

We went to Marlatt School



Irene Arndt White
Herbert Arndt
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Richard Arndt
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**History of Marlatt School
Corner of Marlette Road &
Sherman Road
Waters, Michigan**

Here is a collection of memories
from students that attended
Marlatt country school
District No. 3
Otsego Lake Township
Waters, Michigan

Credit will be given to each
student's memories

2007

Irene Arndt White

The fall of 1920 I started school, first grade in the one room Marlatt School, In the center of the room was a large wood burning stove, which was surrounded in the winter by wet mittens on the floor, and sometimes wet shoes. The teacher's desk was in the front of the room and a "recitation bench" faced that, which was occupied by the class called to order. All eight grades were in the room, but I don't think we ever had more than fourteen kids to be divided among those eight grades. There were thirteen enrolled that year, two or three to a grade. Mary Cassidy and Regina Fliescher started the same year I did, but Regina moved away the next year and Mary didn't pass, so from then on, I was the only one in by grade thru 8th grade.

My first teacher was a man, George Anstett. He wore leather putters and kept a switch tucked in one of them. He walked up and down the aisles, and if your foot or leg extended into the aisle, even slightly, the switch flipped out like a snake's tongue and stung it. I think he was my least favorite teacher.

The big social events of the year were the Christmas program at school, and the

last day picnic. The Christmas program excused us from study for about two weeks while we learned our "parts" and dialogues and songs and made costumes. The highlight came on an evening before Christmas when all the parents and neighbors gathered to watch us perform. A large decorated tree on which candles were lit, held gifts, a result of "drawing names". (We always told each other whose name we had). When Santa Claus came stomping in and delivered bags containing candy, nuts, and an orange (sometimes the only one we got all year) which were donated by the school district. Each girl always had a new dress for the program, and mothers saved their egg money and sewed by kerosene lamps to finish in time.

The last day picnic always offered bounteous food, but the highlight was two or three freezers full of home made ice cream -- the only time we could ever have as much as we wanted.

Herbert Arndt

I was almost six years old when I started school. It was a one room building with a wood shed and toilets out side. We had a quarter of a mile to walk. We would walk home for our dinner except in severe weather conditions. If we carried our lunch it would consist of a syrup or lard or maybe a jelly sandwich. A couple of cookies and maybe an apple. We would carry this in a gallon syrup pail.

We would play games like Fox and Geese in the snow in the winter time, or have snowball fights. In the summer it was "Ante I Over". Sides were chosen. The sides were on opposite sides of the school. A ball was thrown over the school, at the same time the person that threw the ball would holler "Ante". If the ball was caught before it landed on the ground, everyone on both sides would exchange sides not knowing who had the ball. The person with ball tried to tag someone as they were running. Of course one never knew who had the ball. When a person got tagged, they had to quit playing. This went on until one person was left. Another game was Pom, Pom, Pull Away. Sides were chosen. There were two goal lines opposite each other about forty feet apart. Every one

was on one goal except the person that was "it". This person was about half way between the goals. When they hollered Pom-Pom-Pull away, everyone on one goal would try to cross over without getting tagged. When a person got tagged, it was their duty to help tag other ones. This went on until everyone was tagged out. Then the last one tagged was honored as being the best runner, and it usually was.

We always had a Christmas program with everyone reciting Christmas poems or being in a play. We had a lot of singing too. Sometimes Arnold Leibitzke and I would sing duets. Arnold had a guitar and at times he would chord on it. We would have the school all decorated a couple of days in advance. Usually two to three of the older boys would go to a swamp and get the Christmas tree. It was always a blue spruce about ten feet tall. Everyone helped decorate it. We would draw names so everyone would get a gift. We always got a special gift from the teacher. We would take a lamp and also a lantern as did the neighbors to light the school as it didn't have its own lighting. There was no electricity in the area yet. Usually the program ended up with everyone singing "Silent Night". We then waited for the arrival of Santa Claus

and the passing out of the gifts. We always got a bag of candy and nuts. This was donated by the school board. It seems I received a harmonica almost year from Arnold's brother Harold.

