

The picture of Mrs. Steberg's 3rd grade class was from the 1962 High School yearbook. That is me in the front right looking so studious when in fact I didn't know what I was looking at but it seemed like a nice pose for the photographer.



I've tried to identify the others in the picture. I think I know most of them. Of course it's Mrs. Steberg standing in the back helping Cindy Henry. Starting on the row to the left; In front is Linda Gochnauer, Judy Quimby, Merlin Moreland, Steve Johnson and Joanne Meyer. Next row; In front, Emery Kleven, Helen Gillard, Karen Hubmer and Steve Frederick. On the far right is Karl Flormoe. Now I have not asked Joanne, Helen or Karen if that is indeed them but I'm 90% sure. The others I am 100% accurate on them.

Like many, I have so many memories of school in the venerable old building which is now the West Concord Historical Society (WCHS) museum. I'm on the committee to help the WCHS celebrate its 25th anniversary this year. If you go back to last month's edition of the WC Messenger and read Colleen Hayne's column she gave a very detailed history of how the Triton school board ended up

selling the old school building to the WCHS on September 29th, 1994. Suffice to say, this is a milestone year. Hopefully another milestone will be reached soon as we get qualified to be on the National Register of Historic Places.

Recently I found a picture of my oldest sister Karolyn and myself in our graduation caps back in 1959. She was the in the first high school class to graduate from the 'new' high school. I was the first kindergarten class to graduate in the 'old' school when it was an 'elementary only' school. I saw that very picture a few months ago but wouldn't you know that when I wanted to find it to put in this edition of the Messenger, I could not find it. Two hours later I found some other great old pictures. And that is how looking through old pictures goes. Two hours of not finding the right picture but by the end I forgot what I was looking for. But it did conger up many memories I have from the grade school years. I had to check before I shared any of those with you that the statute of limitations was indeed in place. And it is.

I always rode the school bus in which my dad was the driver so I couldn't mess around or get in trouble on the bus. That was too big a price to pay later. But in school I sometimes messed around. In 4th grade we had a teacher by the name of Mrs. Stukel. Elizabeth was her first name. I only know that because Laura at the museum is doing a list of all teachers and administrators since the early 1900's. That's quite a task in itself. But Laura tells me Mrs. Stukel taught two years. Her first year was my 4th grade class. I'm surprised she made it to a second year after a year with us. It was the spring of 1963 when I and my accomplices which included Joel Sackett, Grant Ness, Merlin Moreland and Jim Monical, decided that after school, we would run down to the lower level lavatory and climb out the little basement window. We did that several times and all was good until one day, one of our girl classmates told Mrs. Stukel that 5 boys were climbing out the basement window. So we were marched into our classroom which was upstairs on the west side and is today the fashion room. Well we got an 'old fashioned' talking to and we had to stay after school which led to more being 'talked to' at home. I was down in the bowels of the museum a couple of months ago and walked in the old boy's lavatory. The urinals which we climbed up on to reach the window are now gone. And the window is gone as well so as to keep me from reliving my past by climbing out for old times' sake. I'm pretty sure I would not fit through the same window today.

As a sidebar to 1963, here's an 'apples don't fall far from the tree' kind of story. My brother Harvey graduated that year. He came home one night in the spring with a badly sprained ankle. It was so bad that he could barely walk. I'm not sure what story he gave my parents, but I'm pretty sure it was not the correct one. I found out many years later that Harv and a couple of his classmates, one being Dale Stensland, were out painting big '63s' on barn doors. And we're talking the big doors at the top of the barn where you put the hay in via the ropes and bale forks. Harv evidently fell off or jumped off a ladder when a car was coming and that's how the ankle injury occurred. A Picasso he was not.

Another story from 4th grade that I have told in public before was the day that the boys in Mrs. Stukel's class knew that David Agerter was going to be a Mayo Clinic doctor. Do you remember how we would be bussed over from the elementary school to the high school for lunch? Tom Vanderwall was the driver for this activity. As we were waiting in line at the high school by the doors on the east side of the building, we had two lines. There was a boy's line and the girl's line. Dave was the line leader for the boys this particular day. And the same accomplices that climbed through the lavatory window were there in the line. The subject somehow turned to women's breasts. Hey, we were 4th grade boys. Well we geniuses were trying to figure out what they were used for. Most of us just stared at each other and shrugged our shoulders when Dave pipes up that he thought they had something to do with babies. Well we maybe didn't know right away at that time, but we eventually knew Dave was destined to be a doctor. He's the only one who knew. And you see why I marvel at how Mrs. Stukel survived to teach one more year at West Concord.

Scroll down and you'll see a 1957 picture of the venerable school building that was built in 1902. The north addition that included the gym was built in the mid 1930's and opened in 1936. It was built as part of the Works Progress Administration (WPA). As a kid I remember those big elm trees on the east side where the school buses would park. You'll notice there were big trees surrounding the building.

