

IMAGES

...THEN AND NOW

From the Indian Hill Historical Society



Buckingham Lodge-1861

History Comes Alive at the Little Red Schoolhouse

The Indian Hill Historical Society conveys local history to the public in myriad ways. A major example of the Society's outreach is the annual "One-Room Schoolhouse Experience", provided every winter for approximately 300 fourth grade students from three local schools (Indian Hill Elementary, Cincinnati Country Day, and St. Gertrude). The children "step back in time" to a 19th century school room for a living history session.

As the students arrive in groups, they are ushered into the quaint one-room Washington School with the original historic bell ringing. The room is set up in a fashion reminiscent of yesteryear, with pictorials surrounding the room and adages on the board meant to guide youths in correct behavior and moral character.

The schoolmarm relates the story of the early settlers of southwest Ohio, and in particular of Indian Hill. Fascinating information is brought to life with stories, illustrations, antiques, and theatrical renditions of activities in schools of an earlier time. Then, led by a peer, all students engage in classroom calisthenics, following the 1800s belief that a vigorous body promoted a vigorous mind. The fourth graders learn the differences between schools in the 19th and 21st

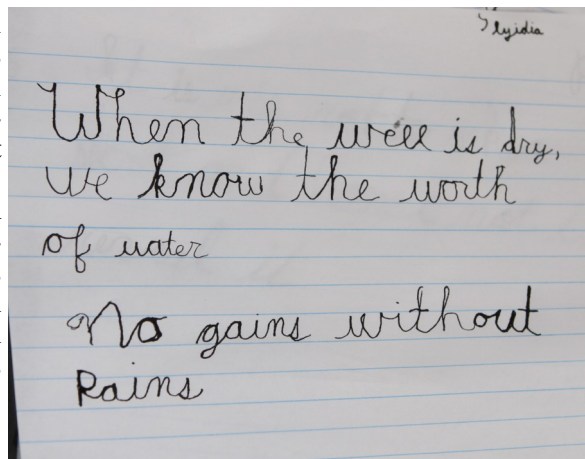
centuries – for example, woodstoves were used for heat; students carried their own mid-day meals in lunch buckets; and corporal punishment was common discipline.

Following the history session, the students are directed to five different stations, each of which encompasses one aspect of an 1874 school day. First the students practice public speaking while reciting selections from reproduced McGuffey's Readers. Then they write in cursive, dipping old fashioned pens with nibs into liquid ink, and copying maxims such as "Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise." Arithmetic is the focus of the next station, where word problems are solved on individual slate boards with chalk. Then the fourth graders proceed to a table filled with intriguing household items from long ago. Students are challenged to guess the use of these items. They are always mesmerized by the bull pull and the rug beater. Then they move again to the "marbles station", where they pair up and play together, mastering the art of flicking the spheres towards their opponent's targets.

When the program concludes, students are asked what they would have liked and disliked about 19th century schools. As the discussion wraps up, each child receives an apple from the teacher, courtesy of the local Kroger's. A round of applause is given to the Indian Hill Historical Society Board and parent volunteers who have led the activities at the various stations.

The Schoolmarm instructing students where to stand during their recitation.

The "One-Room Schoolhouse Experience" has been awarded both the Griffin Yeatman Historical Achievement Award and the History Outreach Award from the Ohio Association of Historical Societies and Museums. This memorable field trip for fourth graders occurred for the 22nd time in January 2014, with classes visiting the Little Red Schoolhouse over a two week period. Once again, local students gained an appreciation for area history and the community's heritage.



Student's interpretation of maxims.