

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CENTRAL GRADE SCHOOL, DISTRICT 51, WASHINGTON, ILLINOIS

EARLY HISTORY

The early recorded history of Central Grade School is virtually nonexistent except for the memories of those having received their early education there. Located on the corner of the now Wilmore Road and Dallas Road, the rural one-room structure was reportedly old in 1880; documentation exists that a subscription school was taught by John Berry in a log house located at that site in the 1830's and called the "West-Side" school house. Parents paid to send their children to the school, the teacher could choose those students he/she wanted to be in the school, and the teacher was boarded with families of the school children.

In the early 1900's the student population climbed to 40 with attendance being rather erratic as the boys would leave school to help with the harvest in the fall and planting in the spring. Schools at that time were generally open eight months of the year. Pupils were classified by the reader, speller or arithmetic book they used rather than by grade level. Ida Parsons, one of the teachers in the early 1900's, taught all age levels at Central School.

One of Ida Parson's students, John Willhardt, served on the Board of Directors in the 1920's. He recalled the visits by the County Superintendent of Schools (BI Martin: 1919-1927) who directed the supervision of schools and was responsible for achievement testing in Tazewell County at that time. He was reminded of the County Superintendent's journey from Pekin to Washington by train and his visits on a hired rig of horse and buggy to get to the schools.

Later, in the decade of the 1920's, the enrollment dropped sharply due most likely to economic conditions during that era. The school became increasingly costly to maintain and was consequently closed for a period of 10 years.

Mr. Bill Ebert attended Central School from 1933 to 1940 after attending a private school surrounded by many different flowers located on the current library property taught by Mrs. Mary Etlein. Most children would either walk or ride a bicycle to the school. He fondly recalls, Mrs. Florence Mette, who was his teacher in grades three through eight, and recognizes her as a “great influence” to him.

Attendance in the school varied. There were about six students at Mr. Ebert’s grade level in 1935-1936 with a total of 17 to 28 students attending school at any given time. He recalls the coal room located the NW corner of the basement and the heat register near the center of the single room to provide heat to the classroom. The property had a hand pump and outdoor well that provided water. The water was brought into the room in a pail with students sharing a common dipper. The restrooms were located on either side of the main entrance after walking up four or five steps. The restrooms have been identified as outdoor toilets located indoors.

The teacher had her desk on the East side of the room with a long, recitation bench separating individual student desks on the West side of the classroom. The individual student desks had the opening for an ink well but no one reported pig tails being dipped in ink. A piano was available and played by Mrs. Mette to the enjoyment of her students.

The teacher would call groups of children to the long bench for instruction by subject. Mr. Ebert said he learned a great deal by listening to the instruction given the older children and credits the learning environment for helping his ability to concentrate on independent tasks in adulthood. The children used goldenrod tablets to practice the Palmer writing methods. Each child had books for their use. Students enjoyed the opportunity to learn and discipline was not a major issue. The occasional group of older boys might slip out the back window while the teacher was otherwise involved, but the variety of teacher responsibilities permitted such shenanigans.

At recess time, one of the games played often and with great relish was “Andy I Over” which involved one team yelling “Andy I Over;” then throwing a ball over the school. If a member of one team caught

the ball, they would run around and try to eliminate a member of the other team by throwing the ball at them. In colder months after the school day, the children would cut hockey sticks from tree branches and play on the frozen creeks. The girls often played Jacks while some of the boys would play marbles or mumbly peg.

Often though, the girls and boys would join together to form softball teams and enjoy an informal game. Mr. Ebert mentioned the dress of the day included high topped shoes, knickers, corduroy or overall pants.

On inclement days the boys and girls used the basement as an activity area, staying clear of the coal and coal furnace used to heat the school.

“Uncle” Billy Hess, who sold sorghum and real estate, went with the school’s softball team providing guidance whenever Central had a game with another school. He was not available for practice sessions.

Mr. Ebert recalls parents planning and holding ice cream socials twice a year to raise money. Donated cakes, fudge, and candy were sold. Some cakes and fudge were used as prizes for the cake walk with the piano providing the music.

A 1937 graduation program shows only one student graduated that year: Ruth Sager. The graduation program was held at District 52 with their graduates and others from Jefferson School, Columbia School, Cottonwood School, Hopewell School, Stormer School, Liberty School, and Greenridge School.

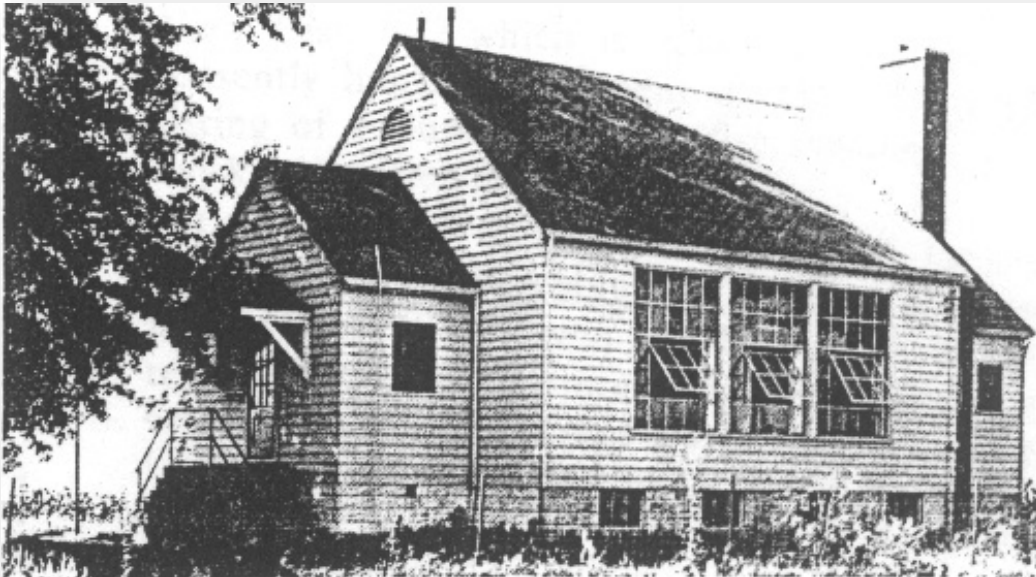
The next major milestone in the history of Central School unfolded dramatically on a stormy Saturday morning in 1941. The weather was extremely warm with news reports indicating temperatures in the upper 80’s. On April 19, 1941, a tornado demolished the one room schoolhouse as it tore its way across the farmlands northwest of Washington. The New York Times headline read, “Howling Storms Damage Midwest...”

