

Stone  
Jul 25 1984

LIBERTY SCHOOL CENTENNIAL  
1868 - 1968

Liberty School has a long history of contribution to education in early Oregon and through the years. Many sources have been used to obtain the information which follows, including the Public Library, State Library, the County Superintendent's Office, County Court House, and the invaluable help of many of the 'Old Timers' in our community.

Mr. Lewis Judson (the son of Lewis H. Judson, pioneer missionary and one of the founders of Salem) tells us that the first school known in this vicinity was established in 1857 on the original James Jory claim. This was South of the present site. It existed for two years at which time Mr. Jory sold his claim and took land in Section 16.

When the States were established, the U. S. Government allotted Sections 16 and 36 of each Township to the State to be set aside for the financing of schools. This land was not intended as school sites but to pay for the cost of education on the State level.

The next school built was Pringle followed by the Prospect School and then Liberty School in 1868.

The land on which Liberty School sits was originally a part of the Joseph R. Patterson Land Claim 50, patented by the U. S. Government, November 27, 1865. This consisted of 319.52 acres in Sections 9, 10 and 15, Township 8, Range 3W in Marion County.

(1) Mr. Patterson sold the entire acreage to J. A. Johns who in turn sold it to Daniel Strang. Daniel Strang then sold it to Charles Swegle. All these transactions took place before the United States actually issued the patent.

On January 25, 1869, Charles Swegle deeded 5 acres of the land claim, see attachments on copy in principal's office, to School District 71 for the consideration of \$25.00. At \$5.00 per acre, this appears to have been the going price for land at the time since Johns sold the entire acreage to Strang for \$1,000.00, or approximately \$3.00 per acre. However, Mr. Swegle included a provision in the deed to the effect that should the property ever be used for anything but a school, the property would revert to the Grantor.

In 1953, a small piece of land to the North of the school was added to the property at the cost of \$2,000.00.

(1) from records in Marion County Court House

Following is a chronological development of the various buildings erected on the school site:

- 1868 Liberty School began in 1868 on land sold to the School District by Mr. Swegle. This was a 16' x 20' building. There were 14 voters and the teacher was Sarah Towner. The building cost \$457.75.
- 1892 The first schoolhouse was replaced by a larger one room building at a cost of \$970.00. In 1896 or 1897, a one room addition was built.
- 1906 Because of crowded conditions, classes were conducted in the Dorman Dance Hall across from the cannery--it was later known as the Grange Hall.
- 1908 A 2-story, four room school was built.
- 1934- The gymnasium and cafeteria were built  
1935 at a cost of between \$4,000.00 and \$5,000.00. This was a WPA project and all of it was hand labor.
- 1953 A six room addition was built on the South and East side of the "new building" at a cost of \$153,047.34.
- 1957 Another six room addition was built. This was the "lower section" and cost \$103,044.00.
- 1959 Three classrooms (Rooms 3, 4 and 5) and restrooms were built at a cost of \$38,193.00.
- 1960 Three classrooms were built at a cost of \$47,280.00.
- 1964 The demolition of the old building at \$2,900.00.
- 1964 Three classrooms and library at \$47,297.00.

(1) The community of Liberty took its name from Liberty School which took its name from Liberty Road.

(1) "Oregon Geographic Names"