

WETMORE COMMUNITY BUILDING HISTORY MEETING

June 8, 1999

Building was completed in 1928.

Bill Donley has blueprints to the building but can't find them.

Bobbie Lou Donley went through the 8th grade at the school building.

Fred Smith remembers that the 1926 flood filled the basement. The basement was all that was constructed at the time, just the stem walls were there.

Cement was mixed on sight. Railroad ties were used for reinforcement in the walls of the basement.

Bill Donley remembers that \$8000 was the bonded indebtedness for the school district to construct the building.

Bill Donley remembers that the school board members at the time of construction were R.F. Billington, Lester Vaughn, and George Hall.

The C-9 School District formed at the time of construction, and the new district was the equivalent of the Custer County portion of the present Fremont RE-2J school district.

The first electricity to the building occurred in the 1940s and was installed in the North Room because of the GI bill. The room was used after school hours for GI education. The rest of the building received electricity around 1955.

The original heat was a coal furnace.

The outhouses were 30 feet northwest of the building.

The top floor originally was fir, tongue and groove (North Room). The basement was originally dirt then they poured concrete. The Hurlys helped pour the concrete. The stage was built before the concrete floor.

Bathrooms were built in 1958-1959. There is a concrete slab for a light/plant underneath one of the bathroom floors.

The windows are still all original, at least all original wood casing. A few windows have been replaced like the basement east wall window and the furnace window and the stairwell window.

Change in flooring from original: North Room was in the 1970s; South Room or Coffee Room in 1955-1956; and the Cemetery Room or Library in the 1970s. The carpet came from the hospital at Fort Carson. The "Little" Room was called that because that was the 1st thru 4th grade room. The Little Room is now the Library and the flooring was changed in the 1960s.

The North Room was originally built for the lower grades-- chalkboards are hung low.

5th thru 8th grade were in the _____ (no one ever said).

High school classes may have been held here. Bill Donley remembers that high school was held at the Greenwood school where Sam and Dody Smith now live.

Betty and Alden Gray remember that the school building closed in the spring of 1961. Loel Gray started 5th grade in Florence in the fall of 1961.

Bill Donley went to school here from 1952 through 1959.

Stage curtain (still hanging) was paid for by sponsorships and selling ads. Bill Donley remembers the cost of the curtain at \$900. He believes that the old curtain had advertising on it too.

The kitchen was included in the original construction. The coal cook stove was sold to George Goodwin in the early 1990s. (Something was mentioned about the chimney.) The building always had running water from the spring that is to the west of the building. The bathrooms and a drinking fountain in the basement near the stairwell ~~was~~ installed in the early 1950s. The drinking fountain was taken out just a few years ago.

There used to be a crank phone in the upstairs hallway. Reed Morris put it in but no one knows when.

Betty Gray remembers serving hot school lunches (1959-1960) for about six months. The home demonstration club mothers got tired of cooking. Those involved were Lucy Holstien; _____ Yellico; _____ Lawson; and Betty Gray.

Bill Donley remembers the basement wall opened up when the bathrooms were installed. There was a door in the basement wall, but they just opened it up to the big opening that is present now. The stair well was covered at the same time; the metal roof was put on _____. Tony Hawkins put the stair well cover on.

Alden Gray remembers that the gas heaters currently upstairs were installed in the 1960s. The heaters came from the Fair Grounds. The furnace room was torn down in 1994. Jerome worked on the basement heating. (Check with Jerome when that occurred.)

Two consolidations occurred that affected the building. The forming of the C-9 School District was from the Blake, Greenwood, and Wetmore schools in 1921 (early 1920s). The C-9 district consolidated with Florence in 1959-1960. Florence continued to hold school in the building until the fall of 1961.

Fred Smith drove school bus as well as ____ Grant, ____ Babcock, ____ Holstein, and ____ Westwater.

Elections were held at the building prior to the closing of the school. The Fireman's Ball, square dances, 4-H dances, box lunches/socials (1945-46) when Gertivera Mock was a teacher with Mr. Frank and Mrs. Nigh. Sharleen Brucks also remembers her grandfather, Arthur Mock, was a school bus driver. They lived on the Mock Ranch. Wedding receptions were held at the building but not until more recently.

When the school closed in 1961, RE-2J Florence took control but did not keep the building for very long. RE-2J gave the building to Custer County with a stipulation that in the future the school district had the option of using the building once again for holding school. This occurred when George Draper was commissioner. (Check with George and see what dates he remembers.)

Nancy Nordyke has minutes from the Building Committee as early as 1962. Alden Gray remembers that the Taylors; Esmeirs; and Burroughs were involved on the Building Committee early on.

Ladies Aid used the kitchen from the time the building was built until they sold the kitchen utensils and supplies to the county. Edna Branstine could not remember when they sold the kitchen to the county but Beverly Haynes would know. The Ladies Aid formed around 1913 or 1914. They cooked dinners using the kitchen for the fire department, funerals, and anyone in the community who was ill, etc.

Groups that have used or still use the building for events are: saddle club; home demonstration club; fire department; county meetings and commissioner meetings; San Isabel Electric; Forest Service; RV groups (check with Jerome on how long they've been using the grounds); political meetings and elections; health nurse gives immunizations; vacation bible schools; 4-H clubs; square dance clubs; library.

The fences do not depict the true boundaries of the lot. Bill Donley and Alden Gray said that there is no plot plan and the boundaries are unclear; but they believe the building sits in the NW corner of the lot. Alden Gray remembers that Mr. Hurly used to have a cardboard plot plan with the location of the building and the correct boundaries.

The porch was added about 10 years ago.

Roof has had some repairs. Alden and Jerome poured a concrete precipice cap around the roof/wall to protect the bricks from further disintegration about 5 years ago.

Bill Donley asked if anyone had been in the attic. Alden said he never had.

Vent line and propane were added _____.

The concrete tables and bridge across the creek were built around 1971.