School was dismissed for the remainder of the year. Another building was constructed during the summer months on the same property by major Washington contractors, Henry and Willis Hett, before September, 1941.

Mr. Reeves was the sole teacher in 1950 and taught all eight grades. The basement was ultimately used as a classroom when in the early 1950's enrollment increased and expanded budgets permitted the hiring of another teacher.

Dave Weaver recalls being hired while a student at the old Central School and during his eighth grade year at the new Central School to clean the classrooms, the blackboards, and to deal with the boiler. He remembers Dale Pittenger, a year older, also provided the same services for a small amount of pay. Dale may also have lost a fingertip to a paper cutter at the school.

Mrs. Nancy Bender moved to Washington in 1957 and first attended the old Central School. She was amazed, having moved from the much larger Peoria school district that a two-room school still existed.



Central School - Wilmore and Dallas Rd

In August 1955, an attempt was made to annex Central School District 51 to Washington Grade School District 52. A petition submitted to Tazewell county Superintendent, L.L. Atteberry was denied on June 10,

1955. The annexation petition was opposed on the grounds of anticipated growth of 400 undeveloped plots in the Washington Estates and Hillcrest Drive areas which happened soon after the denial. Mrs. Griffin recalls that Angelo Karagianis was very involved with the Washington Estates development. He may have worked with Scoltz Homes, the company that built the first spec home in the Estates. Mr. Karagianis also served briefly on Central's Board of Directors. Mrs. Euphemia Schmidt and Rev. Murvel Huffstutler shared the teaching duties at Central School with 38 students enrolled in grades 1 – 8 with Mrs. Schumacher taking over early on for Rev. Huffstutler.

The building that had served as Central School since 1941 was formally retired in 1958 at a public auction. Its last Board of Education consisted of three members: Mr. Wes Wenger, President; Mr. Roland Walwer, Secretary; and Mr. Ralph Brown. The building sold for approximately \$2,000.00 and was utilized as a church. Sixty-one pupils entered the new Central School building located at then 301 Eagle Avenue (later to become 1301 Eagle Avenue) on a 5.38 acre site in the Washington Estates subdivision on January 2, 1957.

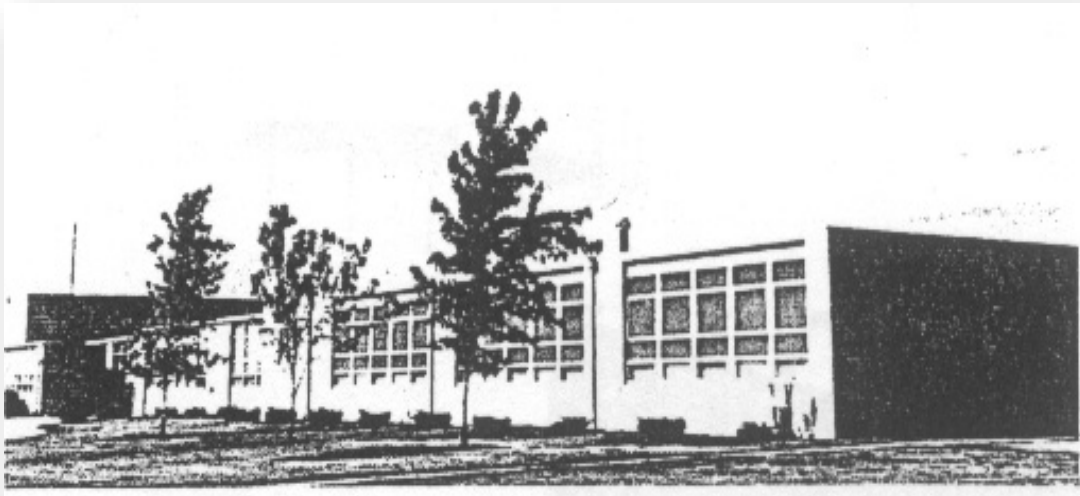


Figure 1 - Central School 1301 Eagle Avenue in 1970

**BRICK AND MORTAR;
PEOPLE AND PROGRESS
(1957-Present)**

The four classroom concrete block and brick veneer building accommodated the students from the old Central School in two 32-desk classrooms. The first two teachers at the new school in January 1957 were: Mrs. Euphemia Schmidt and Mr. Schmeckpepper, who served as the District's first administrator. The third classroom was put into use in September 1958 when Mrs. Alice Griffin was hired. The fourth classroom had no blackboards, floor tile, ceiling lights and was sometimes used as an all purpose room. Plans were being considered for an eventual capacity of 128 students according to Wesley Wenger, President of the Board of Education. Mr. Walwer, the Secretary/Treasurer recalls the first budget in the new facility was around \$30,000. He was responsible for paying the bills at the time. The third board member was August T. Rosenberg. The assessed valuation of \$1,163,610 supported the bond issue of \$58,000 approved by the voters for architects Verkler and Tinsman to construct the school. Included among the teachers added to the faculty in 1959 was Mrs. Marg Pacey - Grades 1 and 2, (who taught her classes in the basement of the Wenger home since her classroom was not ready for occupancy), Mrs. Marge Abernathy - Grades 3 and 4, Mrs. Griffin for Grades 5-6 and Mr. Schmeckpepper who taught the 7-8th graders and served as the first administrator. The only sports team from the old Central School and continuing at the new Central School was an ad hoc softball team that played competitively against students from Lafayette, Hopewell, Columbia, and Liberty schools. Mr. Richard "Bud" Berry was a volunteer who offered to help coach the softball/baseball team in 1957.

The new Central School graduated three eighth graders its first year: Gail Bachman, Ron Kuykendall, and Dave Weaver. There were eight in the class of 1958 – four girls and four boys according to Mrs.

Nancy Bender. The graduates held their ceremony with the graduates of District 50 at the Washington Community High School gym.

By March 1960, student enrollment had continued to climb with the Board of Education anticipating growth to 110 students. The need for addition rooms was evident as the voters of the District approved a \$60,000 bond issue to construct additional classrooms, a kitchen, office, storage space, and toilet facilities. Architect Tom Landis designed and provided oversight for the 1963, 1965, 1967, and the 1980 additions.

Four teachers were employed by the District in 1960. It was also about this time that the first school bus was purchased by the District.

