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Dorothy Voth Gray, my cousin, Class of 1954, (deceased), and her son and his cousins, who gave me access to her photo albums and early yearbooks after she died; these provided invaluable documentation. Her own photos from her albums and her early yearbook photos provide the ONLY photo and firm documentation to confirm and supplement the memories of many others below.

Peggy Smith Guthrie Harris, Class of 1962, who not only provided her own memories but passed on memories from her cousins and others, or helped me to connect with them myself

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My brother Arrel Toews, Class of 1966, for help with places where my own memory was fuzzy, and for ongoing help with editing and style issues

Chapter 4. 1952 – The New High School and Gym Addition

As mentioned earlier, a high school and gymnasium-auditorium were added to the south end of the 6-room red brick school during the 1951-52 school year, and then EVERYTHING changed! I will start the story with what happened to the one-room school buildings and perhaps others that were used temporarily at the school, especially during construction of the high school and gym, for continuity with the previous chapter. Next will be the changes that occurred in the red brick school building and its 6 rooms at that time. Then, finally, the layout and uses of the rooms in the new addition.

4.1 Dispersal or disposal of the one-room schools from the town school grounds.

We do not know with any certainty which buildings surrounded the original school, with the exception that one of them was the former Rose Bud one-room school. Similarly, I have found no information on what happened to any of the buildings from closest to the original school -- the Lunchroom building, the Home Ec room, or the Rose Bud school building. I perhaps still have some limited hope that I will find someone who might know or some document that might have recorded this!

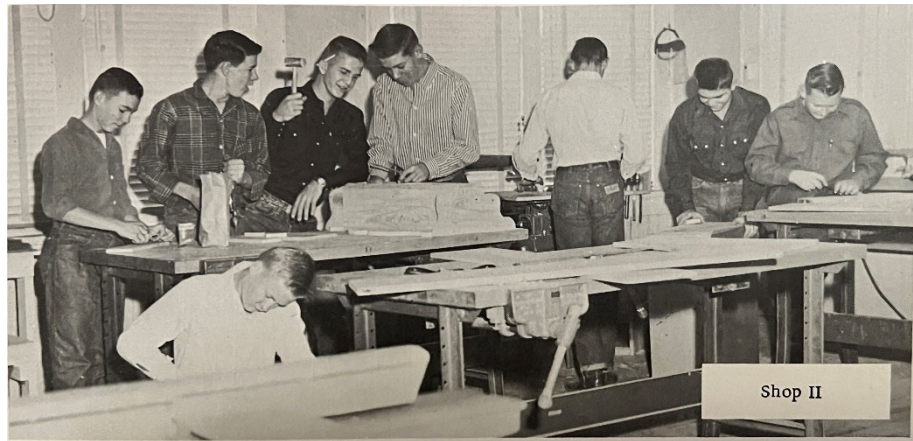
The Columbia School remained on the west side of the street north of the school until about 1965, the last yearbook with photos including Columbia. It was used as a community gathering place, for some family reunions, and for some 4-H Club activities in its final years. In the first years after the high school and gym were built, Columbia was used for Shop classes, as labeled in the photo to the right, from the 1955 yearbook.



The photo to the right, from the 1956 yearbook, provides a rare look inside the Columbia School building, in its 1950s life, but also giving unique information about the inside of the building as it was when it was a one-room school out in the country. The woodworking benches and the jointer and the table saw are clearly visible. I presume that the dark raised area to the left rear of this photo is the stage from Columbia's years as a one-room schoolhouse. My vague memory is of an entryway from outside, perhaps with hooks for coats, and of the right (south) door here being the entry to the main room. The door to the left may have been a closet, or perhaps both doors provided entry into the main room. The photo of the outside of the building above seems to show a window onto the porch for the south door but not the north door. Clear memories from others are welcome!



The photo to the right, from the 1957 yearbook, is clearly labeled as Shop II, indicating that there were two years of wood shop back then already. This would also have been the last year that Shop class was taught in Columbia, the new Shop room being ready for the 1957-58 school year. Betty Jo Kirkpatrick Tennant remembered walking up to Columbia for music in her early years, after the high school and gym were built; this might have been in years before it was filled with woodworking equipment; or perhaps it served both purposes at the same time. This would likely explain why a new shop and music room were the next addition to be added, to the east of the new gym, so that students would no longer have to trudge up to Columbia for these two classes.



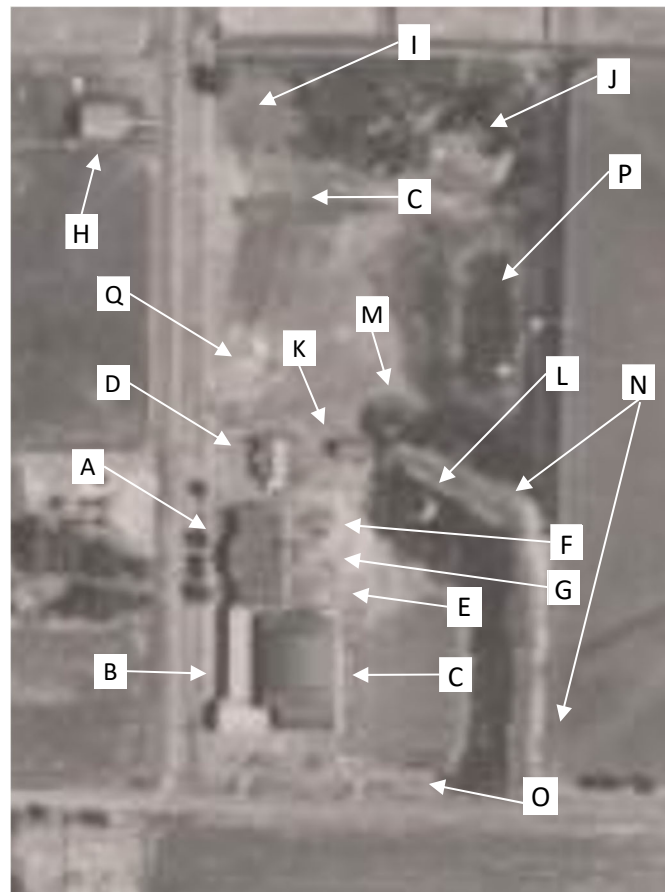
The photo to the right, shown also in the previous chapter, is an important one for this chapter also; it shows the very beginning of construction of the new addition. The shape of the upcoming addition is partly visible, with the brick foundation for the science and home ec rooms and the cement blocks in piles for the rest of the foundations. Importantly, it shows that both of the buildings behind the school (east) are still in place, but the one south of the red brick school (presumably Rose Bud) is now gone, to make way for the new addition.



