

Tigerville News

"Remembering the Past – Celebrating the Present"

First Edition – August 2012

Ephrata, Washington

Editor Beverly Elshire Mayer

Ephrata School District Past and Present

Message

Dr. Jerry Simon, Superintendent of Ephrata School District: In 2014 Ephrata High School will celebrate its centennial year (1914-2014). If you are a graduate, a current or former teacher or staff member of the District, we ask that you mark your calendar and make plans to attend this once-in-a-lifetime happening. The District, along with Ephrata High School, is looking forward to welcoming back the alumni from the past decades. This is a great opportunity to reconnect with former classmates, old friends, teachers, and staff. The EHS-100 Reunion committee promises to make this an enjoyable and memorable event. We are looking forward to seeing you in 2014. *s/ Jerry Simon*

Community Support

For over 100 years the citizens of Ephrata and adjacent rural areas have been supportive in the effort to provide an excellent educational experience for Ephrata school children. This support has ensured the growth of the Ephrata School District. Currently the district is comprised of a five-member board of directors, 11 school administrators, 135 teachers, seven school buildings, student enrollment of 2,156, with a budget of \$21,500,000.00; a far-cry from its humble beginnings in 1902. Dr. Jerry Simon has served as Superintendent of Ephrata School District since 1997 with Dan Martell serving as EHS Principal since 2004.

First Graduating Class of Ephrata High School - 1914



Blanche Pierce



Adaline Sanders

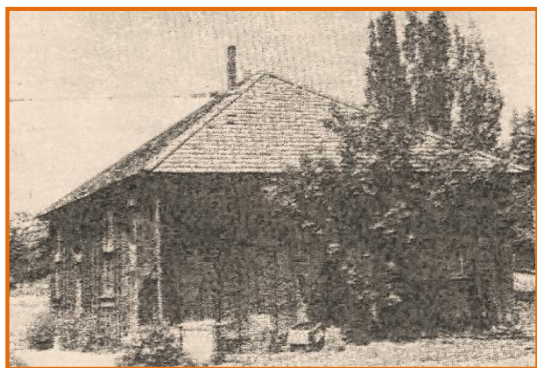


Katherine Kirkpatrick

The three young ladies who made up the Class of 1914 received their diplomas at the Kam Theater from Mr. J. W. Lindley, Superintendent of Schools. Dr. James Thomson delivered the address.

Ephrata High School Past and Present

Ephrata High Schools-Buildings for the Future



As witnessed throughout the years, the Ephrata community continually gives support to its schools. The building program has greatly enhanced the education program by providing well planned and maintained school facilities which are essential in promoting an atmosphere conducive to learning. During the early days of Ephrata the schools were the sites of elocution contests, literary events, and box socials while, in more recent times, athletic events, musical and fine arts presentations have made the school a popular gathering place. The first organized schooling in Ephrata began with a subscription school in

December 1901. The school building above was a frame house located on Division Street where the Bureau of Reclamation building is currently located. The parents of ten would-be students selected Mrs. Lucy Gray as the one to educate their children. Mrs. Gray, who began teaching in the area in 1895, was compensated by donations. The pupils were required to furnish their own seats, desks, and books.

Beginning in 1901 and until the spring of 1904 Ephrata's school children attended classes in a variety of home-like structures. As more pioneering families began arriving in the area it became apparent that steps had to be taken to ensure an education for all young people.

In 1902 the Ephrata School District was formed. The district had the taxing powers to obtain the necessary funding required to deal with continuing growth. In 1904, utilizing taxpayer money for the first time, a building specifically for school purposes was built at C Street & Second Avenue N.W. This building was also used as a church, an office for officials during the formation of Grant County in 1909, along with being a popular site for community gatherings. The school building is situated at far right in picture and is identified by its bell tower; the little house was the Reeder house.



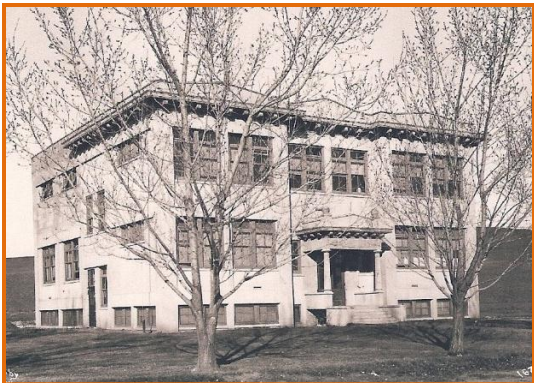
In the spring of 1908 a new five-room grade school was built at the base of Beezley Hill near where the current Grant Elementary School is located. The Ephrata School, as it was called, was a two-story frame building with two 22' by 30' rooms and a hall on both levels, eight large windows in each, cloak rooms, a drinking fountain in the hallway, steam-heated furnace, no lavatories. It was built, including equipment, for about \$7,000.00. The use of the school began with 45 pupils attending first through eighth grades.