A survey of the District indicated a large number of homes under construction or proposed in the Washington Estates and Felker's Addition. In 1960, one third of the school's enrollment came from the Cummings Lane area; another third from Washington Estates, and the balance coming from the remainder of the District. Accompanying the growth of the area was an increase in assessed valuation to \$2,223,110 with a steady increase predicted for the future.

Plans to build a gym were presented to the public in February 1963. Due to zoning ordinances the original plans had to be altered before approval from the Washington City Zoning Board of Appeals was received.

Mrs. (Helen?) Emerson wrote the lyrics for the Central Trojan Fight Song in the early 1960's. She later taught music instruction at Robein School. In 1976 Mr. David Musick used help from former student and Central teacher (A.K. Berry) in recalling the lyrics. He then created the musical score for the school's Fight Song. Adrienne Berry was a first grade student when the new school opened.

One hundred twenty-one students were enrolled in Central School in July 1, 1963 and the District had reached its limits of bonded indebtedness of five percent after the voters approved the plans for the new gymnasium. The District's financial flexibility was enhanced with the consolidation and closing of Hopewell School, District 271, as the assessed valuation rose from \$3,195,610 to \$4,255,490 and increased student enrollment by 39. There was one teacher per age/grade level classroom after 1963.

The first Hopewell School was built in 1869 and reportedly had two teachers and a principal. Mr. Keil was a teacher at Hopewell for a long time. Mr. Schrone was the principal for 20 years. The Hopewell School bell remains the property of Central School District 51.



Front view of the First Hopewell School. The school was moved across the road, after being remodeled was used as the Grange Hall.

Front view of the First Hopewell School; later used as the Grange Hall.

Hopewell School is built across the street from the the original school.



*Hopewell School, Dist. 271
on Centennial Drive
(currently a private residence).*

Bond issues in 1965 for six classrooms and again in 1966 for six more classrooms along with the purchase of two additional acres of adjacent land were successful for \$72,000 and \$87,000 respectively.

Student enrollment, meanwhile, continued to climb surpassing earlier projections. Central School housed 382 students in 1966, indicating further development of the residential areas and outlining continuing need for future planning. It appears the first teaching salary schedule was developed and used during the 1966-67 school year.

Mrs. Griffin was paid \$100 a year to supervise the library for two or three years. She remembers Sharon Day (later a teacher at Central) and a parent helping catalog the library books. Their reimbursement: Superintendent Gary Seymour took them to lunch.

Once again, the Board of Education found itself in need of another six classroom addition. They sought passage of a \$105,000 bond issue in 1968. The issue was overwhelmingly approved. In addition, the science lab was doubled in size with half used for student instruction, the other for experimentation with state-of-the-art equipment.

Mr. Holford recalls Mr. Jerry DeBolt was the President of the PTO (Parent-Teacher Organization) in 1968. Some of their activities included creating a Central School Cook Book, sponsoring a chili supper, and the ice cream social (a long running event at the school, continuing to date as the annual school carnival). Mr. Ken Pitts was the President of the PTO in 1970.

Central Grade School was a founding member of the TazWood Conference, supporting athletic competition and promoting a positive relationship among area schools. Established in the late 1960's the conference has expanded to include small and larger schools as well as adding a spelling bee and scholastic competition.

In 1970 Central School had a staff of 28 teachers, a superintendent, principal, and auxiliary personnel serving a student population of 620 with trends indicating a plateau had been reached – at least momentarily.

Additional land (2.79 acres) was acquired in 1974 at a cost of \$23,250 to enlarge the playground area.

On July 1, 1974, Columbia Grade School, District 49, annexed to Central Grade School, District 51. Columbia Grade School was a four classroom building of block and brick construction. The school was financed through two bond issues for \$37,000 and \$23,000 approved and issued in 1961 and 1965.

The consolidation with District 49 increased District 51 from 9.7 square miles to 14.7 square miles. The assessed valuation of District 51 also rose from \$13,747,400 to \$16,375,580. Sixty-one additional students joined Central School as well as three teachers: Mrs. Janet Ozmun, Mrs. Lola Hutchings, and Mrs. Margaret Robinson.

The 2016 assessed valuation of District 51 is \$264,190,561 with a tax rate of \$2.44. The taxpayers of District 51 provide \$7,860,725 to provide financial support for the various funds within the District budget that include education, transportation, bonds and interest, special education, and operation/maintenance. More than thirteen hundred fifty students were being served at the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year.

Columbia School, after a great number of years' service to its community, provided District 51 with four additional classrooms which housed the District's half-time kindergarten program and students until 2004 when the kindergarten program changed to full-time.



Columbia School on Spring Creek Road; currently unoccupied.

In 1979, the Board of Education addressed the recognized needs to provide an improved gymnasium with additional seating, music facilities, and some additional classrooms. A \$970,000 bond referendum was approved and students enjoyed the addition beginning in September 1980. The boy's basketball team won its first state tournament in the inaugural year of the new gym facility. In 1998 the gymnasium was named the Kenneth G. Holford Gymnasium in recognition of the former superintendent's 30 years' service and leadership for the District.

Over the course of the 30 year period from 1970 to 2000, the student population remained somewhat constant. Programs, however, were expanded to meet student needs in the areas of classroom music instruction, choral music, and instrumental music. Mr. David Musick provided instruction in both vocal and instrumental music at the back of the older gymnasium. In 1980 our first instrumental director was Randy Stuckey as new classrooms were added. Kitchen facilities were improved and personnel were employed to provide a hot lunch program during the 1970's, first with TV-style dinners and later with in-house preparation. Students no longer had to sit on the bleachers in reverse fashion using one bench to place their food and the other to sit uncomfortably to eat their lunch. A bus barn was added to house and protect the District's investment in school buses in the late 1970's.

In 1980, the District purchased its first computer (a Texas Instrument TI-80 with a cassette tape drive); in the 1990's a computer instructor was added to the faculty. Special education needs also increased and personnel (teachers and aides) were employed accordingly. Additional acreage was purchased throughout the 1980's and 1990's creating a campus of 32 acres featuring four ball diamonds and sufficient space for student recreation. Curricular improvement brought advanced instruction in mathematics, a continuing commitment to phonics-based instruction; computer awareness, keyboarding, and later, computer instruction. The District began accessing the internet and participated in a county-wide effort with Illinois Central College to use fiber-optic technology. The school's Scholastic Bowl team won its first state trophy

under the guidance of Mrs. Fran Newman. Federal and state legislative mandates brought increasing control over curriculum goals and objectives, testing, and reporting. The girls' basketball teams under the leadership of Mr. Brett Lawless was second in the State during their inaugural season in 2001 and were State champions the following year. Character education was added in 2003; additional computer instruction and personnel was provided for our primary youngsters; a librarian joined Central's faculty. Computerized grading and networked systems were created in 2003 and laptops became available to the students in 2004. Vocal and instrumental music awards continued and reflected the enhanced music curriculum; MathCounts, a local mathematics competition demonstrated Central's commitment and success with numerous awards; Dance, Drama, and Chess groups were formed and the first Musical was performed during the spring of 2017.

