

Museum Muses

HIGHLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

151 East Main Street, Hillsboro, OH 45133

937-393-3392

UNION SCHOOL (now WEBSTER SCHOOL)



Photo of Union School, built in 1867. Remodeled in 1915 and demolished about 1954.

Photo donated by Dr. Thomas Henry.

See story on page 3.

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Upcoming Events:

**LOG-CABIN STEW
DINNER, October 25, at
6:00 P.M.**

Highland County Historical Society

August 2001

Director's Corner:

This begins a new year for the Society, with a new board of Directors, a new editor, and new format for the newsletter. With this issue, we are hoping to inject more history into the newsletter and to make it more readable. In addition to informing our members about upcoming meetings and happenings around the "Highland House", our aim is to provide a learning experience for our members.

We hope that our members that are not Hillsboro residents will forgive us for covering a Hillsboro school in this first issue - we could not pass up the chance to use the photo kindly donated by Dr. Thomas Henry.

The Highland House Museum experienced one of the best attendance records during the FESTIVAL OF THE BELLS, over 4th of July weekend. We had many visitors from out of state and out of county, in addition to local visitors. The countdown for our silent auction of various glass Festival Bells came on July 8th, and through the generosity of the bidders, the Society netted \$1635. Again our thanks to Peggy, who made this possible.

The new attic windows have been installed, thus all the windows are now in operable condition; however there are a few window sills still needing repair.

It is with great pleasure that we continue to receive reservations for use of the facility. If you have a meeting, bridge club, or family function, please consider reserving the Highland House Museum. We look forward to your calls and to your personal visits.

Memorials:

Julius Bare from Anne Rhude, Susie & Rob Sharp, Willa Stanforth,
Wm. & Connie Stanforth, Lenora Gordon, Margaret Van
Frank, South Central Power, Ohio Asphaltic Limestone
Corp., Julius & Pat Ogden

Wayne Sharp from Teri Sharp

Shirley Sansone from Lenora Gordon, Margaret Van Frank

Special Thanks:

Our sincere gratitude to Dan Higham for his help and services with our computer system. We are now able to enter and print data on our holdings and acquisitions.

Gift Shop:

The gift shop is getting ready for the Christmas season and new items will be arriving during the next few months. We hope you will check our shop for Christmas gifts, ornaments, decorations, Santa Claus figures and snow people. You will receive plenty of excellent bargains, while also helping the Historical Society.

HISTORY OF UNION SCHOOL

By Bob Andrew

Visitors to the Highland House Museum coming into the rear entrance, often comment on the huge sandstone facing engraved "UNION SCHOOL, Erected A.D. 1867". Like myself, many have asked "where was Union School?"

Answering this question turned out to be a genuine research project. I first turned to Elsie Ayres' "Hills of Highland", and Williams Bros.' 1880 "History of Ross and Highland Counties, Ohio." From these I learned that the Union School was formed in Hillsboro under the Union School Law of 1850, which was Ohio's first attempt at consolidating the many one room schools scattered throughout the state. The Union School was opened in the fall of 1853, in a building on Walnut Street given to the school by the Hillsboro Academy. The old Academy building was destroyed by fire in December 1858.

The school board purchased a lot on west Walnut Street in 1863, and in 1866 plans were drawn for a three story building on the site. "Some opposition was made to the project at the time, but now the entire intelligent portion of the community approve the action." (Hist. of Ross & Highland, p. 377).

Schools were opened on the sixth of September, 1868, with the following corps of teachers: H. S. Doggett, superintendent; L. McKibben, high school teacher; E. G. Smith, A grammar; Mary Doggett, B grammar; Maggie Richards and Mary Ellis, intermediate; Serena Henderson, Matilda McFadden and Sarah J. Lambert, primary. At the start 410 pupils were enrolled. Ellen Eckley was added as an intermediate teacher not long afterwards.

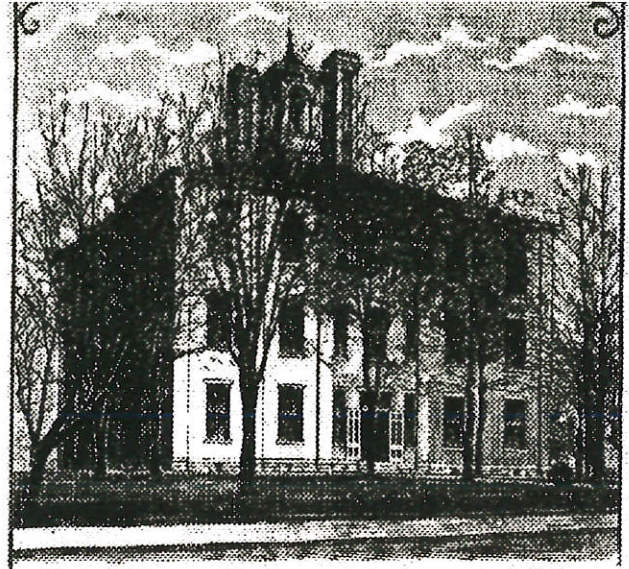
The building shown in the photo was located on the site of present-day Webster school, and has also been known over the years as the "Walnut Street School". Much can be learned by study of the photo and comparison with the present site.

First, the only remnant of the original "Union School", is the two-story addition that was added to the original building. According to Ayres (1971, p. 209) this addition was added in 1888 to provide additional classroom space and office space for the superintendent. This remnant is still visible from Walnut street, and the second floor still retains the west wall (with no windows) which would have connected to the original building. Thus the old original building would have stood just to the west.

This helps us to orient the photo. From this, the

photo was taken from South Street, looking northwest.

Several other interesting observations can be made from the photo. The most interesting of these is the outdoor privy with two doors (boys and girls), just to the right. This is totally gone in an engraving of the building, in a report published by the Hillsboro Board of Education in 1894 (shown below).



WALNUT STREET SCHOOL BUILDING.

Also by 1894, central heating has been added since the four original chimneys, which were for stoves on each floor have been replaced by two larger chimneys near the center, to the north and south of the bell tower.

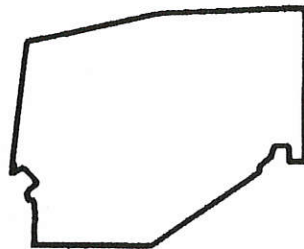
The original photo was probably taken during late fall or early winter, since there are no leaves on the few trees around the building. This is also suggested by the corn stalks in the field on the lower right. However, there are a number of windows open on the upper floors!

Also, notice that the entire school yard is surrounded by a white picket fence about six feet high.

The School Board Report mentioned above also contained the names, married names for females, and locations in 1894 of the Hillsboro High School graduates for the years 1873 through 1893. In addition, photos were located of the third grade class at Webster School, taken May 1903, and the fourth grade class for 1909.

For space reasons these are not reproduced here but will be placed on display in the museum.

MEMBERSHIP
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
HIGHLAND COUNTY
YOUR
TIME TO RENEW



**Highland County
Historical Society**

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