

An Informal History of District 106 and The Highland Schools

The year was 1828. The first white settlers to come into this general area were the Barney Laughtons, who built a home near the present CB&Q depot

grounds and usually spent the night at the log cabin, for he and Joseph Vial were great friends.

The early settlers of this area were cognizant of the need for education for their children, and for spiritual care for their families.

In 1843, a one room log cabin school was built on a plot of ground near the Con-

Miss Sylvia McClintock was the first teacher in this new school. School records of 1870 indicate that the district levied \$650 for educational purposes. Other teachers followed. A Mr. Pringle preceded Miss Alice Vial.

Miss Alice Vial, granddaughter of the original Joseph Vial and still living on Plainfield Road, was graduated from the University of Illinois in 1899. In 1901 she accepted a teaching position in District 106 and continued until 1910. Her starting salary was \$50.00 a month. This included duties other than teaching, namely janitor work. The school had at that time, a total enrollment of 13 pupils.

Following Miss Vial, a Miss Foran assumed the teaching duties in the fall of 1911.

At some time after 1867 the school was located on the present site. It is unclear as to whether the existing building was moved or a new building was built. Nevertheless, the school was located on a small knoll

rooms were needed. In 1949, five classrooms and a kindergarten were completed at a cost of \$120,000.00. Ever this could not accommodate the children moving in, for by the spring of 1950 over 235 children were enrolled. Additional rooms were needed, and since the Board had nearly exhausted its bonding power, no new permanent building could be planned. Consequently the board constructed a two room "temporary" building at a cost of \$1,300.00. This building was later dismantled.

By the spring of 1951 our enrollment had grown to 400, and the end was not in sight for by fall 525 children were enrolled. New classrooms were needed desperately. Some of the rooms contained 45 to 50 children with two teachers. In addition rooms were rented from the Community Church. The problem was how less than \$40,000.00. The only possible solution was the construction in 1951 of a six room portable building at a cost of \$36,500.00.

The next large construction made necessary by the continued growth of the school population was the gymnasium with its eight attached classrooms. This addition was completed by November of 1954 at a cost of \$135,000.00. Then in 1958 we saw the construction of the Junior High School at a cost of approximately \$250,000.00.

The following gives an idea of the rapid growth:

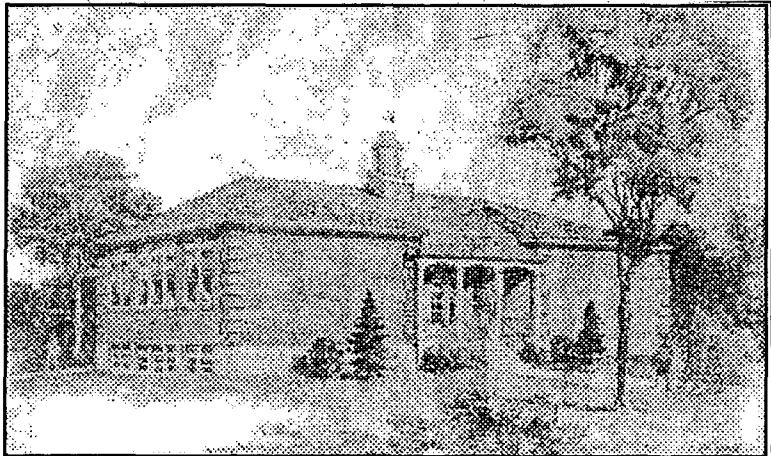
1843-1901	1 teacher - 13 pupils
1901-1936	1 teacher - 33 pupils
1937-1941	2 teachers
1941-1945	4 teachers
1946-1949	5 teachers - 78 pupils
1949-1950	8 teachers - 235 pupils
1950-1951	14 teachers - 400 pupils
1957	34 teachers - 806 pupils
1962	42 teachers - 880 pupils

On December 21, 1955, the Board of Education adopted a resolution changing the name of the school from Plainview to Highlands. This change was advisable because of confusion resulting from other buildings and roads having names somewhat similar to Plainview.

