

Washington Grade School

Presentation by Vernonia Pioneer
Museum Association

January 25, 2012

The First Schools

- First school in area was a one room cabin on the Parker homestead (Heather Park area now)
- First school in actual town of Vernonia was on hill where Stony Point Road joins Keasey Road

First School in Vernonia



Tucker School (near Cedar Ridge)



FIRST Washington School

- Elementary school plus some high school age students. For formal high school education, students had to board at schools in the valley.
- When it was torn down, the materials were salvaged by members of the Natal Grange to build their hall.

First Washington School



Grade School - Vernonia Ore
1911

Washington Grade School

- Built in 1930. Original budget was \$75,000 but final cost was \$90,000.
- Half of the students in Vernonia attended WGS, the others went to Lincoln.
- Vernonia High School was built in 1922 on A Street with financial support from Oregon American Lumber Company.
- The “new” high school was built in 1952.

First Vernonia High School

Built in 1922 – this is May Day in the 1940s



Second Washington School

(Mill worker housing in view left rear)



Washington Grade School Vernonia - OR

Postcard of the New WGS – 1930s



View of WGS during mill years



Future VHS Class of 1947



Vernonia High Class of '47, first grade at Washington Grade School.

WGS Staff 1948



Washington Grade School staff, 1948, Vernonia, Oregon — Seated: Matilda Bergerson, Velma Ramsey Christenson, Mercedes Larson Proehl, Marian Schwartz, Norma Callister, Reva Jo Hughes, Elaine Bristlin (or Charlotte Hilts), Evelyn Heath, Mrs. Steele, Evelyn Hearing Holce, Dorothy Sandon. Middle: Maude Kobow, Mabel Blackwell, Pearl Wilkerson, Lenore Kizer, Ruby Powell (or Rose DeMacon Steen), Lulubelle Fullerton, Jessie Reese, Grace Cantwell. Back: Paul Gordon, Irma Chance, Margaret Brockhouse, Mabel Graves, Darryl Proehl.

WGS – 8th Grade 1945



Vernonia, OR — Washington Grade School — 8th grade — 1945

1. Barbara Brown, Arlene Kirk, Joanne McDonald, Mary Jane Armstrong, Darlene Harms, Pearl Siedelman, Beverly Herrin, Orpha Coburn.
2. Alva Mae harris, Genevieve Schwab, Marilyn Graves, Dolores Johnson, Maxine Hartwick, Alice George, LaRena Cantwell, Bill Sword.
3. Mrs. Haller, Bill Wilcoxen, John Newton, ?, Richard Lalli, Donald Shepard, Calvin Bass, Einar "Bud" Koski, Bobby Ray.

1950 – WGS 2nd in State



VERNONIA EAGLE, MARCH 16, 1950 — WASHINGTON GRADE SCHOOL, SECOND PLACE IN STATE
BACK: OWEN HIGLEY, BOBBY BORDERS, GORDON FULTON, COACH PAUL GORDON, BILL BRAUN,
SPEED LUSBY, WAYNE THOMAS; CENTER: HENRY BASS, FRANCIS CROWSTON, HENRY HIGLEY,
KEN NANSON; KNEELING: LEE FAULK AND ALBERT FULLER, TEAM CAPTAIN.
FAULK HOLDS STATE SECOND PLACE PLAQUE. FULLER HAS COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP TROPHY.



The grade school band directed by William B. Johnson will present a concert at the Washington school at 2:30 p.m. Sunday which 14 selections will feature a wide variety of music. For the past several weeks, the band

has been working especially on Latin American rhythms and three types, the Tango, the Samba and Mexican music will be included in the repertoire.

The band is composed of 56 students from the 5th through the 8th grades. They appeared

earlier this year at Clatskanie at the Columbia county teachers' institute and were very well received.

There will be no charge for Sunday's concert and it is hoped there will be a good crowd both

as an encouragement to the band and as an opportunity for the people of Vernonia to see the excellent work they are doing. They will be appearing in their new uniforms, also. Names of the band members on page 3.

WGS Band in Parade



Trombone section: Mary Steen, Donnie Pearson, Roy Reynolds, Linn Bolmeier and Sam Hearing. Rodney Callister is on the sax. On tuba is Earl Reynolds and in front of him is Grant Bowerman. Standing next to Bill Johnson is Delbert Bush. This photo courtesy of Jim Eckland. Other photo of same truck going other direction is courtesy of Noma Callister Olsen. Year guesses are '55-'56-'57.