Our community began growing in significant numbers about 2002-2003. The Board of Education once more recognized classrooms were needed. Following voter approval of a \$4,500,000 bond issue in 2003, 15 additional classrooms were in use plus upgrades in painting, repair, and heating/air conditioning were welcoming 720 students in 2004. The first assistant principal, Mrs. Diane Beard, was employed.



A state of the art science lab was a portion of the renovations. An architect guided by Central's former science teacher, Mr. Jim Wetzel, constructed the lab that serves upper grade students with one of the best instructional areas in downstate Illinois.

By 2006, the Board of Education felt student growth was continuing. The decision was made to ask the voters to approve another building bond issue for \$11,800,000 to build a separate K-2 facility on the current campus, to expand the 1980 gymnasium and additional upgrades to Central School and to seek approval for an operational rate increase of 25 cents. Due to bonding limitations, the District needed to achieve a 66% approval rate to permit the building bond to proceed. An approval rate of 63.4% was achieved; the referendum did not pass.

After consulting with First Midstate Bank, Board of Education members elected to sell premium bonds in the amount of \$10,900,000 that fell within the district's debt limit and would allow the building process to commence. Kenyon and Associates, Ltd. were retained as the architecture firm. Peoria Metro Construction was the general contractor for the renovation project at the current building and P.J. Hoerr Construction was the general contractor for the new building.

When the district's debt limit expanded because of rising Equalized Assessed Valuations, the Board of Education decided to issue bonds in the amount of \$1,250,000 and to allocate \$550,000 from Education Fund reserves to add seven additional classrooms to the new building. This would allow for grades K-3 to be housed in the new facility when it opened in the fall of 2009. Grades 4 through 8 would continue to be housed in the current building.



In spring 2009, board members approved naming the buildings Central Primary School and Central Intermediate School. It was also determined that Central Primary School would be dedicated to Kenneth

G. Prater for his 30 plus years of service to the district. A ribbon cutting and dedication ceremony was held in September 2009.

Central School District 51 has had superior, dedicated members on its Boards of Education. Moving from a three-member Board of Directors to a seven member Board of Education occurred in April 1964 well after the new Central School was opened.

Central School District 51 has had eleven full-time superintendents, many who also served as principal. They were: Mr. Schmeckpepper, Mr. Cordy, Charles Rellis, Jim Funk, Virgil Dawson, Gary Seymour, Kenneth Holford , Kenneth Prater, Kirk Hines, Dr. Chad Allaman, Dr. Jane Eichman (interim for six months), Dr. Dave Kinney (interim for six months), and Dale Heidbreder (current Superintendent). Mr. Kenneth Holford served as the Superintendent in 30 of Central's 61 years through 2017.

Recent principals at what is now Central Intermediate School included Kirk Hines, Patrick Durley, Diane Beard (assistant), Brian Hoeschler and Ericka Bush (current principal). Recent principals at the newer Central Primary facility included Molly Kosbab, Diane Orr (interim), Brett Lawless, Dr. James Dunnan (interim), Jonathan Cox and Amanda Venegonia (current principal.)

The school's administrators are responsible for addressing several regional, state, and federal oversight groups. When the state superintendent's representatives and the regional superintendent scheduled a visit during Mr. Cordy's brief tenure, it was reported he prepared by buying cigars for each. His plan went astray however, when he discovered the representative who came for the visit from the State offices was female. Mrs. Griffin reported that state visitors seemed more interested in what was on the teachers' bulletin boards than the actual teaching/learning that was happening.

It was also reported that Mr. Dawson was a frugal administrator with access to information about state auctions. It was at several of these auctions that Mr. Dawson purchased used and discarded lockers, desks, and the internal communication system used for many years thereafter at Central School. Many students from the 1970's will remember the small book-sized lockers and the absence of personal locks.

Bright Star Award

This award is given annually by SchoolSearch, an educational research and consulting firm that publishes rankings of school systems in Illinois. The award is given to school districts that rank in the upper third of all of the 868 school districts in the state in academic achievement and in the bottom quarter in expenditures per pupil.

Since its inception in the nineties, the Bright Star Award has been bestowed numerous times upon Central's Schools. The award is presented to those few schools in Illinois who are recognized for high academic achievement by their students while maintaining low operating costs. The recognition is a tribute to our students for their efforts, our teachers for their demanding dedication, and our administrators for balancing the expectations for excellence with the resources provided by our community/parents.

Blue Ribbon School – Central Intermediate School

The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program recognizes public and private elementary, middle, and high schools based on their overall academic excellence or their progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups. Every year the U. S. Department of Education seeks out and celebrates great American schools, schools demonstrating that all students can achieve to high levels. More than 7,500 of schools across the country have been presented with this coveted award. The National Blue Ribbon School award affirms the hard work of students, educators, families, and communities in creating safe and welcoming schools where students master challenging content. The National Blue Ribbon School flag gracing an entry or flying overhead is a widely recognized symbol of exemplary teaching and learning.

Washington Strong

On November 17, 2013 an EF4 tornado with winds reaching as high as 190 miles per hour devastated large portions of our community. One hundred forty students of our 1,279 student body were directly affected by the tornado while twenty-three of 150 staff members of our school district suffered extensive losses. Both Central Intermediate and Central Primary Schools required \$150,000 repairs to their roofs and were closed through the Thanksgiving holiday, reopening on December 3, 2013. Our entire community pulled together under the banner of “Washington Strong” and aided by financial support and hundreds of volunteers from Illinois and from states afar helped with clean-up efforts. It was reported former Superintendent Kirk Hines assisted with writing and applying for state grants to aid in our repairs; he was among many who charitably gave time, expertise, and labor to our situation. Even with the enormous physical impact to our school district and its people, Central’s student population held constant and soon resumed its decade-old pattern of increasing its student enrollment.



This iconic photo shows the power and devastation of the November 17, 2013 tornado. The author was unable to identify and attribute the photographer.

