

Lime Rock School

by Lynne Belluscio

I've been coaxing folks who attended the small rural LeRoy schools to write down what they remember about their school days. Marguerite Greene sent me a wonderful narrative, which I have edited for this article. The whole piece will be in the first edition of the 2011 *Historical Society's newsletter*. A few other folks have promised to send me their remembrances and I hope others will follow suit. Here is a small part of what Marguerite sent:

I entered Lime Rock School for the first grade in 1935. Although some students were allowed to start school at age 5, if their parents insisted, I had to wait until I was 6, because the teachers were my aunts and they did not believe a child was ready for school until age 6. For my first four grades I had my Aunt Lucretia, whom I never called aunt, but always Miss Rogers. For the following three grades I had my Aunt Mame (Camilla), whom I called Miss Rogers until she was married and then it was Mrs. Mancuso. My Aunt Lucretia was a pincher, if you needed discipline she might pinch you. My Aunt Mame in the upper grades was very even tempered and seldom used any discipline other than speaking to you in front of the whole class. In those days, one would hesitate to go home and complain about a happening at school because the punishment at home would be worse than it would be in school.

I remember that the building was actually one large room separated by a huge rolling partition to make it a two-room school. The first four grades were in the east room known as the little room and the upper four grades were in the west side, known as the big room. The little room had a stove in the back of the room and the west room had a stove in the front of the room. I believe the stoves burned coal, as I remember the coal shuttle setting beside the stone. There was a couple, Peter and Lena Paganin, who were known as the janitors. Mr. Paganin was in charge of keeping the fires going and Mrs. Paganin came by after school each day



This picture was taken in the North Woods with a Brownie Box Camera probably when I was in the 7th grade. Top from left to right: Agnes Carli, my brother, Edwin Rogers, Donald Mancuso, Johanna Stefani, Minnie Cory, Ruth Stefani Bottom. Eugene Mancuso, Margaret Cavey, Francis Stefani, George Pursel and Richard Scheg.

and swept the floors, emptied waste baskets, etc. The school did have electric lights. In addition, there were several windows in the building, which also helped make the lighting very good. Each afternoon at the end of the school day the teachers would adjust the shades on the windows (the shades were in two sections, lower and upper) so that each one was placed at exactly the same dimensions.

Although the building had two front entrances, the students always entered from the back of the building, which was a long entrance way across the back of the building with outside steps on each side. As I remember it, the coal bin was also in that area. Those in the small room entered from the east side and those in the upper grades entered from the west side. Coats, hats and boots were also kept in these entrances. They were called cloak rooms.

There were no bathrooms, but there were two outhouses, one for the boys and one for the girls. The boys outhouse was sold at auction and purchased by Joe Stella. He remarked that the girls' was larger and had more holes. The front entrances each had a small entrance room where the water fountains were for drinking

water for each room. (Water in Limerock was condemned so we could not drink from the pump located to the east of the driveway into the school yard.)

The teacher in the little room had a small bell that she dinged at the beginning of the day, when recess was over and at the beginning of the afternoon session. The big room had a large school bell used to alert students. (Items inside the school were also sold at auction and Joe Stella also bought that large bell.) The bell rang at 9:00 am for the beginning of the school day, there was a 15 minutes recess in the morning and another in the middle of the afternoon, with an hour for lunch.

Some students walked home for lunch, while others carried their lunch. We carried our lunch in paper sacks. Often our sandwiches consisted of two slices of white bread with salad dressing for filling. The little room had a big table with clay that we could

play with during recess.

In the summertime we went outside to play and it was generally soft ball. We also played "kick the can" where someone would kick the can away and while the person who was it was retrieving it, all others went to hide. He or she would have to retrieve the can and then look for those who had hidden. There was also a swing set. During the winter we played games inside, such as toss the bean bag into a waste paper basket and musical chairs. Before and after school we often had snowball fights, boys against girls.

In early spring we had a clean-up day where we were required to pick up stones in the play yard. On May day each year all grades went for a walk down Church Road to pick May flowers in the North Woods. I remember there was a pump part way down Church Road with a tin dipper to get a drink of water. (to be continued in the newsletter).

YOU WANT 'EM...

INDOOR OUTDOOR

BANNERS

LP Graphics WE MAKE 'EM

one church st. le roy, ny 585-768-2201 M-F 8-5

- Graduation
- Welcome Home
- Birthday
- Retirement
- Anniversary
- Birth Announcement
- School/Club Event
- Fundraiser
- ANY OCCASION!