In 1909 Chauncy W. Smith became the first superintendent of Ephrata schools. Shortly after his term began the enrollment was such that the Ephrata School became overcrowded and additional space had to be acquired to accommodate the growing school population. The overflow of students was housed nearby at the old Kolsted building on the corner of Second Avenue and Hamill Street.

In 1910 an additional grade was added to the Ephrata School; adding a grade per year continued until by 1913 there were four high school grades. The first 12th grade graduation class, the class of 1914, consisted of three young women. Their graduation ceremony was held on May 1, 1914 at the Kam Theater.

On September 4, 1914 J. W. Lindley, who became superintendent of schools in 1912, directed the school board to open bids for a new Ephrata High School building. By September 25, 1914 work commenced on the building with completion and formal opening held on March 19, 1915. The concrete high school building,



described as a “two-story skyscraper”, was known as the Lincoln School. The building was constructed of reinforced concrete with tile walls and a green stucco finish. It was considered to be “practically fire proof”. The classrooms accommodated from 20 to 30 students; the assembly more than one hundred. The 40’ by 60’ gymnasium was soon outgrown due to the increasing emphasis placed on athletics in the curriculum. The greatest defect in the building was the artificial lighting which gave only from two to eight foot-candles reading illumination. This was addressed with a lighter shade of calcimining and better lights.

The Lincoln School was utilized as a high school until 1944 with many of the graduates coming from other districts such as Soap Lake, Adrian, Grant Orchards, and from farm areas north and northwest of Ephrata. The “green building”, as it was affectionately known by local graduates, stood as an Ephrata landmark until 1983 when it became necessary to dismantle it to make way for construction of the current high school.



Even though the Ephrata School continued utilizing nearby houses for classrooms, the school building could no longer contain the growing population of grade school pupils so a new red-brick grade school was built next to Lincoln School in 1938.

The superintendent at that time was Roy E. Harris. The new Ephrata Grade School would also serve as the high school from 1944 to 1953, the junior high school until 1961, and is currently known as the Beezley Springs building which houses high school classrooms and the Ephrata School District administration offices. The brick building was built for a total cost of \$70,000.00 and “embodied all the newer features of modern school construction” including four class rooms, a library, office, three dressing rooms, drying room, storage room, shower rooms, stage, and an auditorium-gymnasium.

The completion of Grand Coulee Dam and the arrival of water in the canal that ran through Ephrata and further on to the Columbia Basin Irrigation Project brought more students to Ephrata. Families who worked for the Bureau of Reclamation and families who had moved to the Columbia Basin Project to take up farming added greatly to Ephrata’s population.

Because of this growth in population a new Ephrata High School was built and then dedicated on May 10, 1953. The school superintendent was Noble S. Moodhe. Cost of construction for the new school was \$954,481.05. It was a four-year high school until the 1956-57 school years. In 1956 the brick building was structured as a junior high, housing the 7th, 8th, and 9th grades. This separation lasted until 1978 when the high school again became a four-year high school.



1969 view of Ephrata schools complex. From left to right: Lincoln School, Ephrata Junior High School, school parking, Ephrata High School. In background: tennis courts, football field, and shop building. Baseball field at lower left, out of view.

