

Sandlake School and Community

written by Grace ATKINSON Chaney Lane

The first school I knew was not the first in the community. There was a one room school on the corner of a side road half a mile down towards the cheese factory. My mother, among other, taught there.

The next school was on the corner of my Uncle Charles Atkinson's property at the junction of Sandlake and Galloway Rds. It had one lower grade room, a short connecting hall to a larger room, drinking fountain in the hall, two small rooms at the back (one had coat hooks, a sink and a library).

At one time there was a high school in the big room. There was a high school in Cloverdale but no transportation available until about 1930. All eight grades were in one room until gradually more students came. There were no indoor restrooms until about 1930.

The play area had swings and a very small play shed for rainy days. It had a bench on two sides and an overhead wooden ladder placed horizontally for swinging on. At one end of this building was a woodshed as each room had a wood heater. (Outside) there were teeter-totters and an area for baseball. We never played any sports then with other schools; we were too remote and not enough students for a proper team. A larger playshed was built in the 1930s which had a wood floor, but we could skate in it.

All the students walked to school. The furthest about 1 1/2 - 2 miles - still a long ways for little kids. Sometimes there were rides with farmers as they took their milk to the cheese factory. Later, early 1930s when a high school bus was started some students were fortunate enough to ride in it. In the late 1930s a bus route was established through Woods, and Woods School and Tierra del Mar consolidated with Sandlake. We (Grace's family db) were just across Sandlake Road so no problems for us.

Punishments? I really can't remember many, but some went out to stand in the hall, stay in recess and extra writing like, "I will not . . ." We had problems of talking but never talking back. Our report cards had a place for comments that was used.

We had a lovely bell which gave a 5 minute warning before school took up.

There were few vacation days, but there were special days that were celebrated in school. One day was added when a skunk got under the school, and we all stomped on the floor to frighten him . . . and then complained we couldn't stand the smell. We all got to go home. I think the teacher was glad to leave too.

School hours were 9:00 - 3:30, I believe. (We had) two 15 minutes recess and probably a 1/2 hour lunch.

Our special programs were always held in the local grange hall which had room (including) a stage with curtains and benches for seating for Christmas programs always included every child - recitations, little plays or something.

Many times we had a geography lesson in the big room with its sand box where we watered the sand and conformed it to a country, lake area etc. We also had arithmetic, spelling, reading, handwriting (penmanship). (We) received certificates for 100s in spelling and good penmanship. Also, I used to borrow books from the state library which were sent postage free. I returned the books via the mail back to the library.

We had visits from J. E. O'Neal, the county school superintendent, and from David Kennedy, the head of our county 4-H clubs. These men were well liked and always invited to our special events. The enclosed picture (Yikes! I'll find the photo and provide the link here! db) is taken of them at our school picnic at Whalen Island, now a county/state park. There was also a county nurse who came twice a year . . . checked height, weight and any particular problems.

My dad was Eugene, "Chub" Atkinson who had the Atkinson homestead. His love of cranberry bogs and then blueberry plants and myrtlewood trees showed in his marsh area over in the northwest corner of our property. He also had a small herd of Ayershire cows and did some dairy work.

Sandlake School and Community

written by Grace ATKINSON Chaney Lane

My mother, Elva Baker Atkinson, came to Sandlake to teach in the little one room school. She retired from teaching when she and Dad were married in 1912. They had five daughters, the oldest passing on a few days after birth. I was the youngest. She was from (the) Forest Grove area and would ride on the train through the mountains down the coast from Rockaway Beach to Tillamook where she was met and brought to Sandlake over the plank road from Hemlock.

She was the postmaster for the little 4th class office for about 40 years. The mail was sent out in bags five days a week to Hemlock meeting a carrier from Tillamook who exchanged mail bags and went on to Grand Ronde Agency. The local carrier brought the mail back to Sandlake Post Office where was sorted and picked up by local residents. This office was closed probably in the 1950s, and mail was delivered via rural route from Cloverdale.

Sandlake was a low income area, but we never felt different. (I) guess 90% of (the) county was low income during and after the depression. Typical clothing for boys/men were bib overalls, long-sleeved cotton shirts and high topped shoes. Girls/women wore cotton dresses and, cotton stockings. In my case (I wore) lots of hand-me-downs as I was the youngest. Mother spent lots of time adjusting hems and mending.