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Museum Musings

GRIDLEY MUSEUM

Early History of Gridley Schools

Records Indicate First Building Dates back to 1874

A search of old records in the county superintendent of school's office indicates that the Gridley School District (elementary) was formed in the 1872-'73 year but that school was not held that year as there was no record of expenditure. Mr. Partridge also supplied verification of the fact that the Manzanita and Central House school were in existence in 1869. First county record of a high school in Gridley appears in the records of 1892-'93. showing a monthly expense of $150.00 for a teacher.

From the fall of 1892 to the spring of 1895 the high school was held in an upper room of the old elementary school building (now the Elementary Manor on Ohio Street). In the fall of 1895 or 1896 the high school ws moved to a residence on the corner of Virginia and Spruce Streets, later known as the Hamman residence.

The first High School building was completed in 1907 on the site of the present Sycamore School, The second Gridley High School building was built in the summer of 1928 at a cost estimated at $150,000.00. The building was partially destroyed by fire July 4, 1942. The third high school plant for Gridley was built in 1950-'51 located on the east of Highway 99.



1st High School building on Sycamore Street 1895



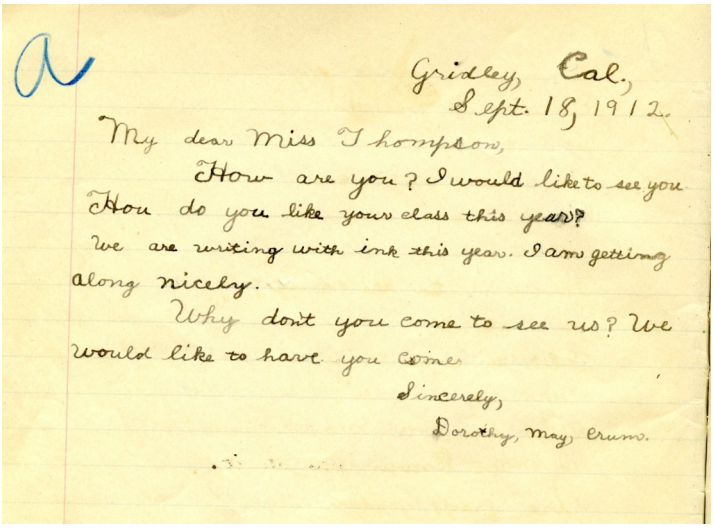
2nd High School on Sycamore Street

Continued from page 1

The first elementary school in Gridley was a two story frame on the site of the of the now McKinley School on Sycamore Street. The two story frame building may have been built around 1874. It would seem that the McKinley School site has been a school ground for more than 142 years. Later another two story building was added with stairs to the upper floors between them. These structures served until 1903 when they were moved from the property.

The second structure completed in 1903 was visited by fire damaging the upper story. The building was restored. The third building on the McKinley site, the one now in use was constructed in 1936, the two story building built in 1903 being raised for the present McKinley School which was built in 1936.

While the first Gridley school was not established until 1874, the Central House School was opened in 1858. The late David Osborn father of J. L. Osborn, as a youth of 16 in 1861 attended the Live Oak rural school on a hill on the Ord Rancho, the site where Ernest Steadman later resided.



Gridley, Cal.
Sept. 18, 1912.

My dear Miss Thompson,

How are you? I would like to see you. How do you like your class this years? We are writing with ink this year. I am getting along nicely.

Why don't you come to see us? We would like to have you come.

Sincerely,
Dorothy May Crum.



Dorothy May Crum on left 1st row



Gridley Elementary School 1875 on Sycamore Street



McKinley School 1935 on Sycamore Street

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Wilson School by Joe McGie

"The original Woodrow Wilson School, facing north on Wilson Street (now named Magnolia Street) between Haskell and Washington Streets, was named after President Woodrow Wilson. The school bore the completion date of '1914' by its name above the front entrance. The writer recalls entering the first grade at Woodrow Wilson School in its first year of operation. The McKinley School had almost burned to the ground the previous winter, leaving only some basement floor remnants to salvage for scrap lumber. This meant that Woodrow Wilson School, in its first year of operation. Had to bear a double burden—its own enrollment of middle and upper graders, plus the primary children of McKinley School.