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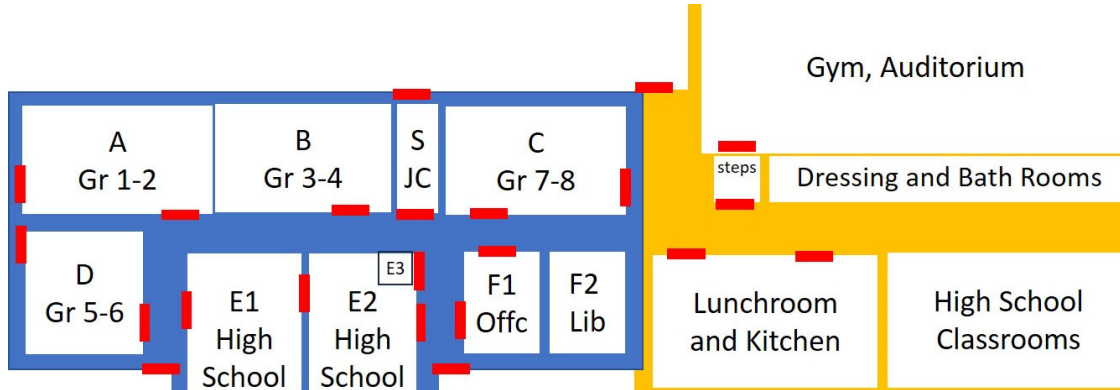
The photo to the left below is the “clean” version of an aerial photo of the school grounds from 1954 that I purchased from the National Archives aerial photos repository. The photo to the right below is a version with structures marked for help in locating things. The 6-room school (A) with the high school (B) and gym addition (C) now in place are clearly visible, along with the first bus barn (D) still standing just north of the original school. The two buildings east of the school seem to still be there (E, F), and possibly a third (G) east of the middle of the 6-room building. The Columbia School building (H) is clearly visible to the north, on the west side of the street. The school from the east side is gone, but its former location (I) appears to still be visible. The building in the upper right of this photo (J) is most likely the building where Ed Barkman remembered having 5th or 6th grade during construction.

There are some puzzles in the photo above and to the right also. There seems to be a building directly behind (east) of the bus barn (K) that was not present in earlier photos. It is also possible that this (K) is a bus or coal truck that was captured in this photo rather than a building. There are two additional possible “structures” just east of this building or vehicle; the one further south (L) is likely the boys’ outdoor bathroom still in place; the one further north (M) remains a mystery. It also looks like there might be a roadway leading to this area coming from the road to the south (N). There may be another building or buildings at the far southeast corner of the school property (O), perhaps earlier buildings moved there for some purpose. The nature of the dark area at the back of the school property to the northeast (P) is not known. The area just north of the bus barn and close to the street may be the ball field (Q); certainly it was in later years. It also appears that there may be sidewalk now on one or both sides of the street. [Help with any of these unknown items would be greatly appreciated!](#)



4.2. Changes in the original 6-room school building AFTER the high school and gym addition

The diagram below focuses on the changes to room usage in the original red brick school rooms after the high school and gym addition; the high school and gymnasium addition are truncated here. This is essentially the way we remember this part of the school in our grade school years, 1954-1963 or so.



With the high school in the new addition, the grade school took over much more of the original building; and now the youngest grades were at the north end rather than the south end. Grades 1-2 had the northeast corner room (A), and grades 5-6 had the northwest corner room (D). Grades 3-4 were in the middle room on the east side (B), and Grades 7-8 were in the southeast corner room (C).

Room A remained essentially unchanged, except for a new permanent south wall. There were several major changes to the middle room on the east side (B). First, the collapsible wall between Rooms A and B was replaced with a solid wall to separate the grades 1-2 room from the grades 3-4 room. Because Room B did not have a coat closet like Rooms A, B, D, and F did, at some point metal lockers were placed along the north wall of the 3-4 grade room to serve the same purpose. The two photos below provide a nicer view of the lockers at the



north end of Room B, from the 1961 yearbook, my 4th grade year. And yes, my well-remembered classmates from my early years are shown in these photos as well.



What had been the stage (S) at the south end of that room became the janitor's closet (JC). The curtains at the front of the stage were replaced with a solid wall, and I believe with a blackboard. Perhaps the part of the stage that protruded into the room was removed also. The doors were nailed shut, but I believe they remained in place; in my memory, there were for sure at least one and maybe two steps up toward those doors (or where they had been) that remained it the time I was in that room, 1960-1962; but few others seem to remember those doors or steps. To our knowledge, the steam radiators continued to be used for heat, though it is possible that the boiler was converted from coal to some other fuel source along the way.

The divided room (E) at the middle of the west side of the school remained divided, and at least one side of it appears to have continued to be used for Typing; usage of E1 and E2 likely changed from year to year; I have not found many people who have clear memories, but the photo to the right, from the 1960 yearbook shows, this room as still divided at that time. Arrel remembers having Typing 1 his junior year, 1964-65, in the south side (E2) of that divided room; no one from those years has memories of E1. What oldest graduates remember as the office (E3) in the southeast corner of E2 became a storage closet; Arrel remembers it being used for storing pop for the pop machine in his day.



Finally, what had been Room F was now divided into two rooms. The north half became the office, with one door on the north side to the hallway where students entered the building, and another door onto the north-south hallway on the east side of the office. The south half of Room F now became the library. On the south side of the library was a "service window" where students could check out books. The room directly south of the library in the new addition was the lunchroom and was also used for study hall. Perhaps the library was only open for check-out during lunch periods, or perhaps during possible study hall hours also. That library window is shown below, the left photo from the 1954 yearbook and the middle photo and the right photo from 1957. There was clearly a door into the library from the lunchroom at the west end, as seen in the top right photo; there was also a door into this room from the north-south hallway, visible in the trophy case photo on page 20. The tall gas heater in the northwest corner of the lunchroom is also visible in the top right photo. This library in the south half of Room F is what became the Superintendent's office in the late 1960s, as many will remember that room.



Below are photos documenting the use of the lunchroom to the south of this library as the study hall also. The left photo, from the 1956 yearbook, is labeled Study Hall. The middle photo, from the 1954 yearbook, shows the library closed, with a teacher helping in Study Hall. The right photo, from the 1959 yearbook, shows a nice view of the inside of the library. Additional photos later in this chapter document the use of extra library shelves as trophy display also, and these provide additional views inside the room. These photos also show that the library and its window were popular places for taking yearbook photos also.



Note that Room F was likely made smaller than its original size for the high school addition. Presumably Rooms C and F were adjacent to each other in the original version of the 6-room school, but with the new addition, the long east hallway needed to be put in between those two rooms. There may have been other changes to both Rooms C and F to get the high school building connected. Presumably their original brick south walls were replaced, and at least one if not both of their south exit doors changed.

4.3 The high school and gymnasium addition

4.3.a. The new building

The photo and dedication to the right are from the 1952 yearbook. The first provides a nice view of the school board members who helped to make this new high school and gymnasium happen – Leonard Chelf, Fred Randolph, and my Uncle Henry G. Toews. A close-in zoom allows one to almost, or just barely, see the layout of the new addition on the blueprints that they are admiring in the photo. The yearbook excerpt below is the tribute and dedication to those people for making the addition happen, and it nicely documents the “confusion” that went on during construction, the story told in Chapter 3.



TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF KREMLIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS WE DEDICATE THIS EDITION OF THE BRONC. WE TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS OUR APPRECIATION FOR THE BOARD OF EDUCATION'S UNTIRING EFFORTS AND FAITHFUL GUIDANCE OF KREMLIN SCHOOL. WE THANK THESE MEN: MR. FRED RANDOLPH, MR. H. G. TOEWS, MR. L. A. CHELF; AND ALL THOSE WHO HAVE MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR OUR IMPROVED AND ENLARGED SCHOOL BUILDING AND ITS FACILITIES.