We are indebted to the following for the preceding historical data:

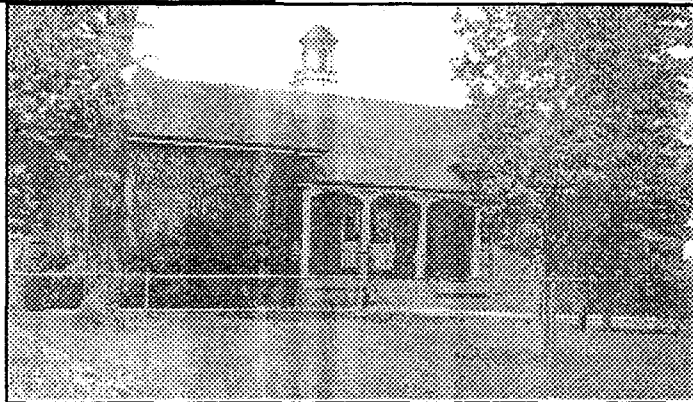
Miss Alice Vial, former teacher, Mr. William Gurrie (dec'd), former township treasurer, Mrs. Joan Burchett, Former Highlands School secretary, Mrs. Orville Klima, whose historical writings appeared in "Smoke Signals" an Indian Head publication, Mrs. Barbara Anderson, school secretary, Mrs. Bethea Spear, Mrs. K. Schlesinger, Mr. John D. Bezek, former superintendent and Mrs. Zena-Gray Nemeck, administrative assistant.

Courtesy of Flagg Creek Historical Society.



in Riverside. This area was called Bourbon Springs. Later a few additional settlers arrived. However, in 1934 a ripple of immigration occurred when work was started on the canal. In 1833 Elijah Wentworth built a log hotel sixty rods north of the present Lyonsville Congregational Church. In the same year, 1833, Joseph Vial arrived from Elmira, New York. In 1834, Mrs. Vial arrived with their four children, Samuel, Martha, Robert, and Nathaniel. Joseph Vial had gotten a land grant, which eventually amounted to 600 acres, from President Van Buren, Joseph Vial built on what is now Timber Trails. It was a 16' x 16' log cabin and stood nearby the subsequently built (1856) Robert Vial House, where the home of Alice Vial now stands. (It's the second house west of Wolf Road on the north side of Plainfield Road). The log cabin served as a hotel and post office, the post office being established in 1837, with Joseph Vial being designated as postmaster. The post office was discontinued in 1839. This also served as a stagecoach station. It was here that fresh horses replaced the tired ones. In 1836 the Democratic State Convention was held in this log cabin, and it was here that Peter Pruyn was nominated State Senator. The present home of Miss Alice Vial replaced the log cabin in 1857.

The white settlers were not the only residents of this area. The Potawatomi Indians under the leadership of Chief Shabbona roamed these parts. They were friendly and helpful to the white settlers in spite of frequent ill treatment. In 1835 the Potawatomi Indians left for the west. Their last camp site was located near the present entrance of Timber Trails on Plainfield Road. Chief Shabbona revisited the old stamping



gregational Church. The site of this first school can be found by locating an historical marker on the north side of Route 66, about 300 feet east of Wolf Road. The first teacher arrived from Scotland that year. Her name was Miss Marry McNoughton, and she later married Joseph Vial's son Samuel. This little log schoolhouse was the first school in Lyons Township.

The history of the school from 184 to 1867 is rather obscure. However records indicate that on April 19, 1856 the school trustees met and organized School District #8 of Lyons Township. In or about 1866 the School Trustees deemed it wise to relocate the schoolhouse. Consequently, in 1867 a new one room school was built on the southwest corner of Willow Springs and Plainfield Roads. It appears that at about this time the school district was numbered 106. The original log cabin was sold and converted into a blacksmith shop.



which afforded a "plain view" of the surrounding countryside. It was, therefore, named the Plainview School.

This one room frame building served the district until 1937, at which time the two room red brick building with basement was built at a cost of \$15,990.00. The frame building was sold and moved to property on Willow Springs Road where it is presently in use. In 1941 two classrooms were added at a cost of \$13,842.00. By 1949 the Bartlett Sub-division was well underway. More children were enrolling, and additional class-

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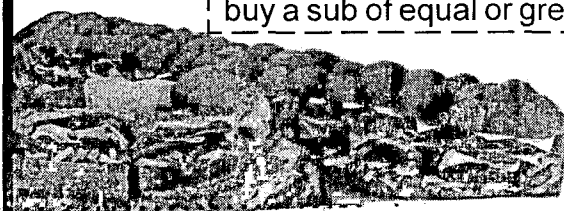
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