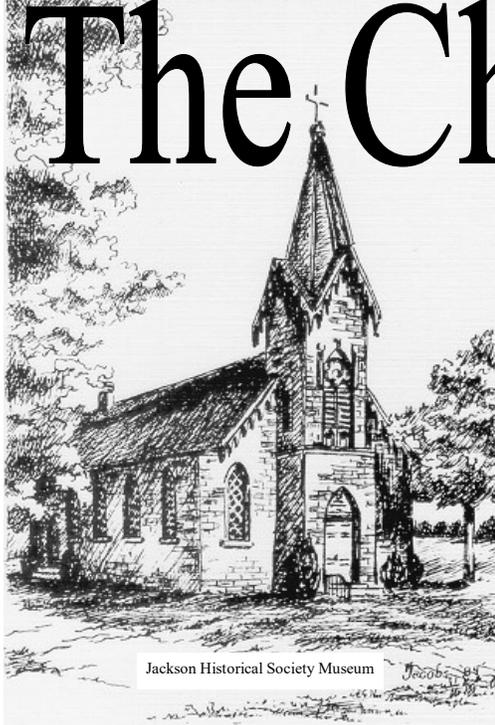


# The Church Mouse



Volume 29 Issue 2 Jackson Historical Society July 2021

## SCHOOL DAYS



**School Days, school days, Dear old Golden Rule days, Reading and 'riting, and 'rithmatic, Taught to the tune of a hick'ry stick. . . .**

This familiar chorus was written in 1907 by two old gentlemen, reminiscing on their childhood together in primary school. Although their "used to be" only gets us back into the middle 1800's, it does provide an excuse to go still further back, the 1700's, to take a look at events that influenced our educational system.

Frederick the Great of Prussia in 1763 laid out the basic foundations of the Prussian education system. His decree required all young citizens, boys and girls, 5 to 13 or 14 years old, be educated in government funded schools. Prussia was among the first countries to introduce free, tax funded, compulsory, primary education. By comparison, it took France and England until the 1880s to establish publicly funded schools.

During colonial time in America, schooling was left up to the colonies themselves. With differing geography, ways of life, and religions, schooling was hard to maintain and centralize. In New England, colonies wanted all capable children to attend school to become good citizens and focused on compulsory public schooling. The middle colonies focused on parochial education, while in the rural south, education developed mainly around apprenticeships and similar endeavors.

In the early years of the United States, in order to consolidate schooling and develop mandatory education, Congress enacted the Land Ordinance of 1785. Among its many provisions was the setting aside of profits from the sale of land in Section Sixteen in every township in the new Western Territory for the creation and maintenance of public schools.

Two years later, the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 provided land in the Great Lakes and Ohio Valley areas for development. Territorial governments were established and land surveyed. Five states, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin were established. Article 3 in the Northwest Ordinance reads, in part, *Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged.*

As additional states were added in new territories, the emphasis on public schooling continued as part of the process. The impetus on education and public schools continued.

## 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 3rd 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

Judi Mielke—President  
Jerry Prochnow—Vice President  
Lenore Kloehn—Treasurer  
Doris Koeller—Secretary

## BOARD MEMBERS

JHS Officers, Elmer Kloehn,  
Gordon Ziemann, Clifford Koeller

**TODAY WILL BE HISTORY TOMORROW**

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

## REISVILLE STATE GRADED SCHOOL

### *School Days, School Days... in Reisville*

About 1848, a log school was built on the Southwest corner of Jackson Drive and Main St. (Hwy. 60). The log school lasted about 20 years, eventually sold as a residence and then was bought and moved to become transient housing for the local canning company.

The next Reisville Graded School, a stone, one-room school building, was built about 1868. It was built on 1/2 acre of land purchased for \$100 on the Northeast corner of Jackson Drive and Main St. This school lasted until 1894, when it was dynamited to clear the site for the next school building.

The new Reisville/Jackson Graded School was built in the summer of 1893. It was a large one-room building with no basement. It had two box stoves installed for heating purposes. For fuel during the winter months, it was necessary for the teacher to notify a member of the school board of a shortage. The board member would take his ax, go to the adjoining woods, and cut some dry wood. He would then throw it over the fence of the school yard and from there, most likely, the older boys would be appointed to carry it into the school and pile it up behind the stoves, either as punishment or a privilege, depending on the teacher and the type of pupil.

The first teacher in the new school was Christ Wechmueller who in 1888, at 20 years old, had taught in the earlier Reisville school. Chris's interesting history will be covered in another article in this Church Mouse.



In 1895, the school was divided into two rooms. Up to this time, there had only been four grades in the school and a pupil completing these four elementary grades was eligible to enter high school. After the division, each room contained four grades, primary and upper, with two teachers engaged, a woman for primary and a man who also was principal, for the upper grades.

Wood was the primary fuel for heating, and drinking water was brought in in pails from Val Rheingans and other neighbors.

In 1912, a heating system, replacing the box stoves, was installed.