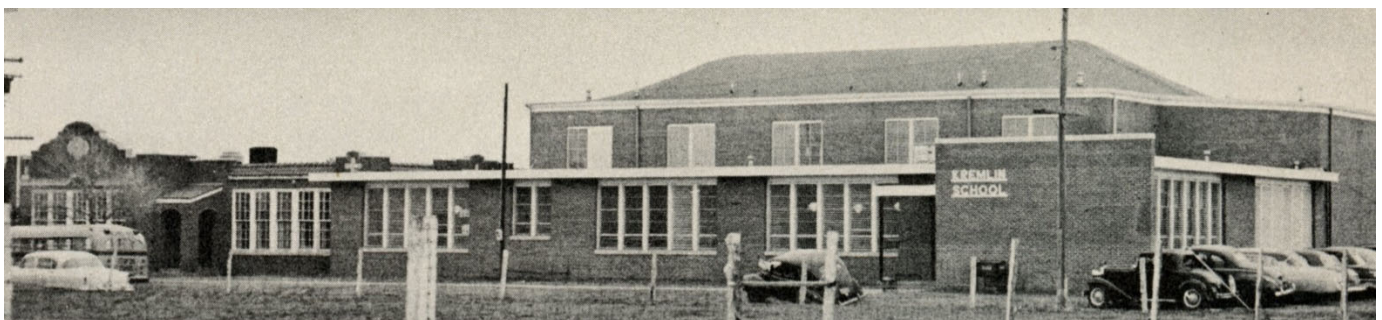
WE ARE ALSO APPRECIATIVE OF THE PATIENCE OF BOTH THE FACULTY AND STUDENT BODY DURING THE CONSTRUCTION. ALTHOUGH AT TIMES THE CONFUSION SEEMED INTOLERABLE; WE ARE SURE THE PLEASANT SURROUNDINGS OF OUR NEW HOME WILL OVER SHADOW ALL THESE INCONVENIENCES AND OVERCOME ANY RETARDATIONS OF LEARNING.

THE BRONC STAFF

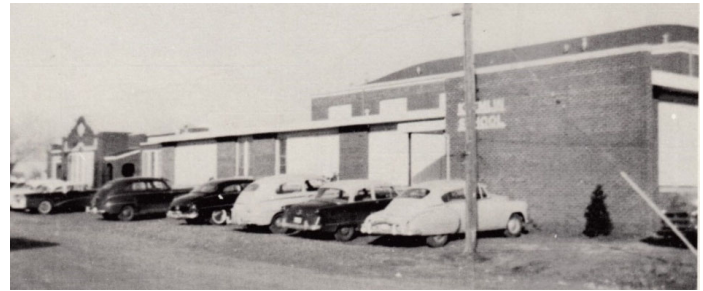
The left photo below, from the OK Historical Society, shows the continuing progress on construction, with good detail of the south end of the new addition. The slide from the playground that was originally at the south end of the original red brick school (and presumably south of the Rose Bud school also, when it was there) is still visible. The photo to the right, from 1952, is the first yearbook photo of the new addition completed.



The photo below is another nice photo of the completed new addition, with a somewhat larger perspective, from the Case magazine article on Kremlin and FW Zaloudek's Case dealership, also from Tillie Chelf's



collection and courtesy of Dick Chelf. Note the school bus in front of the red brick building, where buses parked to load up students; the variety of vintages of cars in the parking area at the south of the building, and one car, perhaps that of the photographer, that seems to be driven up on the sidewalk or stuck in the ditch in front of the school! [More additional and priceless photos like this one, that are NOT from the school yearbooks, are welcome from any and all!](#)

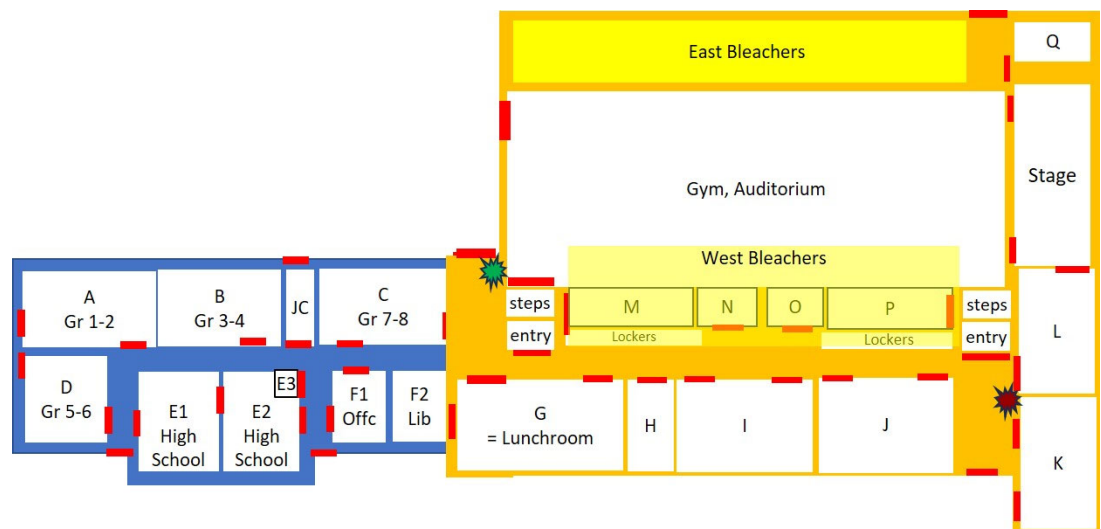


To the right are two more nice early photos of the front of the new addition, the top photo with the buses from the 1956 yearbook and the lower photo with the cars from the 1957 yearbook.

The photo below is perhaps the earliest photo of the back of the new addition, from the 1954 yearbook. The red brick school with the playground behind it is visible to the right of the large gymnasium. The first bus barn is still visible and perhaps the outdoor boys' bathroom. There are 5 large windows at the back (east side) of the gym, the exit door from the south-east corner of the gym and the concrete steps going down, and two small windows at the south end, I am guessing the right (north) one at the east end of the back-stage area and the left (south) one in the small boys' locker/dressing room.



The diagram here shows details of what we believe to have been the original layout of the high school addition, with the red brick building included. Red indicates where doors were located. [This diagram is not yet done to true scale!](#)



4.3.b. The lunchroom and kitchen

As already mentioned, Room G was the lunchroom during lunch-time and likely the study hall during other hours; Room H was the kitchen. There were three stainless steel windows between the kitchen and the lunchroom – one or two for the cooks to serve the food, and the other for students to return their trays with dirty dishes and leftover food for disposal and cleaning. The top photo below, from the 1957 yearbook, provides the most complete view of the south end of the lunchroom. Between the sets of windows there is what appears to be a Coco Kwik cooler and dispenser. To the right of the far-right window into the kitchen, in the southwest corner of the lunchroom, was the Gold Spot milk dispenser for use with lunch; a nice photo of that milk dispenser from the 1957 yearbook is shown in the lower left photo, with the far right (west) window into the kitchen closed. In my days, those who could afford 2 cents per day also got a glass of Gold Spot milk delivered to their classroom in the afternoon, with students indicating earlier in the day who wanted white milk and who wanted chocolate. The lower right photo below, also from the 1957 yearbook, nicely shows the door into the lunchroom from the hallway, the door from the lunchroom into the kitchen at the east end, and the two serving windows. I do not remember clearly whether that doorway from the lunchroom was the only access to the kitchen, or whether there was another doorway into the kitchen from the hallway, as is shown on my floorplan diagram. The photos nicely show the tables and folding chairs.



