

**A Tale  
of  
Two Schools**

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by

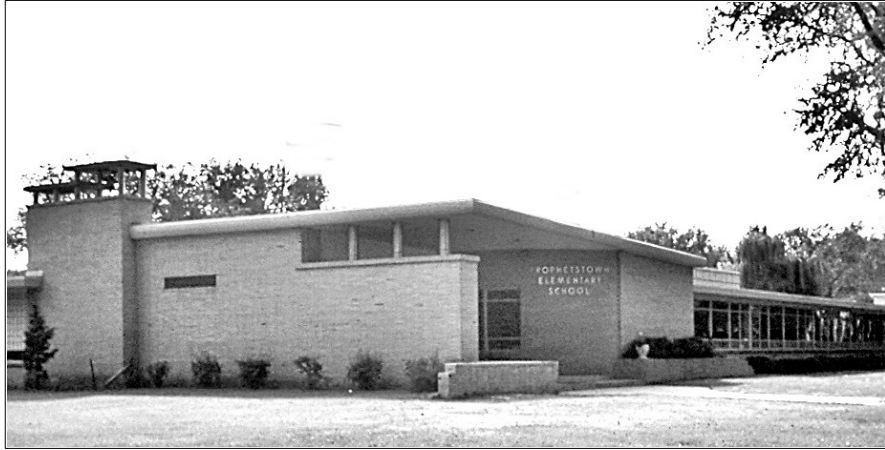
Fred South  
Prophetstown Area Historical Society  
June 2025



This is Prophetstown's 1881 school. It began with 11 grades, no kindergarten or senior class. By 1933 it was in such poor condition that it was condemned, but this was the time of the Great Depression and money was tight. In 1928 Prophetstown built a new high school, but the grade school continued here. It was not until 1950-51 that the new grade school was built.



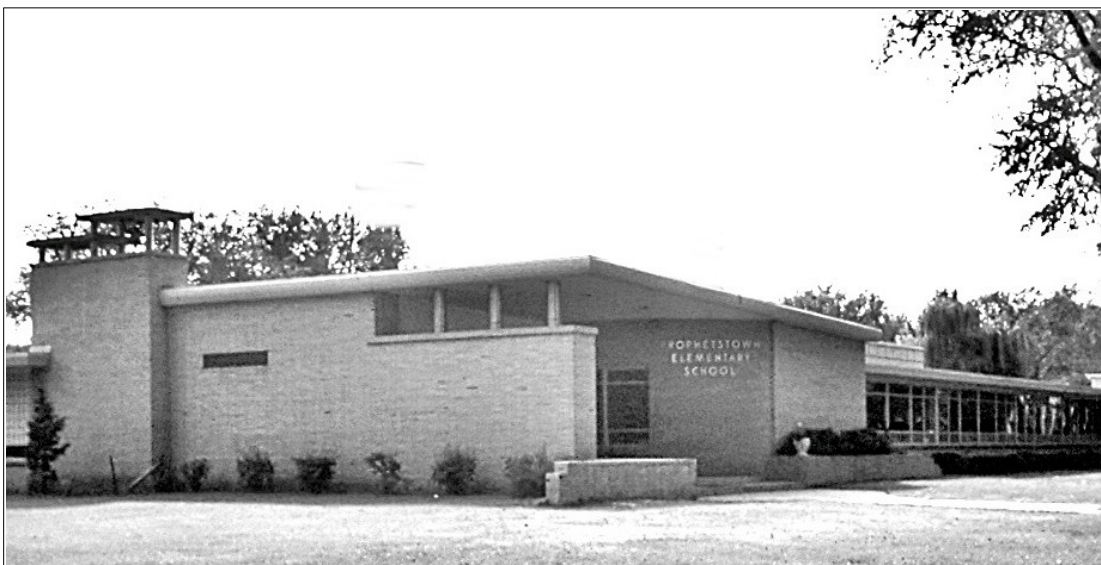
This is the 1881 school as seen from the air. It faced Locust Street, and sat where the elementary school playground is today.



The new 1951 Grade School.

In 1950-51, a new elementary school was constructed. It was built in the shape of an L, because the old school was still standing. So it was built around two sides of the old building, the North and West sides. When the old building was demolished, some of it was pushed into a hole and covered with soil and now lies under the playground at the elementary school.. This was unfortunate. In the 1960s it led to a termite problem in the new school.