Central School District 51 has logged an estimated 135 + years of educational service to its public. A century plus of exceptional teachers, of supportive members of our community, of caring and involved parents, of engaging and vibrant children, and of committed, dedicated members of our Boards of Education have made Central School what it has become and placed its imprint on what it will be. Central Grade School, where “Developing its Greatest Resource” was not merely a motto but guidance for the educational institution and the children it served – and now, for the next century with its new motto:



Central Historical Gallery



PROGRAM

Class March	Selected
Vera Esch	
Invocation	Rev. Ben Esch
Welcome	
Dorothy Mae Holland	
Vocal Solo, "The Second Minuet"	Besly
Virginia Schmuck	
Declamation, "The Step Dog"	
Lorena Bell	
Girls' Chorus, "To a Water Lilly"	
"Sleep Little One, Sleep"	MacCarthy
Remarks	
Superintendent F. R. Isenburg	
Vocal Solo, "By Bendeemer's Stream"	Gathy
Jack Weppler	
Declamation, "Ma at the Basketball Game"	
June Rose Koch	
Toast to the Graduates	
Herman Linder	
Class Songs, "May Time"	Heinrici
"Bonnie Eloise"	Nightingale
Presentation of Diplomas	Rev. Ben Esch
Song, America	Audience
Class Colors—Lavender and Yellow	
Class Flower—Carnation	
Class Motto—Success Never Needs an Excuse	

GRADUATES

DISTRICT 52	
VERNON ATTERBERRY	DOROTHY REESER
CHARLES BESSLER	MAXINE REESER
JUNIOR BLUMENSHINE	FLOYD RICH
JUNIOR BUCK	ROBERT RISSE
*LORENA BELL	*MAVIS ROTH
*IRIS BOOTE	*LOIS SAMPSON
*HARLAND DIEBEL	*VIRGINIA SCHMUCK
MILDRED DEVORE	*RALPH SMALL
MARCELLA DUBOIS	*ELEANOR SMITH
*BENJAMIN PULFORD	ALEXANDER SWANSON
PHYLLIS GRAVENOR	JACK TANTON
*J. B. HOKE	PEARL VALENTINE
*DOROTHY MAE HOLLAND	HARRY WARD
BERNICE HURST	*GLENNIS WEAVER
BERNICE KELSO	JACK WEPPLER
JUNE ROSE KOCH	EUGENE WYKLE
FRED McCULLOUGH	OLIVER YODER
SHIRLEY NORRIS	
JEFFERSON	
MARVIN K. COOK	WANDA ELIZABETH RICH
MAXINE ELIZABETH SCHICK	ROBERT D. WILSON
VIVIAN EMMALENE ZIMMERMAN	
COLUMBIA	
ARLO BRACKBILL	BERTHA SCHARR
*JOHN OTTEN	BERNICE SCOTT
COTTONWOOD	
IONA ATTIG	EARL WILLIAM FAUBEL
HARVEY LE ROY BLUMENSHINE	
HOPEWELL	
JESSIE ALRS	MARY ELIZABETH WYCKOFF
STORMER—JACK CARIUS	
LIBERTY	
*BYRON RANNEY	*ANITA BELL NOFSINGER
CENTRAL—RUTH SAGER	
GREENRIDGE	
FRED ALBERT ASHER	MILDRED IRENE OITMAN

A 1937 Graduation Program

(Note: This was a combined ceremony with only one graduate from Central School.)

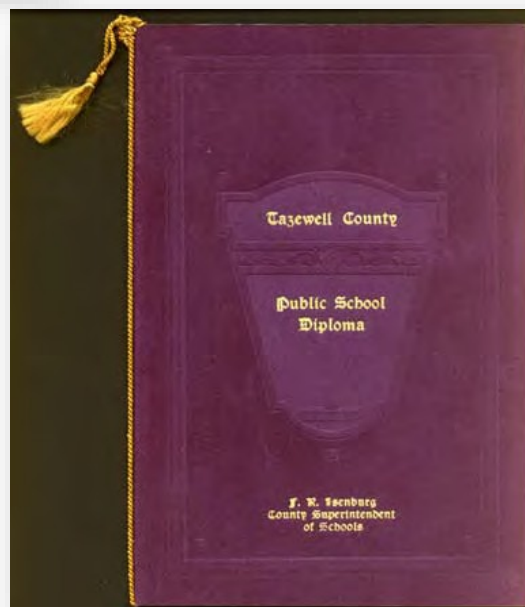
*September 1935:
Mrs. Mette – back row left; Bill Ebert –
front row right*



*October 1936:
Mrs. Mette- back row right;
Bill Ebert is fifth from the
left in the back row*



Graduation Cover from 1940.



Public School Diploma



This Certifies That

William Michael Gert
has satisfactorily completed the Common Branches required by law
to be taught in the Public Schools of
Tazewell County
and is therefore entitled to this Diploma which admits the holder
to any High School in the State.



In Witness Whereof, we hereunto affix our signatures and seal at

Pekin, Illinois, this 24th day of May 1940

John H. Willhardt
President
Clayton W. Hesselein
Secretary

Florence Mette
Teacher
J. R. Isenburg
County Superintendent of Schools

BM 1554 THE JOHNSON-RANDOLPH CO., CHAMPAIGN, ILL.
"W PEARLSON SILVER BURDETT CO. © 1935

Graduation diplomas were issued by the County Superintendent of School – Mr. Isenburg in May, 1940. Mr. Willhardt was the President of the Board; Mr. Hesselein was the Secretary



*Mrs. Alice Griffin's first class at the new Central School in 1958;
Mrs. Griffin is on far right.*

4119 Brown Printing Company, Springfield, Illinois.

TEACHER'S CONTRACT

It is hereby Contracted and Agreed by and between August Rosenberg,
C. Keregianno and Celeste Wikner
the undersigned School Directors of District No. 51, County of Wayne
and State of Illinois, and Alice J. Griffin
a legally qualified Teacher, that the said teacher shall teach
the School in said District for three months for the sum
of Four Hundred Dollars per month, teaching at least 4
hours each day, commencing on the 3rd day of September 1958.
Provided, that nothing herein contained shall require said teacher
to teach upon the days excepted from the school month by the statute. And the said teacher
agrees faithfully to teach the said School according
to the best of her ability, and to keep a Register of the Daily Attendance of each Pupil belonging to the School,
and make such report of the School as is or may be required by law, or by the State Department of Public Instruction,
and to observe and enforce all rules and regulations established by proper authority for the government and
management of said school.

