

Tennessee School

**Tennessee School
1889-1999**



In 1989 Tennessee School celebrated its Centennial. A Centennial Book was prepared for the occasion, and the district is fortunate to have a copy. From it was gleaned most of the history and humor that follows.

TENNESSEE SCHOOL DISTRICT #102C - 100 YEARS -

**School days, School days, Dear old golden rule days
Readin' and writin' and 'rithmetic
Taught to the tune of the hickory stick
You were my Queen in Calico,
I was your bashful barefoot beau.
And you wrote on my slate "I Love You, Joe"
When we were a couple of kids.**

Tennessee School has been going for 100 years - yes, 100 years. It seems like a long time for a little one-room school house, built in 1889; and now it has grown into a

beautiful nine-room school with a big gym.

Of the four schools north of Lebanon, Tallman #7 was the oldest; it would now be 135 years old. Next was Spicer #17, which was started the same year as Tallmann and also would have been 135 years old. Both schools were 105 years old when they consolidated with Tennessee in 1959. Next was Gore #81; it now is 109 years old. And this year, along comes Tennessee #102 -- 100 years old. These and other schools in the county popped up fast, all within a few years of each other, and several a year.

One hundred years have made a lot of changes in our lives and ways of transportation. Today it is but a very short little hop, skip and jump down to Gore School. All of the children in this area went to Gore, and it was a long walk to Gore every morning and night - a/very long walk for little first and second graders; and yes, for other students, too. Mother had no car to bus her youngsters to school; it was just a case of walking. Some had horses and road horseback.

With this distance such a big factor in the lives of the community, it was decided to form a school at Tennessee.

- Summer 1889 Chester Myers' father, Edward Myers and Mrs. Bertha Ross's father, G. C. Davis, were two of the people who carried a petition to start the school. The boundary board granted the petition, and the new district was formed. The land was bought from T. M. Scherer, a bachelor.
- July 6, 1889 Mrs. Bertha Ross did not go to school her first year because it was too far to walk to Gore. Her sister, Mrs. Ethel Blacklaw, had walked to Gore for a couple of years. Mrs. Ross was in the first class that started to school in the new Tennessee School in October 1889.
- July 6, 1889 School board meeting -called for setting a date of July 17,1889, to vote on a tax levy for buying the land and building a school. Called for District #17 and #81 to make a division of school monies on hand and a division of the school property. P.L. Wallace, Chairman, and S.O. Wallace, Clerk.
- July 17, 1889 Board meeting -"On motion a levy of \$700 was-ordered for the purpose of purchasing of a school site and the erection and furnishing of a schoolhouse for the use and benefit of said district."
- 1889 -1890

| | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| <u>teacher</u> | <u>Chairman/Board</u> | <u>Budget</u> |
| Dorena Marshall | P.L. Wallace / S.O. Wallace | \$527.00 |

The first teacher, Dorena Marshall, was from the Knox Butte area. She lived "around" in the district while she taught. She received \$35 per month for teaching. The budget for running the school the first two years was high for everything had to be bought. It was \$527 for each year. The school year had a three-month term in the fall, and sometimes another three months in the spring.

(Editor's Note: The above is copied directly from the Tennessee School chapter of the Centennial Book. At the very end of the book, Edith Hull is listed as the Historian, and I believe these are her words – lots of history in these paragraphs. Once again we are indebted to someone who took the time to preserve some of their history.)



This building served Tennessee students from 1889 to 1949, when a new building was erected.

100 Years via Lebanon Express

(Editor's Note: In celebration of Tennessee's Centennial in 1989, Superintendent Dan Hundley went through back editions of the Lebanon Express, going back 100 years. He used the results as introductions to various songs at the Spring Concert. His work is quoted below:)

Our music program tonight will review the past 100 years of American history. Before each song you will hear about what was happening in the world, in the United States, and in Lebanon, Oregon. The Lebanon news will have been taken from the front page of the May 4th edition of the year's *Lebanon Express*.

1889

Benjamin Harrison was inaugurated president in January. He received the majority of the electoral votes but Grover Cleveland received the majority of the popular votes. The Eiffel Tower was erected in Paris, France; and Elizabeth Cochrane Seaman, also known to millions of her readers as Nellie Bly, set off to circle the globe in an imitation of Jules Verne's "Around the World in 80 Days." She completed the journey in 72 days.

Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota and Washington all became states.

The Lebanon Express carries a front-page ad offering the water powered sawmill of G.W. Wheeler for sale for \$2,000. The mill is guaranteed to produce 5,000 board feet of lumber per day.

The Willamette Valley Steamship line advertises that its ships make 3 trips each week between Portland and Corvallis. Finally, tax assessor Z.B. Moss was in Lebanon arranging for the future wants and grabs of office holders and greedy politicians.

The country is moving into the era known as the Gay 90's. The band will play "Sidewalks of New York" and "Daisy Bell," songs that were popular then.

1899

The Treaty of Paris is signed ending the Spanish American War. Railroads continue to expand, linking more and more of the country together, and "She'll be Coming Round the Mountain," a railroad crew song, was popular.

1909

Henry Ford begins the mass production of the Model T, Sigmund Freud tours the U.S. lecturing on his new theory of psychoanalysis and plans are underway in Lebanon for the First Strawberry Fair. Elsewhere in the Northwest the International Workers of the World, one of the most militant labor unions in the nation, is formed as workers across the land begin to organize to protest working conditions. The next song, "Old Ma Bell," was popular with the labor movement.

1919

In Lebanon plans are underway for the 10th Strawberry Fair and according to the "Express" the high school juniors and seniors had a jolly time roasting weanies down by the river. The Treaty of Versailles is signed in Paris, ending the Great War. It won't be known as World War I until World War II begins in 20 years. Millions of returning soldiers teach the nation a new song, "Oh How I Hate to Get up in the Morning."

1929

Bigger and Better are the bold headlines of the Express as it describes this year's Strawberry Fair. A queens contest has been added and Leneve Maxwell of Lebanon and Carrie Lee Cox of Lacombe are way out in front in the balloting. Sylvia Elliot, the Tennessee entry, is in 7th place. 1929 also marks the year that Edith Ford Hull began her career in education as a teacher at Salt Lake School near Lebanon. Across the nation everyone is in good spirits and "Singing in the Rain" makes its debut. This time of merriment comes abruptly to a halt in October as the stock market, which had been advancing rapidly, comes crashing down on Oct. 24 and Oct. 29, known now as Black Thursday and Black Tuesday, respectively. The Great Depression has begun.

1939

Germany invades Poland, and Great Britain and France declare war on Germany beginning World War II. President Roosevelt has begun his third term and his program to fight unemployment has included work on the Lacombe Water Project and improvements to Santiam Pass. In addition to hiring construction workers, the government has also hired artists and songwriters. Woody Guthrie wrote our next song under such a program, "This Land is Your Land."

1949

In Lebanon a new high school football coach has been named to replace Bud Paige who has become assistant principal and Aunt Jemima will be in town on Saturday to serve what else but pancakes. Congress has increased the minimum wage to 75 cents per hour and the Soviet Union explodes an atomic bomb. Our next song “Coming in on a Wing and a Prayer” was made popular during World War II.

1959

The front page of the “Express” shows an F9F Panther jet being unloaded at the city park, and a headline tells us that Senator Newberger has urged Congress to set aside an additional 3.5 million dollars to begin work on Green Peter Dam. Alaska and Hawaii become states, the first new states since New Mexico and Arizona joined the Union in 1912. Soviet Premier Nikita Krushchev visits the United States but is denied his request to visit Disneyland. A growing unrest is beginning to sweep the country as the nation's Blacks are beginning to demand their rights. Our next song, “We Shall Overcome” has become synonymous with the Civil Rights Movement but the song actually had its origins in the earlier struggles of the country's labor movement.

1969

The Tennessee School District loses its first budget election by a vote of 36 to 39 and the State Legislature expands the protection of the beaches from commercial development. Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin walk on the moon, and the nation sees its first Moratorium Day as antiwar demonstrations are held throughout the country. The next song, “The Strangest Dream” was a popular protest song.

1979

A nuclear power plant mishap at Three Mile Island is the nation's first major nuclear disaster and the United States Embassy in Tehran, Iran is seized.

The “Express” headlines tell us that Tennessee School flip-flops its lunch and recess schedules.

Throughout the country more and more women are joining the workforce and “9 to 5” is a hit.