Bud Thompson, having attended the 1881 school, said he gave a talk to one of the new grade school classes and mentioned that some the old school had been pushed into a hole in the playground area, then covered up. Later, he got a call from the rather disgruntled teacher, because some of the students had gone out and begun to dig in the playground during recess hoping to find some of the old school and came in a dirty mess. At this point the playground had not been covered with blacktop.



THE NEW PROPHETSTOWN GRADE SCHOOL

## **Open House and Dedication**

SPONSORED BY

**The Grade School Mothers Club**

AND THE

**Board of Education**

**DEDICATION --- MONDAY, MAY 28, 1951**

**AT 7:30 P. M.**

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### **Open House Periods---**

MONDAY, MAY 28, 1:00-6:00 P. M.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 7, 2:00-5:00 P. M.

AND SUNDAY, SEPT. 9, 2:00-5:00 P. M.

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**Prophetstown Public School, District No. 75**

**Prophetstown, Whiteside County, Illinois**

## About the School

Construction of the Prophetstown Grade School began in April, 1950, and the building was ready for occupancy in May, 1951, at a total cost (including building, equipment and architect's fee) of approximately \$285,000. Planned for children from the kindergarten through the eighth grade, this modern one-story structure is designed to appeal to children of grade school age and to fit the basic educational needs of the child. Its graciousness of design and its modern educational appointments provide a building that citizens may contemplate with pride and satisfaction.

## Dedicatory Statement

Erected by the citizens of District 75 as evidence of their faith in the American system of education, this building is dedicated to the complete development of the children of the community and to their growth in the understanding of the ideals and practices of Christian living and American citizenship.

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Religion, morality and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged.

—Ordinance of 1787

Only the educated are free.

—Epictetus

Education—a debt due from present to future generations.

—Henry Ward Beecher

America's future will be determined by the home and the school. The child becomes largely what it is taught, hence we must watch what we teach it, and how we live before it.

—Jane Addams

A teacher affects eternity; he never can tell where his influence stops.

In the scheme of democracy, as in the code of Christianity, all men are on a common level of dignity and importance.

—Frank Murphy

Citizens may be born free; they are not born wise. Therefore the business of liberal education in a democracy is to make free men wise.

—F. Champion Ward

## **THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Don E. Frary, President

Carl Swanson  
Lawrence Kiner  
Ward Pritchard

Clara Baldwin, Sec.  
Mildred Hansen  
Monroe Brown

Former Members During Planning

John Gamble

Wilbur Brown

## **ARCHITECTS**

Raymond A. Orput and Associates,  
Architects & Engineers, Rockford, Ill.

## **CONTRACTORS**

General Building Contractor, Daniel Haring Co.,  
Clinton, Iowa

Electrical Work, Scott Electric Co.,  
Prophetstown, Illinois

Plumbing, Heating and Ventilating,  
Lockhart Plumbing & Heating Co., Moline, Ill.

Painting and Decorating, Orville Wells, Camanche, Iowa.

## **MOTHERS' CLUB OFFICERS**

Valerie Lindberg	-	-	-	-	-	President
Verneta Attig	-	-	-	-	-	Vice President
Berneice Johnson	-	-	-	-	-	Treasurer
Kathryn Buck	-	-	-	-	-	Secretary

## **STAFF**

Ray Baltar, Superintendent

Bernice Wallin	-	-	-	-	-	First Grade
Joan Davis	-	-	-	-	-	Second Grade
Blanche Johnson	-	-	-	-	-	Third Grade
Perle Schaefer	-	-	-	-	-	Fourth Grade
Cecil Olinger	-	-	-	-	-	Fifth Grade
Esther Richards	-	-	-	-	-	Sixth Grade
Irene Randall	-	-	-	-	-	Seventh Grade
Ray Baltar	-	-	-	-	-	Eighth Grade
John Massey	-	-	-	-	-	Custodian

Special Teachers Serving the Grade School

Marilyn Johnson	-	-	-	-	-	Speech Correctionist
Stephen Speidel	-	-	-	-	-	Music
Walter Ewalt	-	-	-	-	-	Shop

## DEDICATION PROGRAM

Don E. Frary, Presiding

THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER - - - Audience  
THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - - - Audience  
INVOCATION - - - Rev. John W. Vaughn  
MUSIC