And It is Further Agreed By and Between the Parties Hereto, That the said teacher
shall use her best endeavors
to preserve in good condition the School House and Premises connected with it; also the Apparatus and Furniture
thereof belonging, and also all Books and Records provided by the School Board for the use of said School, and to
deliver the same to the Clerk of said District, or his successor in office, at the close of the said term of School, in
as good condition as when received, natural wear and tear excepted.

And the undersigned, as Directors of said School District, hereby agree in behalf of said district to keep the
School House and premises connected with it in good repair, to provide necessary fuel for the use of said School
during the said term, and that for the services performed as above described, then and thereupon the undersigned
Directors of said District agree to certify to the Schedule as the law directs, in favor of the said teacher.

that the sum of Four Hundred \$400.00 Dollars
is due hereto, the same being the amount of wages agreed upon by the parties hereto.

Provided, That in case the said teacher shall be dismissed
from the said School by the said Directors for gross immorality, incompetency, or any violation of this Contract, or
shall have her Certificate annulled or revoked by the County or State Superintendent,
she shall not be entitled to receive any compensation from and after such annulment or dismissal.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF we have hereunto subscribed our hands this 19 day
of September 1958.

August J. Rosenberg
C. Keregianno
Celeste Wikner
 School Directors
Alice J. Griffin Teacher.

HUMANITIES—This contract should be made out in duplicate, and one copy given to the teacher. No District should allow a teacher to commence school with a written contract or verbally signed by both parties.
WRITTEN CONTRACTS—School boards and teachers should make written contracts. All of the points about which differences would be likely to arise, such as the amount of salary, length of time, etc., should be plainly set forth in such agreements. The language of the contract must express the exact intention of the parties for which the law of the State is to give effect in the future. If it is supposed to be understood, it will become, although it fails to express the true intention of the parties—discrepancy vs. agreement. A. B. Collins, 4th Edition, 1914, pp. 100-101.
The first month shall be the month of the calendar month, but a teacher shall not be required to teach on Saturdays or legal holidays. The first month shall be the first day of January, the twenty day of February, the first day of March, the fourth day of May, Labor Day, the fifteenth day of November, the first day of December, and any day appointed by the President or Governor as a day of fast or thanksgiving, and the deduction shall be made from the time of compensation of a teacher on account of such days. Sec. 12-1-1, School Law.

Mrs. Griffin's 1958 teaching contract



Some of Central's teachers from the late 1950's through the 1990's: L to R: Mrs. Sylvia Delicath, Mrs. Marg Pacey, Mrs. Alice Griffin, Mrs. Barb Spring, Mrs. Bettejo Fisher, Mrs. Ethel Troyer, and Mrs. Opal Bachman.

Members of the Central School District

Board of Directors and Boards of Education from April 14, 1956

Our Boards of Education

Our school community elects seven representatives to establish the policies and guide the practices and commitments of our school district, to direct its administration implement best practices of leadership, and employ the best candidates to serve the educational needs of its youthful population.

Our Boards of Education provide oversight and vigilance in finance, facilities, curriculum, and personnel with a purposeful eye on its community's needs and values while prudently applying the funds provided through its taxpayer's contributions.

Our facilities provide one example of our Board's continued oversight, vigilance, prudence, and dedication traced in the documentation provided in its minutes during the period of 2002 through 2008. Those minutes reflect a continuing review of our community's growth potential through enrollment projections and studies, reviewing building permits issued, examining county population trends and employment status for the regional area, remaining aware of state mandates promulgated and imposed with inappropriate state financing – all balanced with the knowledge of our local community's ability and willingness to support potential growth needs. Such examination of the minutes of our Board's actions find that only rarely is it caught off-guard or unprepared for changes in student growth. Rather, one will discover that our Boards must balance “what is” and “what might be” while warily confronting the reality of error and unnecessarily committing taxpayer's resources. A “simple” decision to use temporary facilities require at least a year's worth of preparation and planning involving location, configuration, safety, plumbing, curricular coordination, foundational support, student inconveniences, architectural guidance and clearance, student traffic and movement concerns, faculty, communication, eventual removal of units, and of course, parental concerns.

Members of our Boards, present and past, are to be lauded for staying “ahead of the curve.” Each member would encourage others in our school community who welcome research, study, and decision-making, (large and small) consider the challenges and choose to seek election and service to lead in Central School District No. 51. The author proudly recognizes below all our Directors and Board members who have led our school district.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1956 – April 14, 1956

Wesley Wenger – President; Donald King –Clerk; Vernon Strubhar

1957 – April 13, 1957

August Rosenberg – President; Wesley Wenger – Clerk; Angelo Karagianis

1958 – April 18, 1958

August Rosenberg – President; Wesley Wenger – Clerk

August 1, 1956 - Vernon Strubhar – Resigned, Angelo Karagianis – Appointed

1959 – April 13, 1959

Robert Fuller – President; Wesley Wenger – Clerk; Ralph Brown

1960 – April 11, 1960

Wesley Wenger – President; Ralph Brown – Clerk; Grant Coningham

1961 – April 10, 1961

Grant Coningham – President; Ralph Brown – Clerk; Wesley Wenger

1962 – April 19, 1962

Grant Coningham – President; Ralph Brown – Clerk; Wesley Wenger

April 6, 1959

Angelo Karagianis – Resigned; Robert Fuller – Appointed

September 16, 1962

Grant Coningham – Resigned; Roland Walwer – Appointed

1963 – April 15, 1963

Wesley Wenger – President; Roland Walwer; Dale Riggins

January 31, 1963

Ralph Brown – Resigned; Robert Fuller – Appointed

BOARDS OF EDUCATION

SEVEN MEMBER BOARD ELECTED

1964 – April 14, 1964

**Roland Walwer – President, James Fox Secretary
Charles Alexander, Floyd Dierdorff, Richard Keil, Kayton Heavrin, Gene Menz
Raymond Allison**

***October 1, 1964**

Roland Walwer -Resigned(?) Appointed

1965 – April 15, 1965

**James Fox – President, Kayton Heavrin – Secretary, Gene Menz, Charles Alexander,
Raymond Allison, Richard Keil, Theodore Sievers**

1966 – April 14, 1966

**James Fox, President Kayton Heavrin, Secretary David Matheny
Richard Keil, Charles Alexande, Raymond Allison, Gene Menz**

1967 – April 18, 1967

**Roland Walwer President, Gene Menz – Secretary, Charles Alexander
James Fox, Kayton Heavrin, Richard Keil , David Matheny**