That brings us to 1989, the present. During our program tonight we have briefly covered some of the events that have helped shape our nation in the past 100 years. We would like everyone to now join us in singing “America the Beautiful” to conclude our program. The words are found on the program.

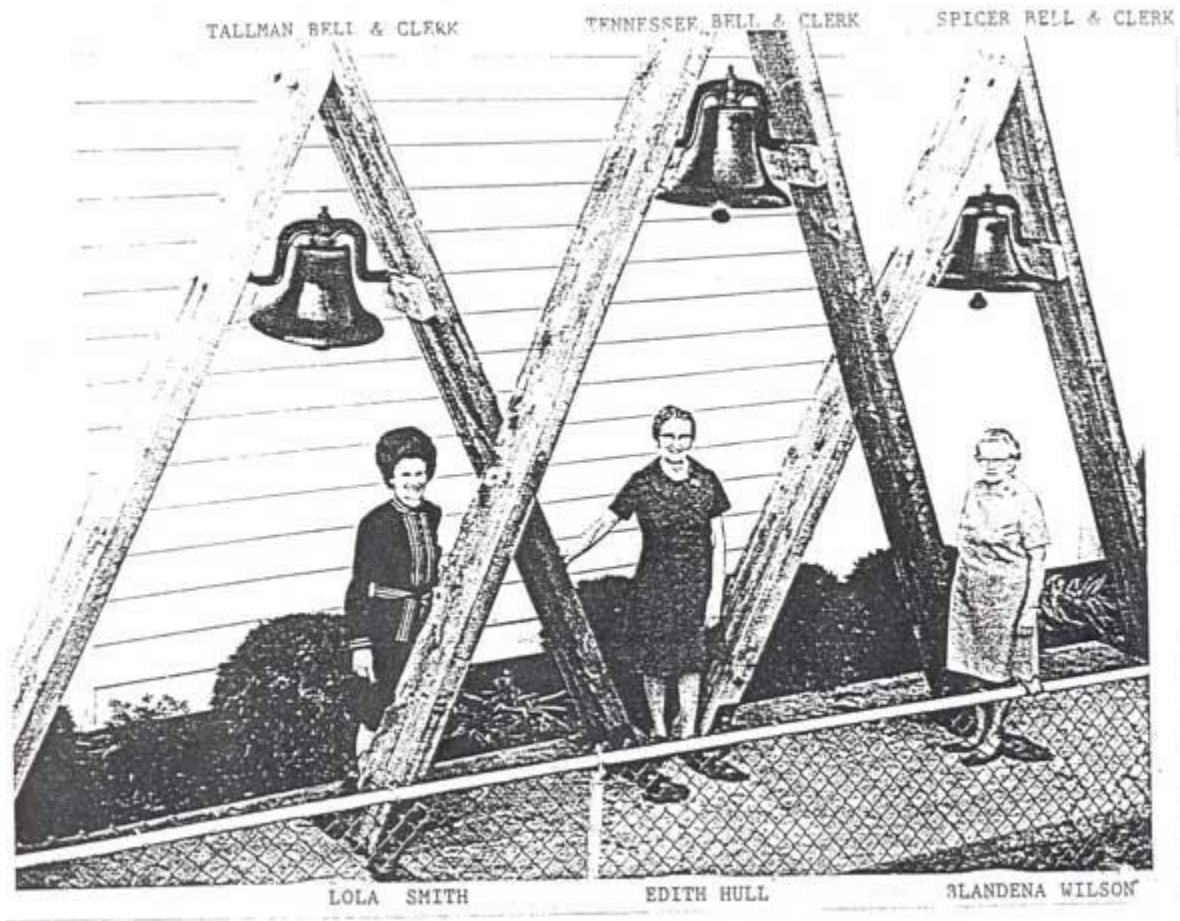
(Editor's Note: No one suspected at this time that in just a decade, Tennessee School would be closing its doors for the last time. After unification in 1995, the district was merged with Gore in 1999.)