The new heating system required digging a basement under half the school. In 1913, two new outhouses were built for \$120.00. In 1914, the basement was concreted and the school connected to the local sewer system. In 1916, additional land was purchased for a playground. 1919 saw electric wiring and lamps added to the school. During a 1931 board meeting a motion was brought up that dealt with remodeling the school to add indoor lavatories, a well, drinking fountains, new floors, electric clocks, planting trees and remodeling the front of the school building. The motion failed in 1931 but was brought up again in 1937 when it passed. As time progressed and population increased, additional rooms were added to the original structure in 1952, 1956 and 1962, and other improvements were made including the purchase of additional land.

Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church was originally located next to the school. In 1947, after exten-



sive remodeling, the church was moved to a location further east on Main Street (Hwy 60), where it remains today. Moving the church freed up additional land for the school.

In the fall of 1962, the Jackson District No. 7 school became part of the West Bend School District.

**THE PRUSSIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM**

The Prussian educational system became a model for many nation’s educational system, including the United States. In 1763, Frederick the Great issued his *Generallandschulreglement*, that expanded the existing educational system requiring boys and girls, 5-14 years old, be schooled in government funded schools.

The Prussian method consisted of eight years of primary education, the *Volksschule*, which included the usual skills of reading and writing, but also music and Christian values, and tried to impose a need for duty, sobriety, and discipline. Mathematics and calculus were available, initially at extra cost. Frederick also created further schooling with the *Realschule* and the state funded *Gymnasium*, a secondary school that was a university prep school.

The state also supported the construction of schools, although many were privately built.

The Prussian system of schooling matured into the 1800’s, achieving a number of goals such as free schooling for citizens, funding to build schools, professional teachers earning a basic salary, and the supervision of schools from classroom through national levels to assure their quality.

A final examination was established for all Prussian secondary schools by the early 1800’s. Successfully passing the test was required when entering certain professions and higher positions in civil service. The final exam is still applied in Germany today.

The Prussian educational system has been viewed as a model for mandatory education by many countries, including the United States. By the mid 1800’s, many American educators had travelled to Germany to observe the system first hand, and returned as converts to advocate for the system’s adoption in the United States. The Governor of Massachusetts, Edward Everett, created a mandatory system in 1852. New York opened a number of schools based on the system. Andrew Carnegie pushed for the system’s adoption and the system began to spread throughout the United States.

The Prussian educational system has been adopted by many countries and adapted to their needs, including the United States.

Material from Wikipedia and Church Mouse



In 1773, Friedrich Eberhard von Rochow and Heinrich Julius Bruns developed a one-room school in Prussia.

**FEDERAL LAND ORDINANCE OF 1784 and 1785  
NORTHWEST ORDINANCE OF 1787**

The foundation for the excellent educational system that we enjoy in Wisconsin has roots in the Federal Land Ordinance of 1784 and 1785 and the Ordinance of 1787 or Northwest Ordinance.

In 1784/1785, the land west of the Appalachian Mountains, north of the Ohio River, and east of the Mississippi River, ceded in defeat by England to the United States, was referred to as the western territory.

Among its provisions, The Federal Land Ordinance of 1784 and 1785 laid out the process by which lands west of the Appalachian Mountains were to be surveyed and sold. The method of creating townships and sections within townships was used for all U.S. land after 1785. The Ordinance also set aside Section Sixteen in every township in the Western Territory for the maintenance of public schools. It also allotted Section 29 for the purpose of religion and not more than two townships for a university. The sale of lands in these Sections generated revenue for educational purposes.

The Ordinance of 1787 or Northwest Ordinance established the Northwest Territory and pre-



pared it for statehood. It also set down procedures for the development of the township system of government. Along with the revenue for schools created through the sale of Section 16 lands, it also established free public education and forbade slavery in the territories.

With the establishment of territorial governments under these ordinances, a legal basis for school laws passed by the territorial legislatures, including Wisconsin, was created.

The University of Wisconsin was established by an act of the first Wisconsin Territorial Legislature in 1838. A Board of Visitors,

(Ordinance continued on page 4)

*( Ordinance continued from page 3)*

(Regents) was appointed, and two full townships were set aside to support of the University. However, it took many more years for buildings to be built, the course of study organized, and students to attend. It was after the Civil War that the University of Wisconsin was finally established and the institution gained monetary and popular support.

The Wisconsin Territorial Legislature also passed laws in 1839, 1840, 1841, and 1843 regulating the formation of school districts, allowed for levying some local taxes for school support, and required commissioners to conduct teacher examinations and school inspections.

According to a state law passed in 1849, each school was required to have a specific name and district number.

Early Wisconsin schools were based in the community, were locally controlled, and often needed private funding to supplement inadequate public financial support. Wisconsin communities played an active role in the education of their children. Early on, school could be held in a family home, local church, or a community build school building.

School districts were determined by the territorial legislature and were based on population rather than location.

School Boards with a clerk, director, and treasurer were established to locate the school, hire teachers for at least three months, and levy taxes for the support of the school. Many men served willingly on these school boards. Annual board meetings were held on the third Monday of July.

School terms in the early years were 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 who lived outside of cities, between the ages of seven and fourteen 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 a nine month term became the standard

Schools may have had two teachers during a year. Many times 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 only 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 being paid more. That tradition continued until the later 1960's when a teacher's salary schedule was adopted.