1968 – April 13, 1968

**Kayton Heavrin – President Gene Menz – Vice President
Dorwin Larson, Lyle Van Hook, Richard Keil, James Fox, Charles Alexander**

1969 – April 12, 1969

**Richard Keil – President Gene Menz – Vice President
Martin Dann, Wayne Ulrich, Dorwin Larson, Lyle Van Hook, Kayton Heavrin**

1970 – April 11, 1970

**Martin Dann – President Kayton Heavrin - Vice President Gene Menz, Roland Walwer,
Evan Jackson, Wayne Ulrich, Lyle Van Hook**

1971 – April 10, 1971

**Martin Dann – President, Lyle Van Hook – Vice President
Robert Jeffers, Charles Alexander Gene Menz Roland Walwer Kayton Heavrin**

1972 – April 8, 1972

**Martin Dann – President Robert Jeffers – Vice President
Kayton Heavrin, Charles Alexander, Gene Menz, Robert Purcell, Roland Walwer**

1973 – April 14, 1973

**Martin Dann – President Robert Jeffers – Vice President Charles Alexander
Robert Purcell, Roland Walwer, Kayton Heavrin, James Wilson**

1974 – April 13, 1974

**Martin Dann – President Robert Jeffers – Vice President Kayton Heavrin – Secretary
Charles Alexander, Robert Purcell James Wilson**

***August 8, 1974**

James Wilson – Resigned, Carlos Canamore- Appointed

1975 – April 12, 1975

**Robert Jeffers-President, Roland Walwer-Vice President, Kayton Heavrin-Secretary
Charles Alexander, Robert Purcell, Donald Mitchell, Robert Dickerson**

1977 – April 9, 1977

**Robert Jeffers-President, Roland Walwer-Vice President, Kayton Heavrin-Secretary
Charles Alexander, Robert Purcell, Donald Mitchell, Robert Dickerson**

1978 – April 8, 1978

**Robert Jeffers-President, Roland Walwer-Vice President, Kayton Heavrin-Secretary
Charles Alexander, Robert Dickerson, Donald Mitchell, James Bishop**

1979 – April 14, 1979

**Robert Jeffers-President, Roland Walwer-Vice President, Robert Dickerson-Secretary
Charles Alexander, Donald Mitchell, James Bishop, Ray Brinker**

1980 – April 12, 1980

**Robert Jeffers – President, Donald Mitchell – Vice President, James Bishop – Secretary
Carl Ross, John Rathbun, Donald Fenoglia, Ray Brinker**

1981 – November 12, 1981

**Robert Jeffers – President, Donald Mitchell – Vice President, James Bishop – Secretary,
Carl Ross, Donald Fenoglia, Ray Brinker, John Rathbun**

1982 –

**Robert Jeffers-President, Donald Mitchell-Vice President, James Bishop-Secretary
Carol Ross, Ray Brinker, Donald Fenoglia, John Rathbun**

1983 – 84

**Robert Jeffers – President, Donald Mitchell – Vice President, Carl Ross – Secretary
Ray Brinker, John Rathbun, Donald Fenoglia, John Barton**

1985-86 – November 5, 1985

Donald Mitchell – President, John Rathbun – Vice President, Carl Ross – Secretary, David Newman, Vicki White, Patricia Bontemps, Keith Steffen

1987-88 – April 14, 1988

Donald Mitchell – President, David Newman – Vice President, Carl Ross – Secretary Keith Steffen, John Barton, Patricia Bontemps, Vicki White

1988-1989 – April 13, 1989

Donald Mitchell – President, John Barton – Vice President, Carl Ross – Secretary David Newman, Vicki White, Patricia Bontemps, Keith Steff

1989-1990 – November 7, 1989

Donald Mitchell – President, David Newman – Vice President, Carl Ross – Secretary Patricia Bontemps, Keith Steffen, Donald Fenoglia, David Woith

1991 – 1992 – November 5, 1991

Donald Mitchell – President, David Newman – Vice President, Carl Ross- Secretary Keith Steffen, David Woith, Joseph Hart, Brian Butler

1989-1990 – November 7, 1989

Donald Mitchell – President, David Newman – Vice President, Carl Ross – Secretary Patricia Bontemps, Keith Steffen, Donald Fenoglia, David Woith

1991 – 1992 – November 5, 1991

Donald Mitchell – President, David Newman – Vice President, Carl Ross- Secretary Keith Steffen, David Woith, Joseph Hart, Brian Butler

November 10, 1994

Carl Ross – Resigned

November 16, 1994 - Ellen Dingledine – Appointed, David Woith – Secretary

1995-96 – November 7, 1995

Donald Mitchell – President, David Newman – Vice President, David Woith -Secretary, Joseph Hart, Brian Butler, Ellen Dingledine, David Wright

1997-2000– November 6, 1997

Brian Butler – President, David Newman – Vice President, David Woith – Secretary Ellen Dingledine, David Wright, Brett Heavrin, Laura Grahek

2000-2001 – April 5, 2001

Brian Butler – President, David Newman – Vice President, Ellen Dingledine –Secretary Brett Heavrin, Kyle Mayginnes, Laura Grahek, David Wright

2002-2003 March 13, 2003

**David Wright – President, Kyle Mayginnes -Vice President, Ellen Dingleline-Secretary
Joe Crocker, James Cotner, Laura Grahek ,Matt Martin**

2003-2004 – April 1, 2003

**Ellen Dingleline – President, David Wright – Vice President, James Cotner – Secretary
Matt Martin, Michele Heinz, Laura Grahek, Joe Crocker**

July 11, 2003

Laura Grahek – Resigned, Kyle Mayginnes - Appointed

April 8, 2004

David Wright – Resigned May 14, 2004, Jim Gerkin – Appointed

2005-2006

**Ellen Dingleline – President, James Cotner – Vice President, Matt Martin – Secretary
Michele Heinz, Joe Crocker, Christopher Nichols, James Gerkin**

2007 – April 17, 2007

**James Cotner – President, Matt Martin Vice President, Christopher Nichols – Secretary
Michele Heinz, Joe Crocker, Ellen Dingleline, William Hudson**

2009 – April

**Christopher Nichols –President, Matt Martin –Vice President, William Hudson-Secretary
Ellen Dingleline, Michele Heinz, Paul Kinsinger, Jeff Mertens**

2011 – May 2, 2017

**Matt Martin – President, Michele Heinz – Vice President, Jeff Mertens – Secretary
Matt Gorman, Paul Kinsinger, Chris Nichols, Julia Sander**