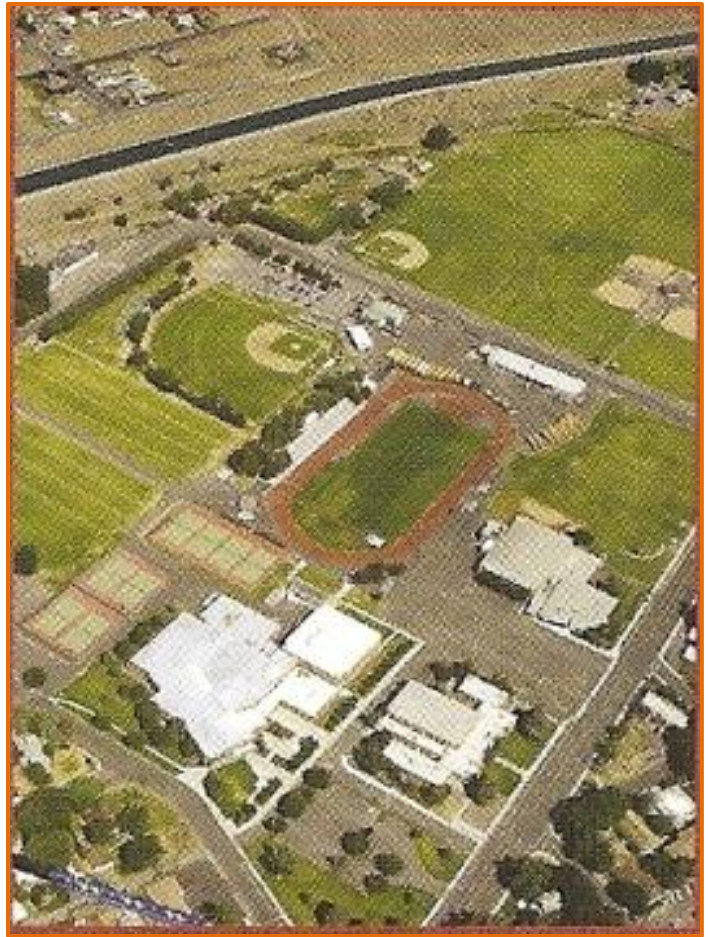
The new Ephrata High School building included a general office, music room, library, domestic science classroom, chemistry and general science laboratory, gymnasium with shower rooms, cafeteria, and shop building. The design of the school was a “finger plan”, consisting of smaller buildings connected by covered and enclosed passages and containing 16 classrooms. Every inch of space was designed with use as the prime objective. When a newer high school was built in 1986 the gymnasium, currently the annex gym, and the music room, currently the Performing Arts Center, were saved from the wrecking ball.

By May of 1983 it appeared that the 30-year old school building was in need of remodeling. A 25-member citizen’s committee was formed to make recommendations regarding this possibility. The committee recommended remodeling but, after further study, it became apparent that new construction for a high school would actually cost the district \$200,000.00 less than remodeling the current building.

The bid for construction was \$5,550,000.00, which included landscaping, relocation of practice fields, partial demolition of existing high school, demolition of Lincoln Building, bleachers for new gymnasium, and the purchase of industrial arts and food service equipment. Richard Kinart was serving as the superintendent of schools when construction for the new high school got underway in June 1985. A completion date of August 1986 was set. Dedication and open house was held on September 4, 1986.



The entire Ephrata High School complex including the main building, annex facilities, agriculture barn, along with first-class football/track and field stadium, baseball and softball complexes, soccer fields, and tennis courts, is a community asset and a source of pride by those fortunate enough to be an Ephrata Tiger.



Ephrata High School Complex – 2012

PROCLAMATION

To the Students of the Ephrata High School: In view of the fact that our school laws of the State of Washington do not permit self-appointed holidays on the part of any student or group of students, we, the members of the Ephrata School Board have seen fit to issue this remonstrance denouncing the action of such high school students of the Ephrata High School who violated one of the statutes of ethics as held and practiced in the schools of the State of Washington by absenting themselves from school on Thursday afternoon of March 12, 1914.

Furthermore, we note that drastic measures have been resorted to by school authorities in the correction of similar offenses. Thinking that some may regard this matter too lightly, we wish to extend a word of caution to those who may in the future contemplate a repetition of the act. The names of those implicated will be kept as a record with the secretary of the school board and a repetition of the act by anyone on any future date will furnish grounds for suspension.

Signed: T. J. Cook, James O'Sullivan, Geo. M. Ryker

City of Ephrata Past and Present

Historical Research by Janet Jenkins Nelson-EHS '65

Janet, a third generation Ephrata resident, grew up hearing stories about Ephrata and Grant County history from family and friends. From this early experience, history of the area became a life-long quest. Over the years Janet has compiled, edited, and written historical stories. In 2008 she published "It Happened in Pioneer Ephrata" "1882-1952", an account of Ephrata history focusing on newspaper articles. With her permission excerpts from her book will appear in this and future EHS-100 Reunion newsletters.