Two additional early views of the lunchroom are shown below, the left photo of high school students from the 1953 yearbok and the right photo of grade school students from the 1957 yearbook.

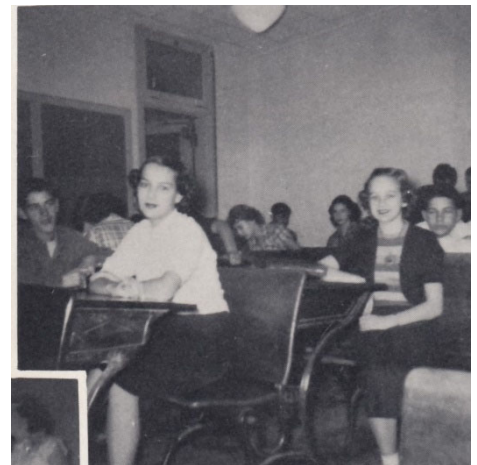
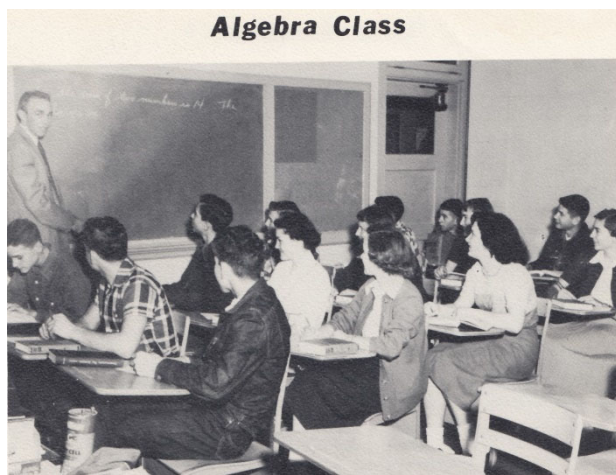


Below are photos of the cooks from various yearbooks, which reveal the locations of some of the kitchen appliances and accessories. Yearbooks from which the photos were taken are indicated.



4.3.c. The high school classrooms

Rooms I and J were essentially identical “generic” classrooms, presumably used for a variety of classes and different from year to year. Both had two entrance doors from the hallway on the east side and large windows on the west side. I do not have definitive memories or photos, but there was at least one large blackboard in each room, and most likely two, one on each north wall and one on each east wall between the doors, and with a bulletin board on each side of the blackboards. The Algebra Class photo, top left, is from the 1954 yearbook. The round photo of the south classroom, top right, from the 1956 yearbook, is looking south-west and shows the windows and a bit of the canopy over the science room door and south entry door. The bottom left photo, from the 1962 yearbook, shows another view of the canopy over the science room and south entry door. The only good view I have of the outside door to the science room is in the photo of my brother Arrel standing there a few days before demolition began in 2015, middle photo bottom row. The bottom right photo, from the 1953 yearbook, is included to show the older-style desks, perhaps replaced for the 1953-54 year.

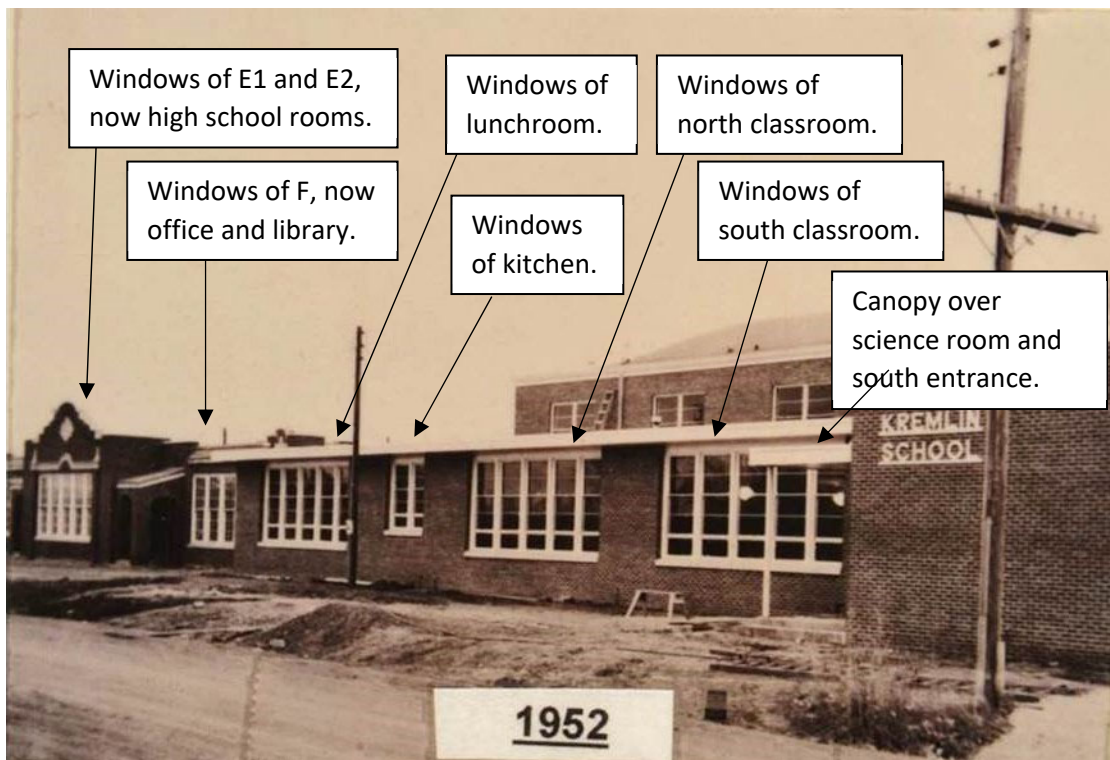


Below are some photos to put the rooms described so far into perspective, from inside and outside.