Probably the favorite part of the old school for many students was the playground, out in back

Bells
From the *Tennessee Centennial Book, 1989*

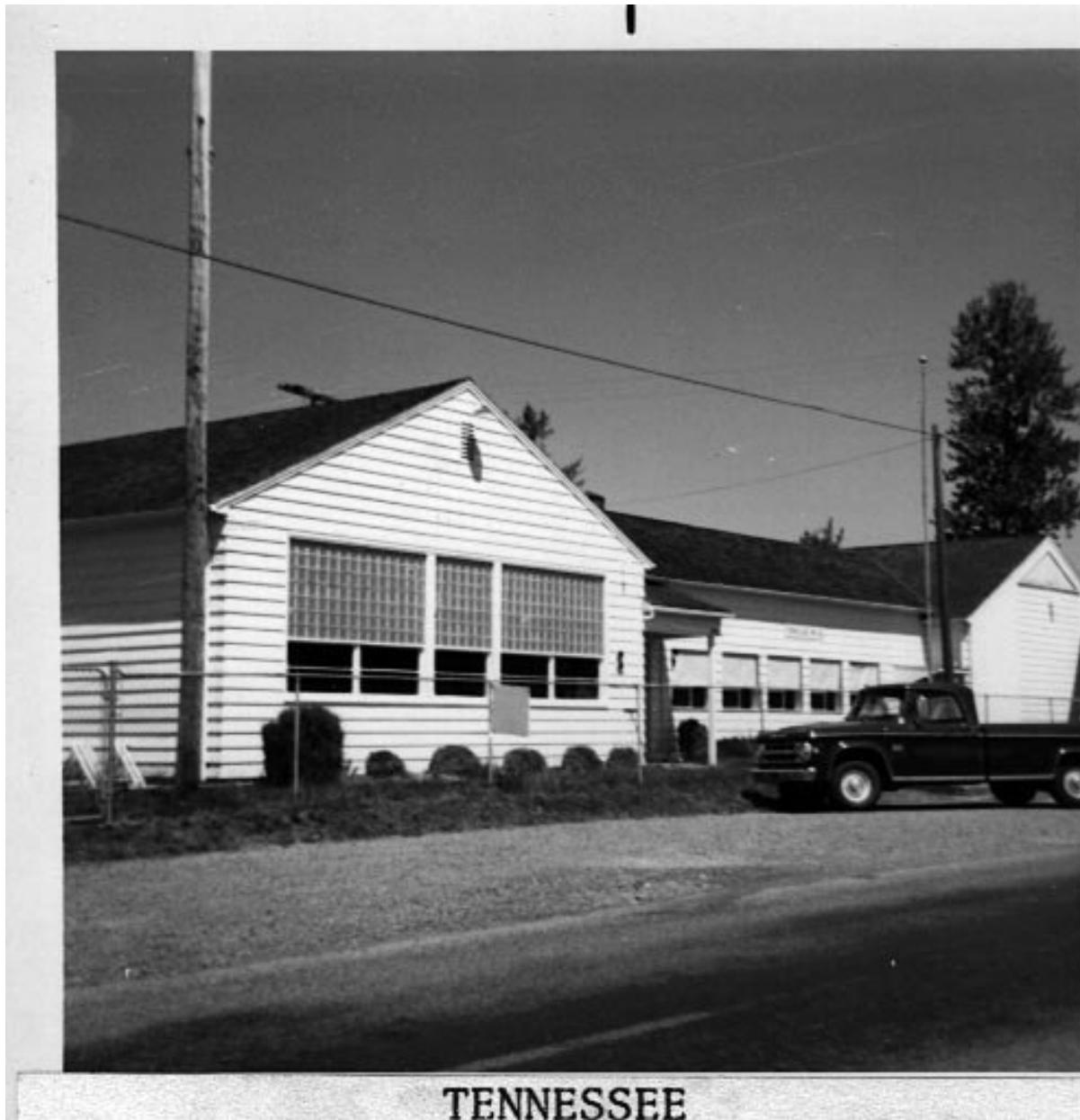


TENNESSEE

Now as quiet as a school yard after recess, the three bells in front of Tennessee School, north of Lebanon, are reminders of the days when the clanging let children know it was time to hurry or be tardy. The bells are from Tallman, Spicer, and the original Tennessee schools. Mrs. Ethan Hull, Tennessee clerk and teacher for 25 years, has for 12 years wanted to preserve them. Since the three schools were consolidated in 1959, she has kept the monument plan alive. One of the three still stands. Spicer School was converted into a house, Tallman burned down, and the original Tennessee School was torn down. In 1972 Mrs. Hull's son, Clair, Mike, and Robert Bellinger, School Board Chairman, erected A-frames supporting the bells.