Ephrata's Name

"There is some controversy as to the naming of Ephrata. One opinion holds that it was the surveyors of the Great Northern who named the town. However a copy of a deed from Frank Beezley to the Great Northern states the location as 'Beezley Springs'. It is certain that it was named by a man who worked for the Great Northern; but he was not on the surveying crew that came through in 1890, but worked on the operating crew that maintained the track, and he probably named it in 1893. The first record which the Great Northern has of this location is in the official list of officers, agents and stations, dated February 15, 1893, approximately six months after construction of the line in 1892, in which the station is simply called No. 11. The name itself seems to have derived from the fact the only fruit orchard in the vicinity was located here. The man had recently been to the Holy Lands, and the lay of the land was very similar to the barren Ephrata area. It reminded him of the Holy Land, so he named it 'Ephrata'". "Origin of Washington Geographic Names" by Edmund S. Meany. "It Happened in Pioneer Ephrata" by Janet Jenkins Nelson.

Photo caption: "You are looking at almost the entire town of Ephrata as it was in 1896. This is the Great Northern depot. These three men were photographed by Fred Norton, the Great Northern operator in 1896. From left to right, Frank Beezley in the wagon, Bob Randall, U. S. Railway mail clerk and Mr. Agnew a hardware merchant from Everett. The half boxcar building was a combination depot/telegraph office and residence for Fred Norton. Archives of Grant County Genealogy Library "It Happened in Pioneer Ephrata" by Janet Jenkins Nelson.



Ephrata's Growth

When the mainline of the Great Northern was built in the area in 1892 it greatly changed the outlook for settlement. Station No. 11, with its ready supply of water for the steam engines, became the town of Ephrata and a community began to build. After Ephrata was named county seat of the newly formed Grant County on February 24, 1909, a big rush began in earnest to establish Ephrata as one of the most prosperous towns in the county. Settlers began arriving, settling in the surrounding area hoping to establish a prosperous future for themselves and their families. Farmers began filing for homesteads, building homes, planting acreage, and building rural schools. The town of Ephrata, whose population grew to over 1200 residents by the end of 1910, was busy establishing businesses, building schools and churches, establishing law and order, providing fire protection, publishing newspapers, along with other ventures, some being initiated by government.

The first government act affecting Ephrata happened with the 1909 state officials carving Grant County out of the immense Douglas County and naming Ephrata as the **County Seat** where official business would be conducted. The town continued in quiet prosperity until the need for irrigation water prompted Ephrata residents in 1918 to push for a dam on the Columbia River. The building of **Grand Coulee Dam** transformed the community into a government town from 1933-1941. Other periods of intense government activity also provided opportunities for Ephrata to grow and prosper. In 1942 the **United States Army Air Corps Training Base** was built in Ephrata. In 1951 the **Columbia Basin Project** was created to deliver water from Grand Coulee Dam to over 600,000 acres of fertile, but otherwise dry, farmland. Next, the people of Grant County formed the **Grant County Public Utility District** with headquarters in Ephrata and began construction of two giant hydroelectric dams on the Columbia River.

Ephrata's beginning was that of a "pioneer town" that served as the early-day hub for cattlemen, sheep men, and farmers. Because of the intervention of government entities, Ephrata is now referred to as a "government town". Government projects have enriched the community of Ephrata with growth, prosperity, talented people, and their families; creating a community that is stable and better educated than most communities of their size.

Mayor of Ephrata

Chris Jacobson, the current mayor of Ephrata, is a 1969 graduate of Ephrata High School. During his senior year Chris served as a member of the student council whose main responsibility was to approve budgets for the various clubs and classes. Another responsibility was "cleaning up the city". He is shown at the right of this picture with Student Body President Tom Fitts cleaning up debris following the school's annual box burn. His duties with the city council haven't changed too much from his duties with the student council....just bigger budgets and a wider range of clean-up and maintenance responsibilities.



Jacobson presides over the Ephrata City Council which strives to serve a population of 7,664 residents. Included in the council membership is Mark Wanke – EHS '75, Bruce Reim – EHS '71 and Valli McMahon Millard – EHS '84.

Newsletter

The second issue of the EHS-100 Reunion newsletter will appear on September 01. Going forward, the newsletter will be updated on the first day of each month. Suggestions for future articles may be addressed to Beverly Mayer at sagehen@accima.com.

Attention: Alumni Response Requested

When you attended Ephrata High School was there a tradition or unique activity that stands out in your memories? Was your graduation ceremony one-to-remember? Will the "graduation stalker" reveal himself and tell his side of the story? Please send your story and possible pictures to Beverly Mayer via e-mail with brief information; designate your name and class year. As many as possible of the alumni responses will be reported in a future newsletter. Deadline October 01, 2012.

**WANT TO BE A MEMBER OF THE EHS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AND SUPPORT EPHRATA SCHOLARS?
CHECK OUT ALUMNI ASSOCIATION WEBPAGE.**