- Door to Home Ec room
- Two doors to south classroom, south door barely visible
- Two doors to north classroom
- Door into kitchen
- South door into lunchroom



- South wall of the north entryway to the gymnasium
- Water fountain
- Note that most of the lunchroom (to right of photo) was across from the doors to the gym and the east exit doors

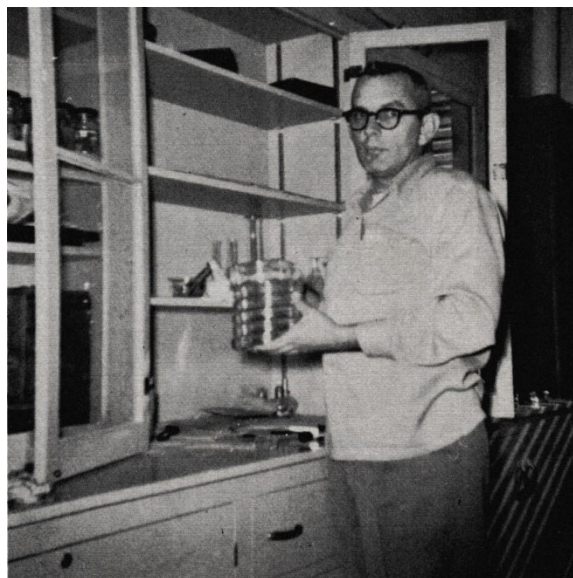
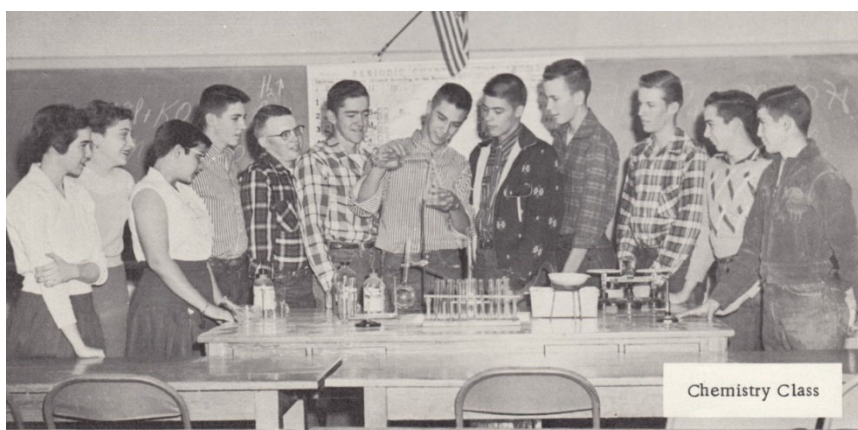


- Windows of E1 and E2, now high school rooms.
- Windows of F, now office and library.
- Windows of lunchroom.
- Windows of kitchen.
- Windows of north classroom.
- Windows of south classroom.
- Canopy over science room and south entrance.

4.3.d. The science room

Rooms K and L were the science room and the home ec room, respectively. As shown in the layout diagram, the science room and the home ec room were on another hallway, running east-west, from the south front door of the school and to the south doors into the gymnasium. For reasons that are not clear, the science room had both a door from the hallway but another door from the covered porch area that sheltered the south entrance door and the west door into the science room.

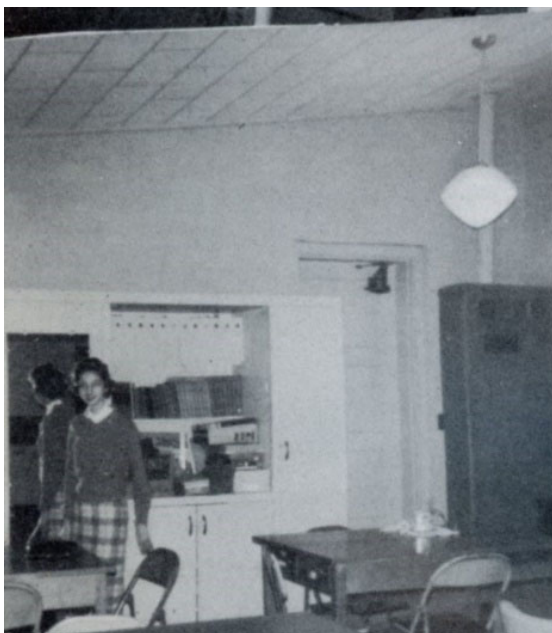
A few photos of the science room are shown here. The top left photo, from the 1957 yearbook, shows a chemistry experiment in front of the blackboard, which was at the west end. The top right photo, also 1957, shows the specimens and equipment cabinet with glass-front doors and the tall heater in the corner, as well as the wet lab sink at the west end. The bottom left photo, from the 1959 yearbook, gives a clear view of the specimens and equipment cabinet. The lower right photo, again 1957, shows the teacher's desk at the front, a student using a microscope to the right, and a biology poster on an easel in the back.



4.3.e. The home ec room

There was a door into the home ec room at the intersection of the long north-south hallway and the shorter east-west hallway, on the south wall of the east-west hallway, just before the south entrance to the gymnasium.

The kitchen area was on the west wall, as shown in the top two photos, left from the 1958 yearbook, right from 1959; this allowed the same plumbing to go the water fountain in the hallway. The middle right photo, from the 1953 yearbook, shows the sewing machines under the windows on the south wall. A mirror, storage closets for projects, and an area for trying on clothes that were being made was in the north-east corner, as shown in the two bottom photos, left from the 1961 yearbook, right from 1961. Further south on the east wall was a door that led up to the back-stage area, allowing the home-ec room to also be used as a dressing room for plays and musical performances, as seen in the lower left photo. This photo also shows the ceiling sloping from south to north for this wing of the building. The lower right photo is of the northeast corner and shows the door from the hallway into the home ec room. I believe there was a stove at the south end of the west wall; location of the refrigerator remains unknown.



The girls not only learned how to set a proper table, as shown top left, from the 1954 yearbook, but how to host and serve meal as well, with some of the high school boys as dinner guests, as shown in the top right photo below, from 1956. The lower left photo shows one of the girls being quite impressed with seeing herself from four angles in the mirrors, from the 1953 yearbook. The lower right photo, from the 1958 yearbook, shows one of the sewing projects on its dress-form, perhaps to make a headless classmate also?



Unknown to most is the fact that Peggy and Ginger Semrad went to beauty school in the summer in their late high school years. To the right is a photo of them demonstrating their hair design skills in the Home Ec room.

Peggy and Faith Mary remembered that the home ec room was also used as the concession stand for ball games in their grade school days. A table was set up in front of the kitchen area, and 7th and 8th graders took turns selling candy and pop there, with the goal of raising funds to buy the shiny “velvet” ball uniforms worn by the grade school teams in their day and ours.



4.3.f. Drinking fountains and pop coolers

At a minimum, there were drinking fountains at the south end of the high school, between the doors into the home ec room and the science room. This was also a convenient location for getting a drink of water for patrons at the ball games and other events in the gymnasium.

The top right photo, from the 1953 yearbook, shows only one porcelain double fountain, uncooled water; the door to the science room is just visible to the right. The left and middle lower photos, from the 1953 and 1960 yearbooks, show both that fountain and a new upright refrigerated water fountain. The top left photo nicely confirms the location of the water fountains, with the door into the home ec room showing behind the girls, as well as the entry door into the south end of the gymnasium. The middle photo below shows an electric lighted photo hanging above the two fountains, plus the open door into the gym. The lower right photo shows the custodian outside of room J, with the door to room J visible, as well as the photo above the water fountains. The bottom left and right photos also show the historic senior photo panels hanging up high on both the east and west walls of the hallway. This water fountain is indicated by the green star with the red center in the room layout diagram.



In addition to water fountains, there appears to have been a long history of soda pop being available also. Several people involved in their senior trip planning and funding remember using pop sales in the school as a way for each class to raise money for their senior trips or for other class projects or donations. The left photo at the top of the next page, from the 1954 yearbook, appears to me at least to be of a pop machine in the janitor's closet, based on the low ceiling. The janitor's closet would have had a low ceiling, which was in fact a raised floor, because of its prior life as the stage in the original red brick school building. The door behind the boys would be consistent with the east door leading out of the janitor's closet to the playground area to the east of that room.