2013 - April 25, 2013

**Chris Nichols –President, Matt Gorman-Vice President, Mrs. Julia Sander-Secretary
Amy Johnson, Michelle Heinz, Toni Minton, Saundi Pugh**

2015 - April 20, 2015

**Saundi Pugh – President, Matt Gorman -Vice President, Toni Minton - Secretary
Brian Beebe, Chris Gray, Amy Johnson., Chris Nichols**

Chris Gray – Resigned

Sarah Tellefson – Appointed 2015

2017 - April 27, 2017

**Saundi Pugh President, Amy Johnson-Vice President, Sarah Tellefson - Secretary
Brian Beebe, Bryan Cherry, Matt Gorman, Casey Pfeifer**

Bryan Cherry - Appointed



The Trojan Award

Conception, planning, and lengthy, thorough discussion involving primarily our upper grade faculty resulted in the creation of The Trojan award, initiated during the 1990-91 school year. A single student was selected by faculty near the conclusion of his/her eighth grade year utilizing the following guidance:

- a. Possesses positive leadership qualities.**
- b. Demonstrates a willingness to go beyond the basic requirements in schoolwork.**
- c. Shows courtesy and respect to others.**
- d. Displays cooperation and self-discipline.**
- e. Is persistent in the desire to attain a balanced, functional education.**
- f. Is helpful and kind to others.**
- g. Assumes responsibility for his/her actions.**
- h. Contributes positively to a productive learning environment.**
- i. Participates willingly in school activities.**

<u>Student</u>	<u>Education</u>	<u>Current Employment</u>
1991 Shelly Anderson	Carthage College BA Music Education and Vocal Perform.	Director of Choirs, Bentonville Schools
1992 Brian Prina	Eastern Illinois University BS in Sports Medicine	Caterpillar logistics
1993 Josh Russell	University of Iowa PhD in Piano Performance and Pedagogy	Faculty positions at Bradley and Illinois State; Headmaster of Chesterton Academy of the Sacred Heart.
1994 Mariam Khoury	University of Iowa BA Fine Art and Communication	Freelance Artist
1995 Shelly King	University of Illinois MS in Education	Mathematics and Chemistry teacher at Tremont High School.
1996 Kevin Prina	University of Illinois MS in Music	Fine Arts School of Music Clearwater, FL schools teaching choir and orchestra.
1997 Ann Steffen	Arizona State University MS in Social Work	Program Director for the SEED program providing psychosocial support and mental health to returning captives of ISIS in Kurdistan, Iraq.
1998 Katy Weber	Eastern Illinois University	Sixth grade teacher at Central Intermediate School Washington, IL
1999 Jodie Dennis	Illinois State University	Service Coordinator for Early Intervention
2000 Lindsay Wetterauer	Illinois Central College Occupation Therapy	COTA/L at OSF Hospital. Adjunct faculty member at I.C.C.
2001 Brittany Metka	University of Illinois	Art Educator; entrepreneur and manufacturer of dog toys.
2002 Zach Weber	Southern Illinois University BS in Construction Management	Caterpillar – Parts Information Specialists.
2003 Taylor Fuerst	University of Iowa B.B.A in Marketing B.B.A. in Entrepreneurial Management	Regional Director for Sorenson Media – technology in the broadcast media industry.
2004 Rusty Smith		

2005	Brian Tigue	Illinois Central College	Finance Manager – Uftring Chevrolet
2006	Marshall Escue	Bradley University MBA with concentration in marketing	Event Specialist at Maui Jim Ass't. Varsity baseball coach at Peoria Notre Dame.
2007	Sarah Misselhorn	University of Iowa BS in Biochemistry Working on PhD in Pharmacy at the University of Wisconsin	
2008			
2009	Kaleb Rhoades	Illinois State University BS in Accounting; BS in Human Resources Management	
2010	Beau Biedscheid	Illinois Wesleyan University BS in Music Education	Student teaching at Bloomington High School
2011	Jess Learned	Olivet Nazarene University studying Spanish education.	
2012	Emily Kastl	Illinois State University studying accounting.	
2013	Matt Evans	Attending Illinois Central College with plan to transfer to Illinois State; majoring in accounting.	
2014	Rebecca Gorman	Senior at Washington Community High School	
2015	Emily Junker	Junior at Washington Community High School	
2016	Conner Newman	Sophomore at Washington Community High School	
2017	Shelby Borlin	Freshman at Washington Community High School	

Thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Roland Walwer- (board member and parents), Mr. Bill Ebert (student, parent and interim member of the Board of Directors), Mrs. Alice Griffin (teacher), Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth G. Holford (principal and superintendent), Mrs. Ellen Dingleline (student, parent, and board member), Mrs. Nancy Benders (student), Mr. Dave Weaver (student and parent), Ms. Adrienne Berry (student and teacher), Mr. Kirk Hines (student, teacher, principal, and superintendent), Mrs. Laura Cotner (district administrative assistant) Mrs. Shannan Dobbelaire (bookkeeper), Mr. Brian Hoeschler (CIS principal) and Mr. Heidbreder (current superintendent), and many other among the Central family for sharing, gathering and verifying information for this brief history of Central School District 51.

The author wishes to acknowledge the assistance of many but accepts responsibility for the information contained herein. Should there be any error of information, it is due to the inaccuracies of memories that occur over time, the absence of written documentation, and/or the varied perception people maintain of events over time. Any corrections or additional information may be forwarded to the attention of the author for consideration.

Kenneth G. Prater (former principal and superintendent)
Updated September 2017

Bibliography

“A Bicentennial Salute to Sunnyland” created by the seventh grade class of Beverly Manor School, typed by Mrs. Camp, published by Rev. Wayne Camp, photos provided by Illinois Central College, and final editing by Mark Roberds.

“Early and Continuing History of Washington, Illinois and Vicinity 1825-2000.” Originally published in 1929 by the Tazewell County Report Washington, Illinois. Updated and reprinted in 2000 by the Washington Historical Society. Published by Art & Print, Inc. Washington, Illinois.

“History of Washington, Illinois Sesquicentennial 1825-1975.”

“Picturesque Washington Illinois 1906-2000.” Reprint of 1906 publication by Paul R. Goddard. Published by Paul R. Goddard, Editor of the Washington Post and Theo. Roehm.

Central School District 51 official minutes of regular meetings of the Boards of Education July 2002 through June 2017.

“Tornado aftermath costly for Illinois Schools,” by Gary Adkins. Illinois School Board Journal, September/October 2014. Researched on the internet.