The later years of school I would go in early to make a fire in the "Round Oak" stove to get the school warmed up. The stove sat in the middle of the room. At times I had to check the fire during the day too. We burned wood and coal, I would get the school key from Marlatt's, across the street. The key hung on a nail inside the door. I would also bring a pail of drinking water to the school as the school had no water well. The teacher would usually room and board there. Marlatt's had geese and a gander I didn't like. If the gander was anywhere near when I walked in the yard, he would come running towards me and hiss. He never nipped me but I sure hated him. They also had a Plymouth Rock rooster that was worse than the gander. If he was around and you didn't watch, he would run at you and fly against your legs and try to spur you. He was worse than a dog.

I got \$1.50 a month for building the fire in the mornings and was paid by the teacher. This was for seven or eight

months. The second to last year I went to school, the teacher wanted me to have skis. So she ordered a pair I wanted and she paid for them as I didn't have the money. I did the fire starting that year in return for the skis. I sure was happy when my skis arrived.

Edward Arndt

I had Margaret Minkel as my kindergarten teacher. I skipped the first grade and started in the second grade the next year. Effie Lambert was my third grade teacher and she spanked my butt for leaving the gate opened. I remember having bread and butter sandwiches for lunch. I would look at another boy having meat in his sandwich, thinking they were really rich. Archie Campbell was my 8th grade teacher and he must have taught well because in the summer I wrote a paper on agriculture and won first place in Otsego County. The reward was a free one week trip to the State Fair in Detroit in 1935.

Richard Arndt

I started school in 1929 and my kindergarten teacher was Effie Lambert. We were taught to call her Miss Lambert, but no one ever called a teacher "Miss". Everyone called her "teacher".

My class mates starting in kindergarten were Arthur Krause, Arthur Giffin, and Frank Holzschu.

Everyone walked to school. We walked on quarter mile. School started at nine. Recess from 10:30 to 10:45. Lunch was at 12:00 o'clock to 1:00. We walked home for lunch. Kindergarten through third grade got out at 2:30. The "big" kids got out at 4:00. Afternoon recess was 2:30 to 2:45. When we got home from school in the afternoon, we always got a slice of bread with butter. This was to hold us over till supper time which would be 6:30 when Pa got home.

Starting in the first grade, my classmates were Arthur Giffin, Arthur Krause and his brother Lawrence Krause. Frank Holzschu had moved to Petoskey and Lawrence had failed first grade and so he had to do it over. The teacher's name was Mrs. Bea Luchein. She was a older person, probably 35 years old. She was

kindest and nicest teacher I ever had. She never gave anyone a spanking. If someone did something wrong or that required a spanking she would take a twelve inch ruler she kept in her desk and say, "Hold our your patty". You would have to extend your hand to her with palm side up. She would hold your hand in hers and gently pat the palm of your hand with that ruler. It was more symbolic than anything because it sure didn't hurt. I never got my hand spanked but Isaac Giffen and Lawrence Krause did. They seemed to always be getting into some sort of trouble.

The school was heated by a "Round Oak" coal/wood stove which was in the center of the room. The teacher usually had one of the oldest boys carry the coal/wood in from the attached shed on the back of the school. On cold winter days we would usually sit around the stove in the morning and the teacher would lead us in singing songs, usually from the "Golden Song Book".

Christmas time we always had a program of short plays, poems and songs to recite. This was put on for all parents just before Christmas. We had curtains to draw across the front which now served as our "stage". When this was all over (about

45 minutes to one hour) we would hear sleigh bells ringing and in would come Santa Claus. He would pass out the gifts from under the tree and we would also each get a sack of candy and nuts and an orange.

In the fall, probably in October, we would close the school for “potato digging vacation” as everyone was needed on the farm at this time.

The country doctor would stop by at least once a year and everyone would get whatever vaccinations they needed. I remember our mother coming to school on vaccination day and bringing the kids that were not in school yet so they could get vaccinated.

This is how we played baseball. If not enough kids for all bases to be covered, on pitcher, one catcher, two hitters. Those at bat were called hitter, and one fielder, only one base and that at the first base position, also one on first base. If you got a hit, you run to first base. If you got to first bases, the second hitter was at bat. If the second hitter got a hit, the first hitter who was on first base, would run home while the second hitter would run to first. If the first hitter got to home plate, they were up to bat again. If one of

the hitters was tagged "out", they would be the first baseman. All players moved up one position when someone was tagged out. We did not have sides or teams. I think you went from the first base to fielder, to pitcher to catcher to batter. If there were enough kids for three bases, I think we had three batters. When someone was tagged out. everyone moved up one position. there were no innings, just keep moving up on positions as one was tagged out. The boys and girls all played ball together and I thought it was lots of fun. Sometimes certain teachers would play too. One time we were playing during the afternoon recess. The teacher never did go in to ring the bell when recess was supposed to be over. We just kept playing till 4:00 and then we went home. I was in the fifth or sixth grade at that time.