The right photo below, from the 1960 yearbook, includes Errol Wofford, and it was clearly identified by him as being just north of the north-east corner of the gym; the wall behind the pop machine is the north wall of the north entry into the gymnasium, and the door to the left in the photo is the "new" door leading out to the north end of the gymnasium and the south side of the playground, in the new space connecting the 6-room school building to the new high school. This is the area identified by the green star on the room layout diagram.

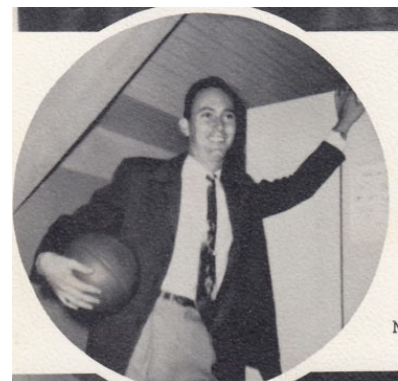


Note that there is also a water fountain to the lower right of the pop machine in the second photo. This would have been the water fountain that would have been more easily accessible for the grade school students in the original 6-room building, just outside the door of what is now the 7th and 8th grade room. This would also have been directly opposite the north door entrance into the lunchroom and study hall.

4.3.f. Dressing rooms and bathrooms under the west bleachers, and the main north-south hallway

Across the hall from the lunchroom and at the east end of the east-west hallway in front of the science and home ec rooms were doors into a "foyer area" and then steps leading up into the gym, at both ends. West of the gym, under the west bleachers, were the boys' locker room to the north (M), with the boys' bathroom connected to the south (N); and a mirror image girls' locker room (P) and bathroom to the south (O).

We have no photos of either bathroom; the photo to the right of Coach Bill Stout, from the 1954 yearbook, may be under the west bleachers at the south end of the boys' dressing room.



Below are several photos of the girls' dressing room, all from the 1960 yearbook. The left photo shows a bit of the bleachers slanting above in the upper left corner, slanting from left to right, east to west, above the dressing room, and the door coming into the dressing room from the foyer at the south end; out that door and up the stairs to the left and the girls were on the basketball court, at the stage end of the gymnasium. The middle and left photos show the lockers, a comfortable chair, and a mirror for the girls to look their best, on or off of the basketball court!



There were doors into both boys' and girls' bathrooms from the long north-south hallway, approximately opposite from the kitchen and room I. Inside the boys' bathroom were 2 or 3 open toilet stalls to the north on the east wall, and a "group" urinal for 2-3 students at the south end, with a sink between the urinal and the door to the hallway; I can only presume that the girls' bathroom had one or two additional stalls in place of the urinal in the boys' bathroom, and perhaps the stalls had doors, unlike the boys' room. These bathrooms were also used by the grade school students, who had to walk a long way down the hall from the original 6-room building into the new high school to get to the bathrooms. And then, at least for the boys, there was worry about being tormented in the bathroom by the high school boys; several had such tales of terror to share; and grade school students did not always make it to those bathrooms in time! High school students usually waited until the breaks between classes to go to the bathroom, but some presumably got permission to go there during class as well.

On the east hallway wall in front of the bathrooms were the lockers, both north and south of the bathroom entry doors. These were stacked half-high lockers, as shown in the photo to the right, from the 1960 yearbook. Senior photo panels hung above the lockers, as seen in the right photo, with the south entry area to the gym and home ec room barely visible in the background. More senior photos hung high on the west wall also, as shown on page 16.



The photo to the right, again from the 1960 yearbook, shows the half-height lockers, this time with the top locker open. An important element in this photo is that it seems to be at the south end of the north set of lockers; the young boys at the lower right are presumably lined up to get into the boys' bathroom, which would have been just to the right (south) of this north set of lockers.



From the best of people's memories and from photos, there was a trophy case in the hallway, located between the two doors to the girls' and boys' bathrooms – the "prize possession" in the photo to the right below, from the 1951 yearbook. The left photo below, from the 1956 yearbook, gives the best view of the location of this trophy case – looking to the north, the north lockers are seen behind the girls, the door to the boys' bathroom in front (south) of that, and then the trophy case at the front right of the photo.



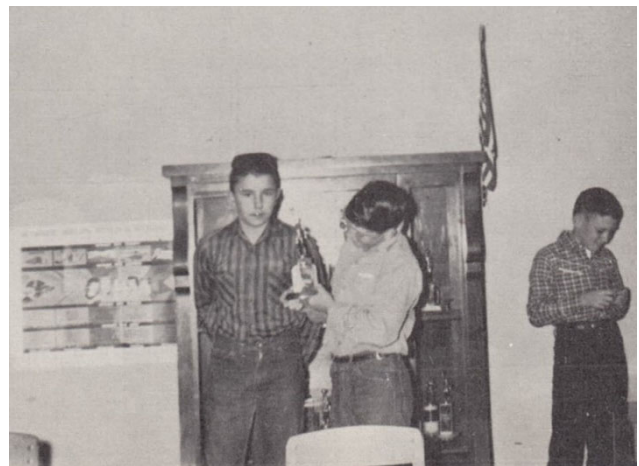
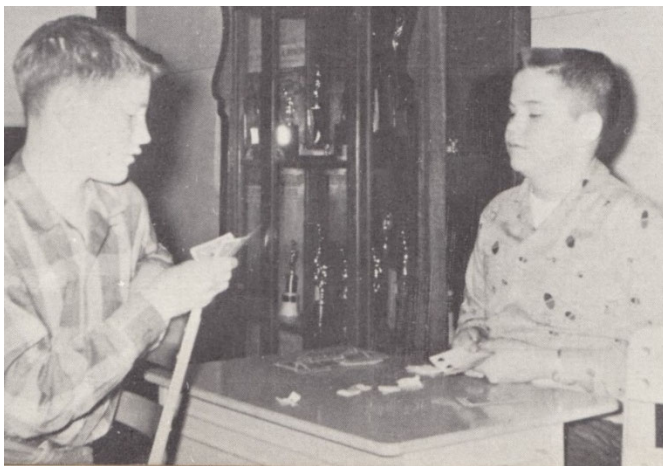
To the right are two color photos of the hallway from a few days before demolition of the school began. They seem to confirm the trophy case location from the older photos above, though it is not certain whether any changes may have been made of the 60+ years between these photos! The left photo is looking south; the right photo, looking north, provides a nice view into what was the 7th-8th grade room in the 1950s and 1960s and the "jog" due to different widths of the grade school and high school hallways.



As mentioned earlier, there were years when trophies were displayed in the library as well; which trophies were where, and why, is not known. The left photo, from the 1955 yearbook, and the right photo, from the 1961 yearbook, show that trophies were displayed in the library over many years. The right photo also shows the door from the east-west hallway into the library.

