

The original structure was a red brick single-story unit divided into four rooms. It is interesting to note that these same four rooms are still in use--75 years later. These are the four rooms at the top of the center stairs and off the large center hall. Each room had its own heating plant--a little pot-bellied stove. Coal buckets, pokers, shakers, kindling wood and blocks of fire wood were all standard equipment for each room. And the author still wonders whether the jobs of carrying out ashes or bringing in coal, were honorary appointments or disciplinary measures for acts of misconduct.

School board members realized that the steady growth of the city might soon require a building of larger proportions to meet the needs of the community. Consequently, they agreed to a type of building that could easily have a second story added at a comparatively low cost. This foresight was indeed prophetic for in less than eight years the district population had increased and demanded a bigger school. * In 1893, a second story consisting of four rooms was added. Henry B. Walda was awarded the contract for \$5,498.00.

The writer has been unable to authenticate what type of lighting was used in the first years of its existence. However, a number of people interviewed were quick to tell me they remembered well the gas lights used in the 1890's.

Outside restrooms were used at the school until the remodeling program of 1912. One dear little lady with a twinkle in her eye laughed at my question about children asking permission to leave the room. She laughed heartily and assured me that even then children still "had to go". She added that perhaps there was a little less travel in the winter months, but that it was always made up for in the spring. I asked her if she thought the Sears and Roebuck catalogues (supposedly standard equipment in all out buildings) were the forerunners of our present day visual aid programs. Again, that knowing little grin and the quick reply, "Perhaps so, but in the rough stages".

Individual slates were used at first, but blackboards came into use before the turn of the century. With them came another questionable honorary chore--that of taking the erasers outside to dust them. (What, no chalk dust allergies?)

One of the more interesting customs of the early schools was that "togetherness" supposedly a modern innovation, was encouraged even then. Two people shared each desk, i.e., two boys or two girls. Miss Carrie Snively, who will be remembered as the girls physical education supervisor, said it was the dreaded responsibility of the teacher to be right there the first day of school to prevent best friends from sharing a desk.

* History of Fort Wayne Schools--100 years
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