About the teachers hired in 1934. I believe it was Mrs. Bessie O'Dell that was hired first. Because she was from Crawford County (a different school district), someone made a complaint that it was wrong to hire her. Archie Campbell from Gaylord was then hired. They told Mrs. O'Dell they didn't need her. The day school started, they both showed up. Both tried to have a class at

the same time. Mrs. O'Dell gave up and just sat there all day. It may have been the second day also. I don't know for sure. After awhile (days) I don't know, Mrs. O'Dell filed a law suit against the school board. It may have been when the school year was over, I don't remember how long. She won her case and they had to pay her for the year.

Another game we played was "Duck on the Rock". Everyone found a rock about three or four inches in diameter. The one that was "it" would put their rock on a large rock. Everyone else gets back to a line drawn on the ground about twenty feet away and take turns throwing their rock at the rock sitting on the large rock. If someone hits the "duck" and knocks it off, the one that was "it" would have to put it back on and then touch the person that hit it before they could get back to the throwing line where they were safe. If the person was touched by the "it" person, then that person was "it" and the game went on.

Earnest A. Arndt

I must have been in the first grad and Archie Campbell was the teacher. I was happy to be in school with all of the neighborhood kids so I visited a lot. Archie didn't want me to visit so after being warned, he pinched my ear while ushering me back to my seat. With a little thought, I can still feel it. I will never forget that and I believe it worked wonders.

If I recall correctly, the school had four rows of seats, a round oak stove in the center, two closets at the entrance end of the building that were the width of the building. the blackboard and teacher were at the other end of the room. I think we had about twenty seats for pupils. A woodshed was also at the far end of the building and part of the school. The entrance to the woodshed was from the outside. Two privies were near the woodshed.

The last year or maybe two, the teacher, Mrs. Marlatt would have us bring in vegetables and she would start a pot of soup on the "round oak" stove when it was being used. I also remember we all had to take a spoon of cod liver oil every day. The cod liver oil was paid for by the

school district.

At recess we played games. Baseball was played with the best ball and stick we could come up with, Usually the best ball was a hollow rubber ball. Other games were: Duck on the Rock, Pom, Pom, Pull away, Ante I Over, Fox and Geese, and Red Rover, Red Rover. Sliding on the ice, when available, was never passed up.

One event I remember was our teacher, Mrs. Marlatt, had my grade compete in arithmetic over a considerable time period. Three of us competed and I won the prize of two eggs.

One time in the fall or late summer. I found a cocoon in a bush. I took it to school and just before school was out for the year the butterfly emerged. We were ready to throw the cocoon out but instead dampened it and a few days later the butterfly emerged.

Like kids all over, one is hungry when one gets home from school. Some of the things we had were a slice of bread with sliced radishes and mustard and a slice of bread with chicken fat.

In the winter when we would start out

school, we now had a mile to walk. My older brothers, Richard and Bob, would go ahead and say “we’ll wait at the corner for you”. there was on corner before the school but they referred to the corner the school was on. Richard started the fire. maybe because he was one of the oldest or could get it going faster.

Pa was director of the school. I don’t know what all of his duties were, but I think finding a teacher could be one. He was in charge of making up the brown bags of Christmas candy, nuts and fruit for everybody who was expected to attend the event. The children always gave a play and sang many carols. After this was over, Santa would arrive with his gifts. Then he would pass out the gifts from under the tree and the bags of candy he brought.

There was a group of property owners east of the school called the “Viking Club”. The last two or maybe three years the school existed, we could write letters to Santa Claus and they would fill our wishes. Everyone had one wish. This was a very exciting time for us because some strangers were involved in our happiness. Over the years I can recall getting a cowboy suit and a sled. I believe the last Christmas party Jeanne

Dormire and I were to sing a duet, probably Silent Night, but it was called off because was due. Not singing was a real let down for me.

The school was consolidated with the Gaylord School after the 1938 school year was over. Members of the school board were Adam Arndt, Director; John Giffin, Moderator; and Susie Giffin, Treasurer.

The preceding information was submitted by Ernest Arndt and the entire Arndt family who lived on Sherman Road and later Hartwick Road near Waters, Michigan.