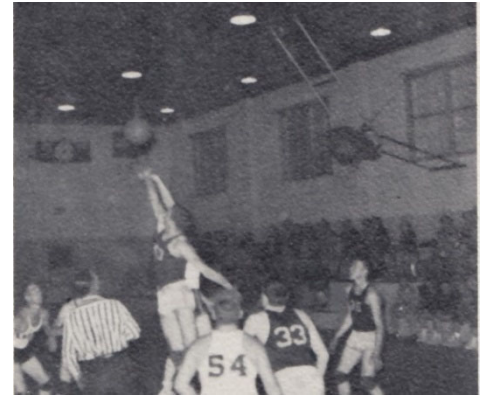


There are also photos that show a smaller free-standing trophy case in one of the classrooms. This was almost certainly the grade school trophy case, always showing up with grade school photos. I suspect that it was in the 7th-8th grade room, because those are the students who would have been the major players on all of the grade school sports teams. A couple of photos are below, both from the 1957 yearbook; the right photo shows a student inspecting one of the trophies.

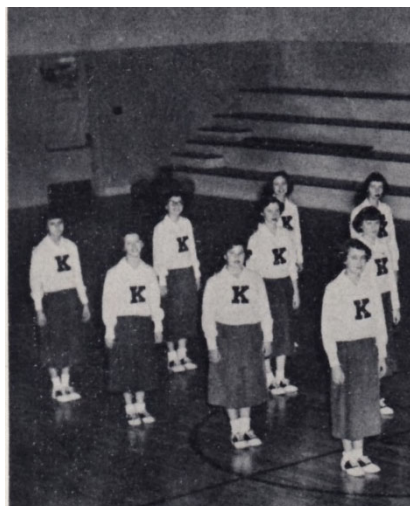


4.3.g. The gymnasium and bleachers

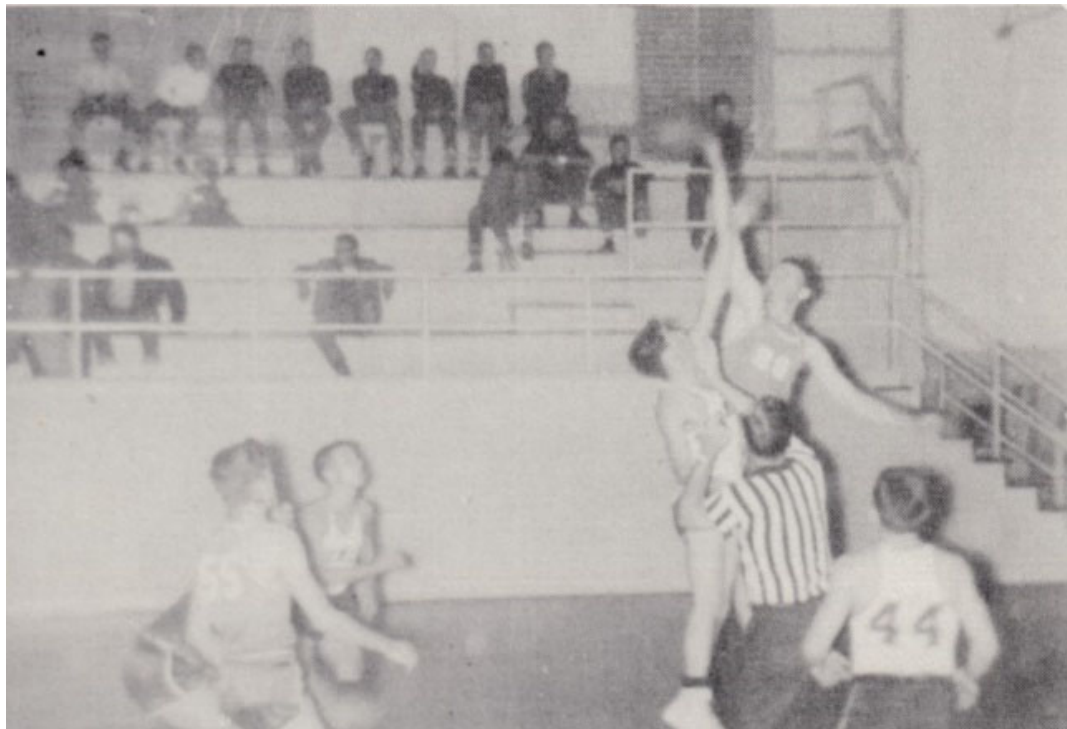
The gym had one door to the outside at the east end of the north side and another at the south end of the east side, just north of the stage. The scoreboard was on the north wall above the exit door at the north end of the gym. There were floor-level bleacher seats on the east side, from the east exit door all the way to the north wall. In the center of those bleachers was a raised score-keepers' table. In addition, there was a third basketball goal above the west bleachers that could be lowered for additional shooting practice. The top left photo below, from the 1956 yearbook, nicely shows the north basketball goal, permanently attached, the north exit door out to the playground area in the early years of the new gymnasium, and the score-keepers' table at the center of the east bleachers. The top right photo, from the 1954 yearbook, shows the scoreboard above the door, the third goal that could be raised or lowered, and the tall windows on the east wall.



The cheerleaders' photo to the left below, from the 1960 yearbook, nicely shows the polished wood gym floor, the score-keepers table, and the steps to get to the higher levels of the east bleachers. The middle photo below, of the pep squad from the 1953 yearbook, shows the north-east corner of the gym, both the door and the steps going up. The right photo below, cropped from a music program photo from the 1957 yearbook, shows the south end of the east bleachers and the exit door out the east side of the gym between the bleachers and the stage. Both east doors were at gym floor-level and higher than the grounds outside; both west doors were at the hallway level and had steps going up/down between the hallway and the gym floor-level.



There were raised bleachers on the west side, high enough to be above the locker rooms and bathrooms below them, with symmetrical steps going up from both the north and south ends. The center of those bleachers is nicely shown in the baseball team photo below, from the 1956 yearbook, including the railing, the steps going up in the middle, and a row of benches at the very top. The bottom photo, also from 1956, shows those bleachers “in action”, including the steps up at the north end.



The photo to the right, again from 1956, nicely shows the door coming into the north end of the gym from the long north-south hallway, with a few steps up to gym floor level, and then steps going up to the north end of the west bleachers. The photos below are two similar views of the south end of the west bleachers, of the doors coming into the gym from in front of the home ec room, the stairs going up, and a view to the top of the bleachers; left photo from 1953, right photo from 1957. The left photo also provides perhaps the best view of the south doors from the hallway into the gym. Entrance to the girls' dressing room is between the girls on the stairs and those doors.



The gym had four large gas heaters with powerful blowers, hung from the ceiling, one in each corner. There are no great photos of these, and always at the very top edge; at the north-west and south-east corners can be seen below, from the 1956 (left) and 1957 (right) yearbooks.



4.3.h. The stage area

At each end of the stage was a door with steps leading up to the back-stage area and/or onto the stage. The only good photo of these is the one to the right, taken a few days before demolition of the school, with lots of leftover items on the stage. In these later days, the basketball goal was mounted to the ceiling and could be raised to allow full view of the stage.



However, in its earlier days, including my school years, the basketball goal was mounted onto the stage floor by a complicated apparatus that allowed it to be removed for use of the gym floor as an auditorium and use of the stage as a place for performances. It had to be loosened from the floor and then tilted and rolled out of the way for use of the stage.