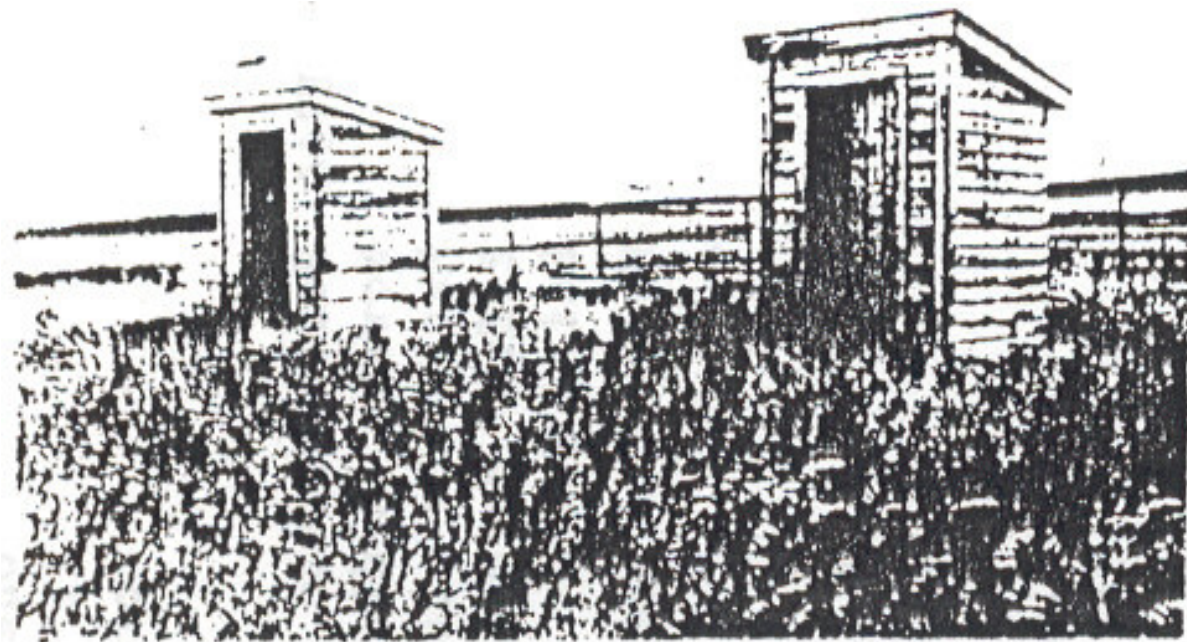
-News articles furnished by Mrs. Art Wilson





The new Tennessee School, built in six stages between 1949 and 1979. Always a small school, we know that Tennessee only had 90 students in 1995 when it, along with other local districts, was unified into the Lebanon Community School District.

THE EPIC ROLE OF THE SHACKS OUT BACK



Listen my children and you shall hear
 Of the plumbing systems of yester year.
 Not many years ago behind most every school
 Stood a pair of biffies that were really cool.
 Here's a pair that have weathered well -
 If they could talk what a tale they'd tell.
 Some of the things that they would say
 Would follow the course of a routine day:
 It was nine by the clock on the school house wall
 That first day of school in the fall.
 The teacher said, "Children, you all should know
 How to get permission if you have to go.
 You needn't talk or speak your mind
 Just raise you hand and give the sign.
 One finger for just a routine notion
 But two if your bowels are really in motion.
 But, I will be the one to decide
 If you really need to go outside."
 At 10:30 the clock declared recess
 Just in time to avoid a mess.
 The littlest kids could hardly wait -
 Ten minutes more would have been too late.
 At 12:00 by the sun up in the sky
 The kids and School Ma 'am heaved a sigh.
 Lunch was eaten and games were played
 And a hurried trip to the privy was made.
 It was 1:00 when the school bell rang
 And from the biffies ran the gang.
 It was 2:30 by the clock on the wall,
 When a boy at recess let fly a snowball.
 With giggles and screams and toss of curls

**Refuge was taken "out back" by the girls.
It was 4:00 when Teacher dismissed the class
And stepped aside to let them pass.
So went the day, alas and alack,
At the old log school with the shacks out back.**

*(Supplied by Maxine Case Anderson-Class of 1925,
in the Tennessee Centennial Book.)*