The very early schools were often family homes, or one-room buildings constructed of readily available log 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, often with a privacy fence around them. Water was carried from a nearby farm and wood for heat was usually supplied by the parents of the pupils. The duties for the teacher included maintaining the fire and removing the ashes, sweeping the floors and getting the water. These duties were often stated in the teacher's contract. In later years, many schools were heated with coal, then oil burners and finally furnaces in their basements.

Two recesses and lunch time were part of the average school day. Recess activities included games like "Run My Good Sheep Run", "Tag", "Drop the Hankie", "Captain may I", "Annie, Annie, Over", "Fox and 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 were 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 the buildings. The Christmas programs and end of year picnics were a must and everyone came, grandparents to babies to enjoy these events.

As our history unfolded, it became apparent that formal education needed to be available beyond the 8th grade. In 1947, a state statute was adopted that all school districts needed to be part of a high school district.

And so, what started out with several ordinances being passed by the U.S. Congress in the late 1700's, a path to statehood was provided, and a mandatory, government paid, elementary education for citizens, later expanded to offer 4 years of high school and an opportunity to attend the University of Wisconsin was created.

It was indeed an exciting and productive period for American education.

**TEACHER TEACHER**

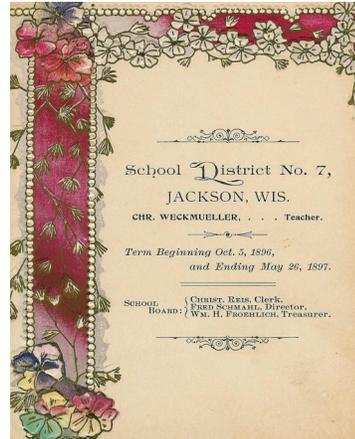
Esther C. Weckmueller passed away at the age of 89 in April, 2004. Included in her estate was a diary kept by her father, Christopher Weckmueller. Chris grew up in our area. I thought it would be interesting to share a few of his thoughts with you.

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. At the age of 20, Chris taught in a Jackson school. Six years later, at the age of 26, he began teaching in the “new” one-room school in Jackson.

Here are some 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.”

Graduation exercises closed each school year with a program at Braun’s (Schneider’s) Hall. The hall rented for \$5.00.



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 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.”

Chris continued teaching in Jackson through the 1898-1899 school year. Material from Weckmueller diary.





### AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETIES EVENTS

RICHFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY **RICHFIELD DAYS**, August 27-29, 2021 Please stop by the Richfield Historical Society Ice Cream Booth on Saturday and/or Sunday. Contact [www.richfieldhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.richfieldhistoricalsociety.org) for more information.

GERMANTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY Please contact the Germantown Historical Society at [germantownhistoricalsociety.org](http://germantownhistoricalsociety.org) for information on future events.

POMMERSCHER VEREIN FREISTADT For activities and information, please contact [Pommerscher.org](http://Pommerscher.org).

THE HISTORY CENTER **The Wisconsin German Experience**, A Traveling Exhibit, See it at the Tower Center August 18-28, 2021. The History Center, 320 S. 5th Ave., West Bend, WI 53095. Contact [www.historyisfun.com](http://www.historyisfun.com) for info.



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 [russvh.627@sbcglobal.net](mailto:russvh.627@sbcglobal.net). Russ Hanson, Editor

### SWEET TREAT HISTORY FESTIVAL

The Jackson Historical Society's annual Raspberry Festival has been transformed in 2021 into the Sweet Treat History Festival, our ice cream social.

The Festival will feature the excellent Honey Grove ice cream and Amish made Raspberry Pie as our "sweet treats". A strolling musician will provide our musical entertainment.

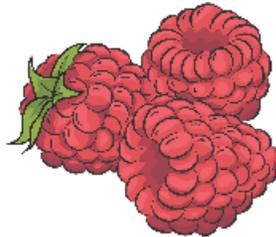
The historic Karl Groth log home will be open for tours and our one-room school house will feature presentations. Our Immanuel Lutheran Church Museum will host displays of Jackson History and local speakers.

There will be yard games and antique engines and historical demonstrations on display. Farm fresh produce will be available for sale.

Please join us on Sunday, the 12th of Sept, from 1-4 pm, for our Sweet Treat Historical Festival.

For more information please leave your name and your message at 262-677-3457 for a return call.

Thanks.



*Sweet Treat History Festival*  
Presented by the: Jackson Historical Society  
Sunday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
1-4PM

*Bring your family & join us for a good ole fashion ice cream social!*

Join us for:

- ~Historical demonstrations
- ~Farm Fresh Produce
- ~One Room School House Presentation
- ~Tour the 1850s Karl Groth Log House
- ~Church Museum of Jackson History
- ~Local Speakers
- ~Yard Games
- ~Antique engines
- ~Honey Grove Ice Cream & Amish Raspberry Pie
- ~Strolling Musician

Located:

Jackson Historical Society Museum & Grounds 1860 Mill Rd., Jackson, WI 53037