The photo to the right, from the 1954 yearbook, fairly clearly shows the complicated fold-up apparatus and the wheels that allowed it to be moved back-stage. The two photos below, from 1953 (left) and 1956 (right), show the goal apparatus in place and padded, in spite of there being performers on the stage. The goal would not have been removed for performances that were at half-time or between boys' and girls' basketball games.



Here is a photo of the stage in use as a stage rather than a mounting point for the basketball goal, from the 1956 yearbook, with the mounting apparatus removed and stored in the back-stage area somewhere. Note the pop-up stage lights also, which I did not remember at all. There was a significant cellar or crawl-space under the gym, which would have given access to the wiring for these lights. There are school stories about escapades in that “cellar” also. I believe that the wooden box is the conductor’s platform and not meant to cover up the holes for the basketball goal apparatus.

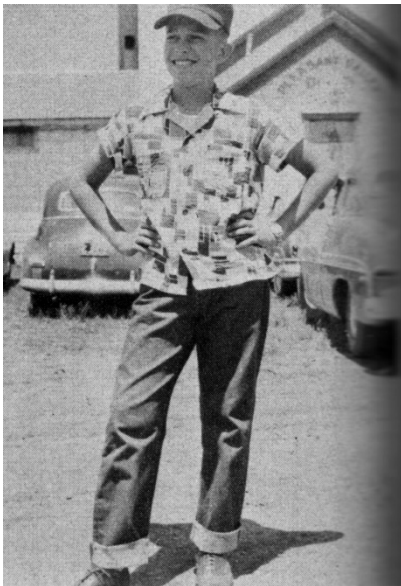


Major uses of the west end of the gymnasium and the stage were for musical performances, plays, and coronations of the various “royalty”. Some early additional photos of these events that nicely show the use of the stage are shown below. The “Ready for Santa” photo again shows the raised lights at the front of the stage. Music group and performance photos generally show the piano on the gym floor at the east end of the stage, presumably to avoid it being lifted onto the stage for these performances. There are many more photos of these kinds of events on the stage in later yearbooks; I have focused on earliest photos here, wherever possible. These yearbook photos are from 1955 (top left), 1954 (top right), 1954 (bottom left), and 1955 (bottom right)

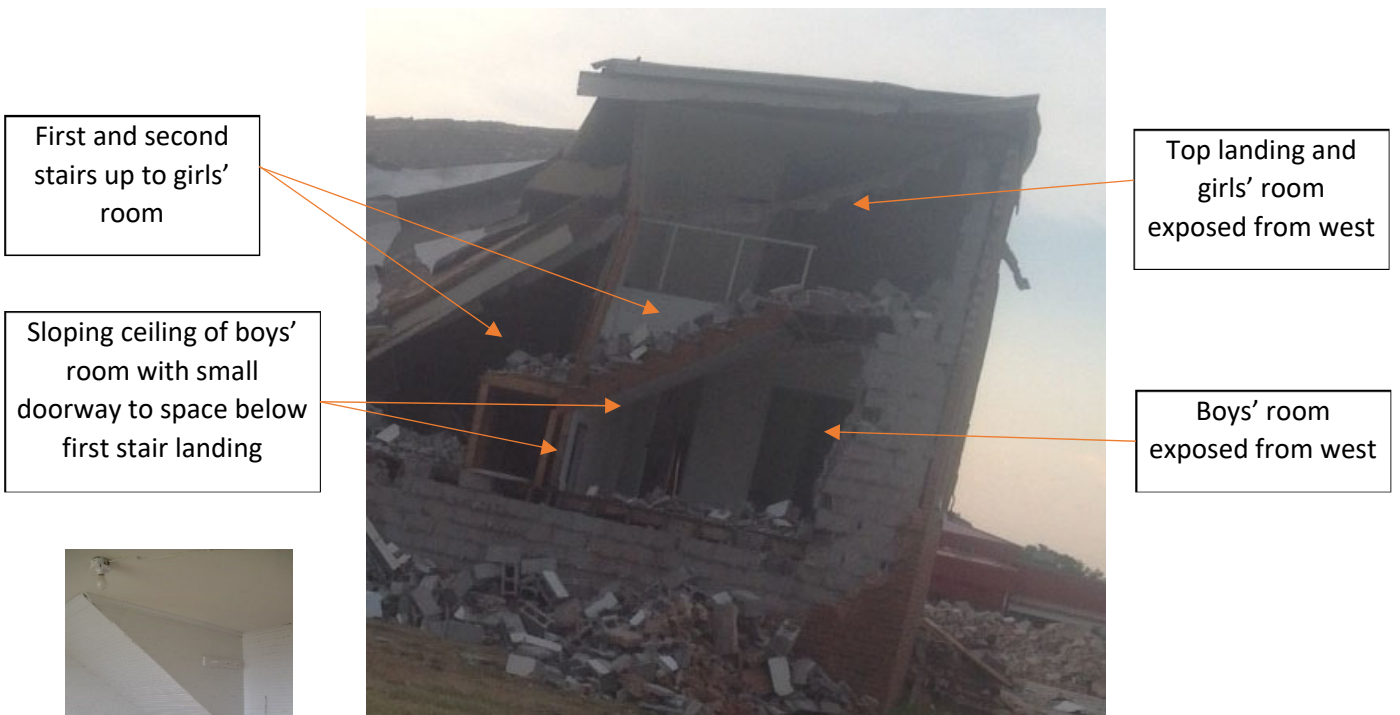


Of interest, the 1952 yearbook boasts photos of the new school from the outside, but “event” photos are still using the original stage at the south end of room B of the red brick school. This may be because the new building was completed in the spring of 1952, barely in time to include a photo in the yearbook, but with most events in that yearbook having still been in the red brick building. Alternatively, it could be that the stage was not completed until a half year later or so, while the other parts of the building were in use. The first photo of the new stage in use is in the 1953 yearbook.

The 1953 yearbook still shows some student photos at the Community Hall, suggesting that some events may have continued to use this building. The building to the left is the Community Hall, and the building to the right is the Pleasant Valley one-room school-house (name visible in left photo), moved next to the Community Hall at some point and likely used as a dressing room, with a wooden connector to the Community Hall.



At the east end of the stage were two small locker/dressing rooms, used for grade school sports and, I believe, for visiting basketball teams. These were very likely also used as dressing rooms for plays and other performances on the stage. On the stage floor level was the boys' room, with an entry door from the north. At the back (south) end of the boys' room was a sloping ceiling, which was the bottom of the steps leading up to the girls' room above. Access to the girls' room was by a stairway at the west end of the boys' room leading halfway up to the south to a small landing, then a second flight of stairs leading up to the east to a landing that led to the girls' room. These features are reasonably clearly visible and marked in the photos below, taken just before and then during demolition of the school in 2015.



Boys' room looking north-west with storage area under stairs

West wall between boys' room and back-stage area

Here is a view of the east end of the stage from the south, showing two windows on south wall of the boys' room and one window on the south wall of girls' room. This suggests changes to windows at some point, because the early (1954) view of this part of the school shows two windows on the east wall of the stage area and none on the south wall. My best guess is that the two dressing rooms east of the stage may not have been there originally but were added a few years later, perhaps with the east wall windows removed, perhaps not. [I am still on the hunt for good more recent photos of the south end of the east wall of the gymnasium to see what windows were there at the time of the first photo below.](#)