Stringtown - Dist. #9

Country School Legacy: Humanities on the Frontier

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COUNTRY SCHOOL LEGACY:

Humansities on the Frontier

Project Director—Andrew Gulliford
Media Director—Randall Teeuwen
Exhibits Director—Berkeley Lobanov

HISTORIC SITE FORM

State
County
Location (in miles & direction from nearest town)
Southwest of Springfield, Nebr.
Is this the original location? Yes
Name of building & origin of name

Name & number of the district
Stringtown Dist # 9
Date built Don’t know Years in use Don’t know
Who built it? A contractor or the community? Don’t know
Does it look like it came from a plan book or was it designed by the community? Couldn’t say

Names of former teachers:

Miss Daisy Brennan 1928-1915
Miss Bessie Reynolds
Miss Beulah Brown
Mr. Ford Bates—Skyline Manor Omaha, Ne
Miss Lydia Wimer
Mrs. Georgia Oliver—Now Georgia Vance in Bethesda, Ca
Miss Golda Hance—Now Golda Boyd, Springfield, Ne
Carmelita J. Anderson
James Francis
Howard Webster Phelps
Eva & Cecil Phelps
Iredell Evans
Paul & Frances Simard
Estelle Bessey

Name & address of person in charge of building:

Who is the owner? Couldn’t say.
COUNTRY SCHOOL LEGACY HISTORIC SITE FORM

Architectural Features:

Size of building ____________________________

Number of Windows (four pane, six pane, etc.) 6

Number of doors (entrances) 2

Number of classrooms 1

Bell tower or cupola None

Materials used (wood, brick, stone, etc.)

Type of roof Wood shingles

Outhouses 2

Playground Equipment None

Color of building & trim White & green

Coal shed or stable Coal shed

Teacherage

Flagpole

Other architectural features:

Narrative Information: Did any special events happen at the school? What stories do people remember? The carried water from the farm east of the school for drinking purposes out of a bucket with dipper used by all. When I first started to school, Dan Phelps farmed the land. His house was built by John Hinton at Springfield. Ne. My father John Phelps helped John Hinton build the farm house. My family lived in the school house. Historian Bill Sullivan lives in the pond for cattle. We believe they could be at the farm. Mrs. Verna B. Dettman, date Dec. 29, 1980

District records available: yes no where stored

Black & white photo taken: yes no

Old photos available: yes no

Does the building have any state or national historic designation?

Elementary Student Dist. #9 (Phelps)

Name & address of surveyor Mrs. Verna B. Dettman, 545 Aline St., Bina, Neb. 68028
Other Special Events
Stringtown School District #9 Sarpy Co.

The porch on front of the schoolhouse was used at noon for all to sit and eat lunch from their lunch pails. Many topics discussed here at noon.

The porch had a crawl area under it. One day a mother skunk and her babies decided to make their home. The school had to be closed as a result.

A rabies dog (called mad dog in those days) came to school. A scare of the neighborhood. When it wandered to our farm, my mother shot and killed it to protect our animals.

A boy ran a barbed wire into his throat while coasting down a steep hill, west of the school building. The pupils fastened the two barbed wires together -- we could coast under for a longer ride. Wires came loose -- result an accident.

The same boy was bitten by a rattlesnake at school. Old time remedy was used. The same boy is a man of age eighty, still living and active. He has done some inventing and now is improving on inventions.

There were spills, thrills, etc. in those days. A boy sometimes rode his horse to school, it was trained to go back home. The teacher liked horses and always wanted to ride his horse. One day he consented, put her on the bare back horse but instead of giving her the bridle, he took it off, slapped the horse on the rump. Result -- the horse started for home, the teacher fell off and broke her arm.

Running races backward in the road going home was very common. One night, a snake decided to cross the road as running was well in progress. Result -- the lead girl stepped on it which scared her so badly that classmates thought she was going to faint. After that, the game was played differently.

Pupils going to school saw the three convicts walking the Rock Island Railroad tracks. They tried to go to the main country by way of a field road across the tracks. Snow drifts to deep in that area so they went on meadow area (just a depot, semaphore
one house there at that time) they went to a road east of the
depot into the country where later, Roy Blunt, a farmer was
killed as they made him drive them. He used a box wagon
so they could hide in it. Result -- farmers and two convicts
killed. (Roy Blunt was my uncle by marriage).

We had a boy who rode a yearling calf to school through
the woods for 2½ miles. We had school hours 9:00 A. M. until
4:00 P. M. At 4:00 P. M., sometimes earlier, the calf would
be waiting for his rider. No bridle, just calf and boy.

We used to go to neighboring farm houses to get baking
soda to give a sick girl. She died in her late teens from a
heart attack.

We carried water in a bucket from this same farm for the
teacher and pupils to drink. We did not have a well on school
ground. We all used the same dipper to drink the water.

We had double desks at school, some had lift up noisy taps.
We had an organ to use to sing with; also a pot bellied stove
for heat with cobs to start fire, wood used during the day and
cob to bank fire at night so that there would be coals to start
fire faster in the cold mornings.

On Friday afternoons, after the last recess, we chose up
sides for ciphering or spell down when teacher pronounced words
or Railroad spelling was most desired. Those pupils at their
desks, solved problems given as well as those at the chalk
board? (Blackboards, made of slate) Also, they wrote spelling
as well as those who were standing. Everyone worked.

Course of Study was used throughout the State. Grade eight
students had to take two day of tests (15 subjects) and pass
them before they could go to High School. These were given in
the closest town in the county to the school. Stringtown pupils
went to Springfield.

The green horn country school children did not know where
to go in Town school as they'd never been there before. Most
passed the first time, those that did not, took the eighth
grade over. Teachers and pupils worked hard for these tests
(Complexes and therapists not heard of in those days)
I remember, we were some of the first to get telephones. My father was repair man for them. Telephones were great help to the people in those days.

At the end of the school year, the pupils were awarded for perfect attendance, the best penman, and sometimes other achievements at the last day of school picnic.

Stormy winter days were spent inside the school room with chalkboard games for some. My girlfriend played the organ by ear (never had a music lesson). The teacher would teach us to dance, (those that wanted to learn). I remember, we had one teacher who knew all the latest dances. We were really elated over that because in our community, we had country dancing every Saturday night at someone's home. People took turns and everyone looked forward to the fun of dancing. The non-dancers played cards.

A deaf man took care of small children and babies with entertainment, later, putting them down to sleep for the evening until dancing, etc., was over. Children went with their parents, was so customary in those days. They knew how to act like little ladies and gentlemen too. Rowdyism was never allowed at these parties in those days, the host and hostess seen to that.

Have some school pictures, attendance certificates, teachers contracts etc.

Submitted By: Mrs. Eva A. Dietze
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