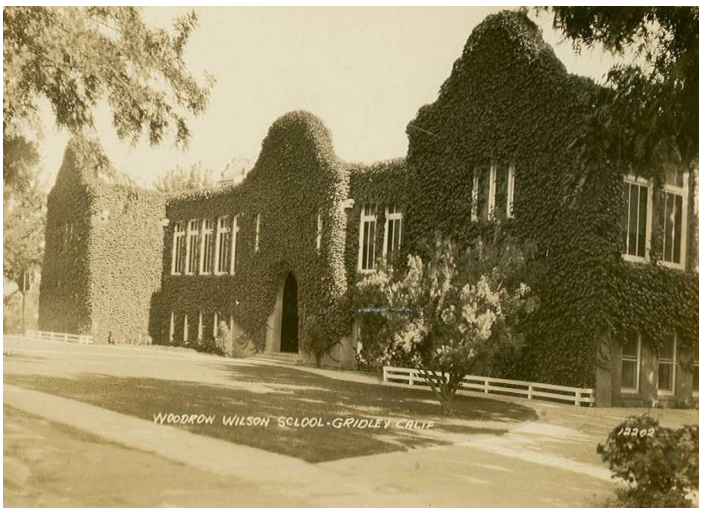
Woodrow Wilson School was constructed with large unpaved, unfloored basements and classrooms upstairs, with oiled pine floors. Its first stage of completion provided for six classrooms upstairs. A few years later a southeast wing was added, providing two more classrooms upstairs, and additional basement space in the southeast wing.

The school was built of reinforced concrete walls, with an architectural style quite common to the schools of the Sacramento Valley of that World War I era—a Spanish Mission style. Belfries reminiscent of Spanish Mission architecture ornamented the west and east rooftops of the structure. Three interior stairways, front, east and west entrances, plus an outdoor stairway on the southeast wing, provided entry for the pupils route to classrooms that formed the upstairs perimeter with a 310 seat auditorium and stage located at the south extremity of the west wing of the building.

Originally the basement included only the lavatories at each end of the building for boys end girls respectively, and large furnaces stoked originally with coal, and later converted to gas burners. In bad weather the large dirt-floored basement served as indoor play areas, with many holes gouged out by boys; pocket knives for marble games, 'mumbly-peg' and 'peggotory.'

During WWI days, boys physical education activities for boys often consisted of marching about the grounds in military formations. The sidewalk flag salute in front of Wilson School was followed by marching in to the martial beat of a snare drum played by an adept





Manzanita School 1868-2026

Manzanita School District was formed on August 2, 1866. It was formerly part of a district called the Live Oak District with a school on the Ord Ranch Road. The early school building that was used until 1915 was built in 1873 and is described in an old account as being beautifully located in a grove of oak trees. It was also stated that the 'District enjoys harmony and prosperity'.

Until about 1908, when another room was added, the school was a one room rectangular structure with windows on each side. There were two windowless anterooms off the front porch—one for the girls and one for the boys. Lunches, coats, overshoes, etc. were kept there.



Manzanita School



Manzanita School

West Liberty School



West Liberty School District formed in 1863, serving southwest Butte County. There was an altercation with Gridley residents in 1876 and a petition to abolish the district in favor of the Gridley district was signed by Gridley town residents and the West Liberty Board, George Gridley and ranchers in the area rose up in wrath, hired an attorney, appeared before the board of supervisors, and won. The school was saved.

Butte District School



Butte District School formed in 1873 west of the town of Gridley at a distance five or six miles on Pennington Road. Students pictured here are: R1; Leta Fairlee, Adelaide Watson, Angeline ?, Willie Ashbury, Lyle Fairlee; R2; Joseph Nugent, Ester Nugent, Violet ?, Joe Ashbury, Stella Ashbury; R3; Frank Watson, Marvin Cassady, Gertrude Watson, Norman Nugent, and Lester Dow, Teacher.

Great news!

The Museum is hosting a second annual tribute for our Veterans, November 21st at the Moose Hall, entitled, We've Got Your Back.

We'll have delicious food, funny skits with lip-sync, dancing and recordings from our "In Their Own Voice" recording studio. We are so thankful to those who attended last year. The funds collected then built the studio and the funds raised this year go to keep the lights on, storing the stories and expanding our reach to families of vets and the Gridley region.

As our veterans are our honored guests, they pay no fee to attend and others please donate whatever you are able.

We are also reaching out to our community for assistance. If you have costumes, uniforms, or other talents you would like to share please contact us at Gridley Museum : Phone 530-846-4482 or email gridleymuseum@gmail.com

Looking forward to seeing you all then!

Memorials

The Gridley Museum Accepts Memorial Donations in Memory of a Family Member or a Special Friend. As a 501 © 3 non profit organization, your contribution is tax deductable. These Memorials will be recorded in a Register at the Museum and will be used for special projects such as permanent exhibits not the general fund. When you give to this fund you may use our non-profit # CT0169578. Thank you for your consideration.

Membership Form

Please consider being a member. Annual memberships run 1/1—12/31
Check the appropriate membership:

____$35 General Membership ____$50 Supporting ____$100 Sustaining

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