

History of Education in Railroad Township

About 1865 there was one school in the township located in San Pierre. The first teacher being George Furback; the second, O.B. (Capt) Rockwell; the third Lulu Glazebrook; the fourth, George Rockwell. In later years, the school was called "Union".

Later, there was a school east of San Pierre called "Hard Scrabble"; its name derived from the un-disciplined pupils. The first teacher that undertook the position was Henry Roney. A school northwest of San Pierre called "Knowledge Box" was so named because of its noted reputation as having studious and brilliant pupils. Scott Biggs happened to be one of the first teachers. All of these schools were ungraded.

While George Netherland was County Superintendent, the schools became systematized or graded. This was in 1880.

There came change in school locations and more of them were erected. District No. 1 was still in the same place in San Pierre; No. 2 was the "Buckeye", named because of the settlers from Ohio. This was located northeast of San Pierre with Belle Selock as its first teacher; No. 3 was the "Knowledge Box" as mentioned above, located Northwest of San Pierre; No. 4 was the "English Lake" school, having Pete Roney for its first teacher. This school was located in the very small village of English Lake in the north eastern part of the township along the Kankakee River; No. 5 was located South east of San Pierre in a district called "Blue Sea"; No. 6 was the "Prairie Queen" South-west of San Pierre, situated on and surrounded by prairie land, therefore deriving its significance; No. 7 was the "Lomax" school also located in a district called Lomax, four miles north of San Pierre. LeDora Stouffeur was an early teacher; No. 8 was located east of San Pierre.

The school in San Pierre burned and another was rebuilt, which they nicknamed "Two rooms and a kitchen". Frank Delaney held the position as first teacher. This school was used for public meetings, church gatherings, and every kind of entertainment. There was much agitation against this and a petition was started by Dr. Glazebrook to buy new land to erect a larger and better building. The land was bought at the west end of town.

In the meantime, the District school (which was a frame structure) burned. A temporary building was erected on the new land. It was soon destroyed by fire compelling the town pupils to attend the "Prairie Queen" school two and one-half miles west of San Pierre.

Finally a new two story brick building was built in 1902, while Adam Smith was Trustee. The Advisory Board assisted him, for their power came into effect in 1898. A little later the state condemned the school. Ventilation and lighting being the main causes. In 1912, while Owen Daly was Trustee and Carroll Cannon, County Superintendent, the school was rebuilt according to state requirements.

In January 1914, Dr. W.J. Solt became Trustee and the small district schools were done away with. The township supplied busses drawn by horses and all the county children were brought to Lomax and English Lake districts. The "Lomax" school was rebuilt according to state requirements and "English Lake" school was remodeled.

"Lomax" had two teachers and all grades. "English Lake" had one teacher and all grades. San Pierre had seven teachers, four in the grades and three in high school.

In 1917, when J. Allen Barr was County Superintendent; Dr. W.J. Solt, Trustee; and Guy W. Johnson, Principal; the school had four years of High School for the first time. Before this, San Pierre had three years of High School. Students wishing to complete their course had to attend a Commissioned High School which was North Judson, Medaryville, Wheatfield or Knox. Time went on very successfully and things were progressing when fate hit hard again. The school burned January 29, 1923. The term of school was completed in the three churches and a private home. Leonard Rennewanz took the office of Trustee on January 1, 1923. Plans were made immediately to rebuild, The new school was erected on a hill, directly across the road from the old location.

School the following term was held in the same manner as the previous year. About the middle of March, the building was completed. The teachers and pupils took their respective places.

After having waited patiently for a number of years, San Pierre secured its four year Commission being recognized by the state as a school fulfilling all requirements. Our County Superintendent, Mr. Barr and Trustee, Mr. Rennewanz were responsible for this great deed and many compliments and thanks of appreciation were given in their honor. The members of the State Board of Education at this time were as follows: Henry Noble Sherwood, President; E.N. Graff, Secretary; John Bettinger, Inspector.

Our school is again progressing. This year the faculty increased, making a total of eight teachers instead of seven. The enrollment of the school has also increased, greatly. Lomax and English Lake are continuing as mentioned above. In the future, we hope for more and better progress.

The following is a compilation of trustees in the township:

1. Samuel Jones – 1864-1868
2. Matt Jones – 1868-1872
3. Wm. Selock – 1872-1876
4. Wm. Payne – 1876-1880
5. Wm. Payne Jr – 1880-1884
6. Joe Beyers – 1884-1892
7. L. Rennewanz – 1892-1900
8. Adam Smith – 1900-1904
9. L. Rennewanz – 1904-1908
10. Owen Daly – 1908-1914
11. Dr. W.J. Solt – 1914-1923
12. L. Rennewanz – 1923-1927
13. John Eckert – 1927-

Composed by Herrette Daly, San Pierre, Indiana, May 14, 1929