

LENTNER SCHOOL

1964 - 1965

There have been no Lentner School group pictures found for the last year of the School's existence, the term of 1964 - 1965. It was during that term that rural schools were consolidated and the Lentner School District became a part of the Shelby County R-IV School system.

Little Rex Baker, the only first-grader in the 1964 - 1965 term became the last first-grader to attend a Lentner School. Since 1868 there had been so many children beginning their education, as first-graders, in a one-room Lentner School.



This cute small boy probably had no idea he was making history by just showing up for school! So he gets a larger picture slot than those that preceded him. After 97 years, it was the end of an era.

Mrs Sam (Mildred) Gorby

Lentner Teacher

1939 - 1940 1940 - 1941

Autumn 1947 - Spring 1965



Mildred Gorby had the reputation of being an excellent teacher for the 20 years she taught at Lentner School, longer than any other teacher in the Lentner School District. For those of us that knew her for the over 50 years she lived in the Lentner community, she was so much more to us. We went to church and Sunday School with her. She was a kind neighbor, a faithful friend, a cordial hostess, a confidant, a fun companion on day jaunts after Sam passed away.

Mildred was always a promoter of anything beneficial to the Lentner community.

We fondly remember Mildred - and we miss her!

A School Teacher's Memories

A treasure was found on August 27, 2008. Becky McCue, grandniece of Mildred Gorby came across the street to my door (Marjorie Boling). Becky had just found a notebook that contained a handwritten account by Mildred Gorby of her experiences in a one room school. It was written after her retirement.

Apparently she was giving a talk to 4th grade students at an Elementary School at 9:30 A M followed by speaking to 5th graders at a Junior High School at 10:00 A M on Monday, November 16, ? (no year date).

It seemed that her remembrances were just destined to be found at the time of the Lentner School Reunion that so many of her former students would be attending. Including it in this book was a "must".

Her thoughts are quoted on the next page.

MEMORIES OF MILDRED GORBY

This is National Education Week.

I was asked to tell you about my education and how it has helped me in my experiences in a one room school.

I always wanted to be a teacher even before I started to school. When the neighbor children came to play - guess what we played - school! Guess who was the teacher? I managed to be the teacher.

One couldn't go to school then until one was 7 years old. You see, there were no buses and most of us walked to school. I walked 1 ½ miles. My book sack and my lunch bucket were my pride and joy. Santa had brought them to me a long while before. I wanted to be ready if I ever got to be 7 years old.

The day finally arrived and dressed in warm clothing my brother, who was six years older, and I started to school. At the school we had a wood stove - it wasn't too warm. When we got near it, our faces and hands were warm - our backs were cold. Usually there were 2 or 3 in each seat. We had a wood shed and two outside rest rooms - his and hers.

We had a board for a bat and a ball made of rubber and string. We played tag, hide-and-seek and ran races.

On Friday, after the last recess, we spelled and ciphered. Do you know what I mean by ciphering? It was "an arithmetic match". We only celebrated at Christmas and the last day of school. Santa never came in person.

After 8 years at this school, my parents decided to buy a home in Clarence. There were no buses and it was just too far to walk to high school in Clarence. My brother had ridden a horse in his high school years.

After 4 short years in high school, I took the Teachers Examination and got a job teaching that fall in a rural school. It was here, I feel sure, that I studied harder than my pupils to be able to answer some of their questions. The many ones I didn't know we looked up together. It was fun and a learning process for all of us.

I taught in the winter and attended college in the summer. I received my college degree at the Kirksville University with additional hours from Missouri University and the college of Fayetteville, Arkansas.

After five years teaching in a rural school, I taught in Clarence. Then I married and moved to Lentner.

Now I will spend the rest of my time telling you about the one room school in Lentner where I taught 20 years.

I had from 19 to 26 pupils in all grades. This school was really just like one big happy family. It was great, I loved everyday. School started at nine. We had health inspection and Show and Tell. Some had been on trips, some had had a birthday - sometimes 2 or 3 had a short play or a song. We spent 15 to 20 minutes if needed.

In the school room there was a blackboard, a large bulletin board, a large coal stove, teacher's desk, a piano, a long table for art crafts, many filled book shelves, phonograph, encyclopedias, maps, a globe and a recitation bench.

On the west of the large school room was a room or hall for wraps and lunch boxes. We had a coal house but still had outside rest rooms - Dick and Jane.

The 8th grade recited first. There was a bench in front of my desk so the other children would not be disturbed. This was the recitation bench.

Why did I have the older children's classes first? So that they could help answer questions and help with the lower grades.

You see, a rural teacher was the coach, the janitor, doctor, nurse, cook, music teacher and the dentist. "Oh, yes - I've pulled several loose teeth."

Besides having classes in all subjects, we were busy doing many, many other things. Each October we had a box supper and program. Boys bought the girls' boxes of food. One night I was busy and didn't have time to put anything into my box. It didn't really matter - my husband always bought mine. And some of the fellows in the community always bid against him and he had to pay dearly for my box - but it was for a good cause. The school could use the money! Other rural schools came to the box supper. We sold chances on many things and had contests. We made several hundred dollars each year.

The directors let us spend the money for swings, merry-go-round, slides, ball equipment, encyclopedias, hot lunches in the winter and money for going roller skating.

The mothers had birthday parties for their children and we had a community masquerade party. We made Christmas gifts for the parents and had a Nature Study club. The P T A was very active and met each month and had large crowds and splendid cooperation. Santa came on a big white candy truck and gave us oranges and candy each year. We had a Christmas program. Santas came as the school band played "Here Comes Santa Claus". Just one time I began to wonder! I later found out Santa had a little difficulty with his clothing - and reindeer.

We took part each year in the rural track meet. We took hikes in Nature Study Class, and played baseball with other schools.

Each spring we took part in the school pageant. We competed with other rural schools in subjects and music. We entered displays at the Shelbina Fair and Clarence Homecoming. We had a tonette band and a rhythm band. We entertained at the Bethel Grange.

We put on a miniature wedding at the Macon REC and at the Clarence Theatre and the Shelbyville Theatre.

Three of our boys went to Quincy on Saturdays for 6 weeks where they competed on the TV Amateur contest. They won first and each received a billfold, roller skates and \$25. They made a record of the songs they had sung.

Discipline was not a problem. A busy person is a good person!

Now your next question may be "Why aren't you still teaching if you enjoyed it so well?"

Well, I'm afraid for you to give me an answer! About the first week I taught at Clarence, after the rural school consolidation, one boy said to me "My sister said she had you as her teacher several years ago." Several years later a girl reminded me that I had her father in third grade. Ten years after that, a girl said she had been to see her grandfather and he said I was his 8th grade teacher. I didn't want to hear about teaching a great-grandfather.

Now, boys and girls - study hard - get all the education you possibly can. I hope some of you will be teachers. It is so much fun - and so rewarding.

GIVE IT YOUR BEST!

Have a good school year.

By Mildred Gorby