Agnus Dei—L'Arlesienne Suite - - - Bizet  
I'll See You Again (From Bittersweet) - Noel Coward  
Grade-High School Band — Stephen Speidel, Director

PRESENTATION OF PLATFORM GUESTS - Mr. Frary  
RESPONSES:

For the Board of Education - - Lawrence S. Kiner  
Member, Board of Education  
For the Mothers' Club - - Mrs. Valerie Lindberg  
President, Mothers' Club  
For the Lions Club - - Dr. J. L. Sly  
President Lions Club  
For the Prophetstown Boosters - - O. C. Perrin  
President, Prophetstown Boosters  
For the American Legion - - Arlyn Dorathy  
Commander, American Legion  
For the High School - - E. A. Bowers  
Principal, Community High School  
For the Architect and Contractors - Raymond A. Orput  
Architect  
For the City - - Donald L. Sipe, Mayor  
For the State - - Hon. George S. Brydia  
Representative 35th District  
For the Churches - - Rev. George O. A. McKinley

### MUSIC

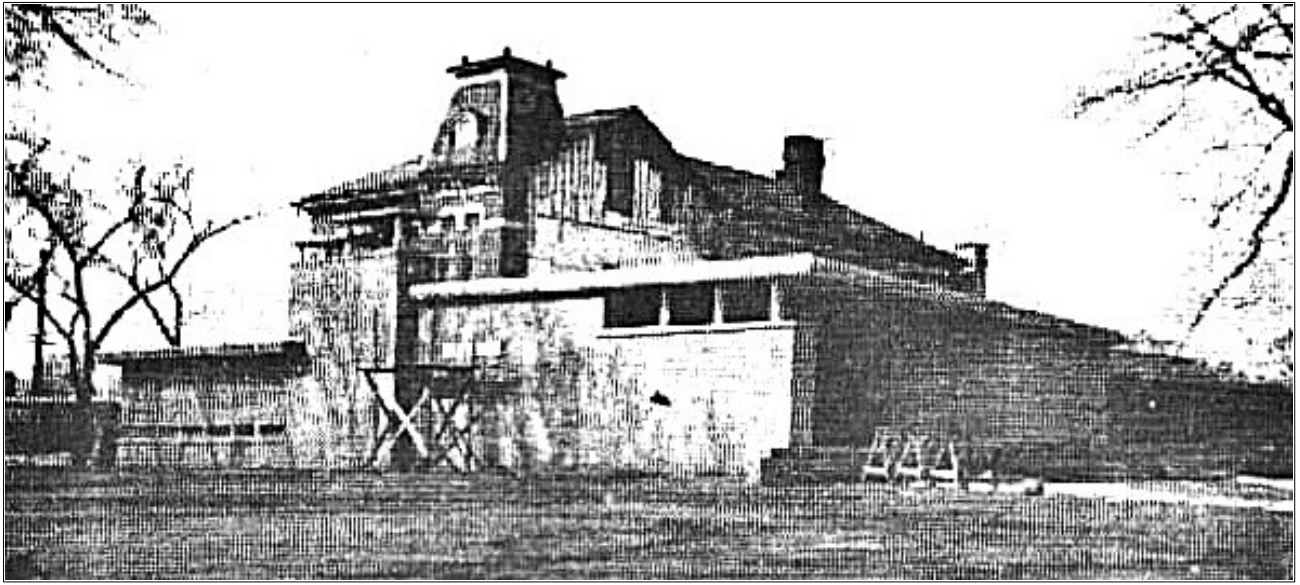
Shoutin' Spirits (Black Man's Gospel) - - Shumaker  
Indiana State Band March - - - Farrar  
The Band

ADDRESS - - - Honorable Vernon L. Nickell  
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

DEDICATORY STATEMENT - - - Mr. Baltar, Supt.  
"AMERICA" - - - Audience

BENEDICTION - - - Rev. John W. Vaughn

Refreshments provided by the Contractors and served by the  
Grade School Mothers Club.



### **The old and the new.**

Taken from a point at the northeast corner of the schoolyard, this picture shows the location of the new building immediately north of the old school. The kindergarten section is at the left and the classroom section stretches along Third Street to the right. Taken before scaffolding had been cleared away from the building and shrubbery and flowers planted, the picture does not do justice to the beauty of the main entrance, which presents a very attractive appearance. The roof of the gym, located at the rear of the old school, can just be seen projecting above the classroom section of the new building.  
(from the *Echo*)