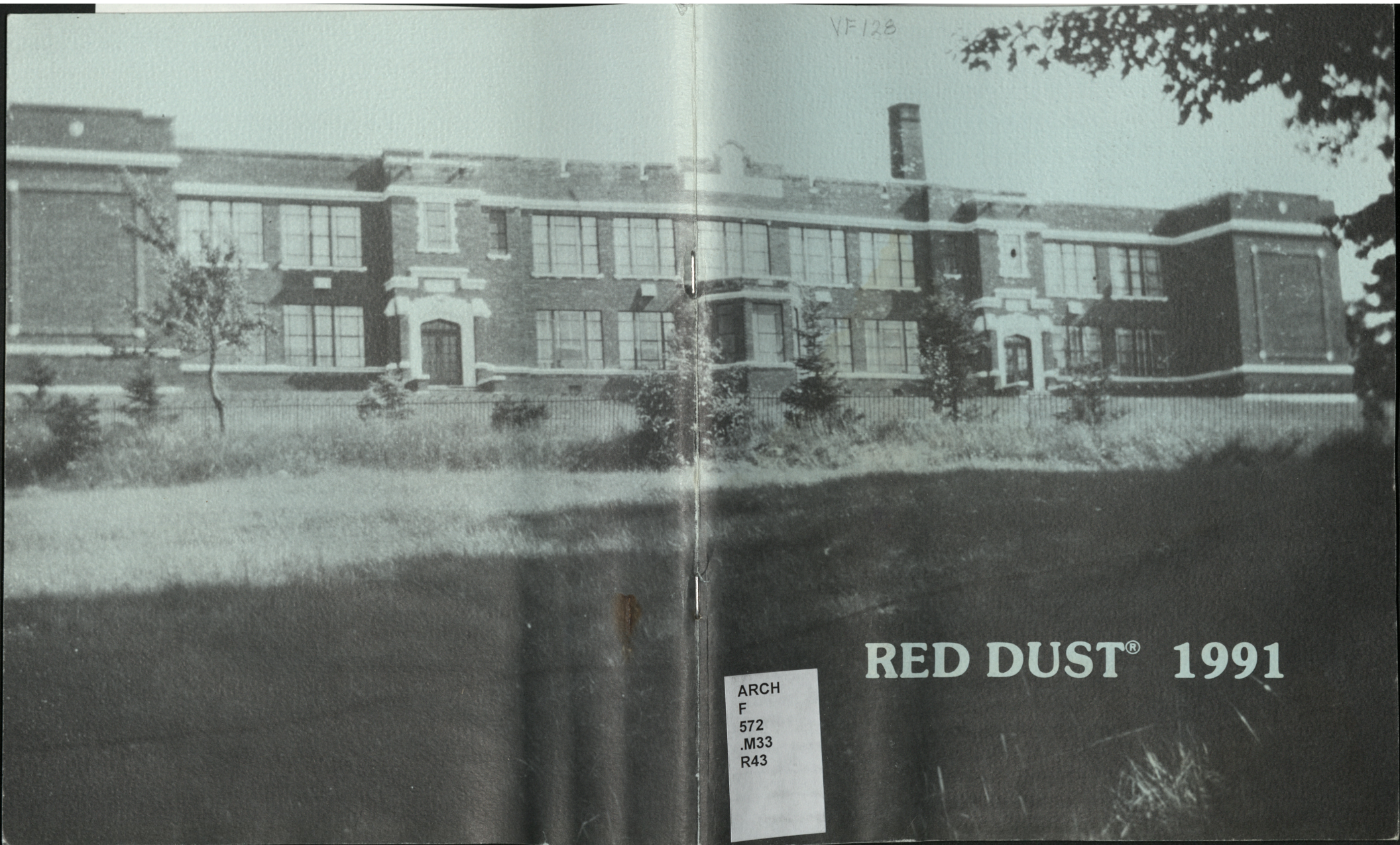


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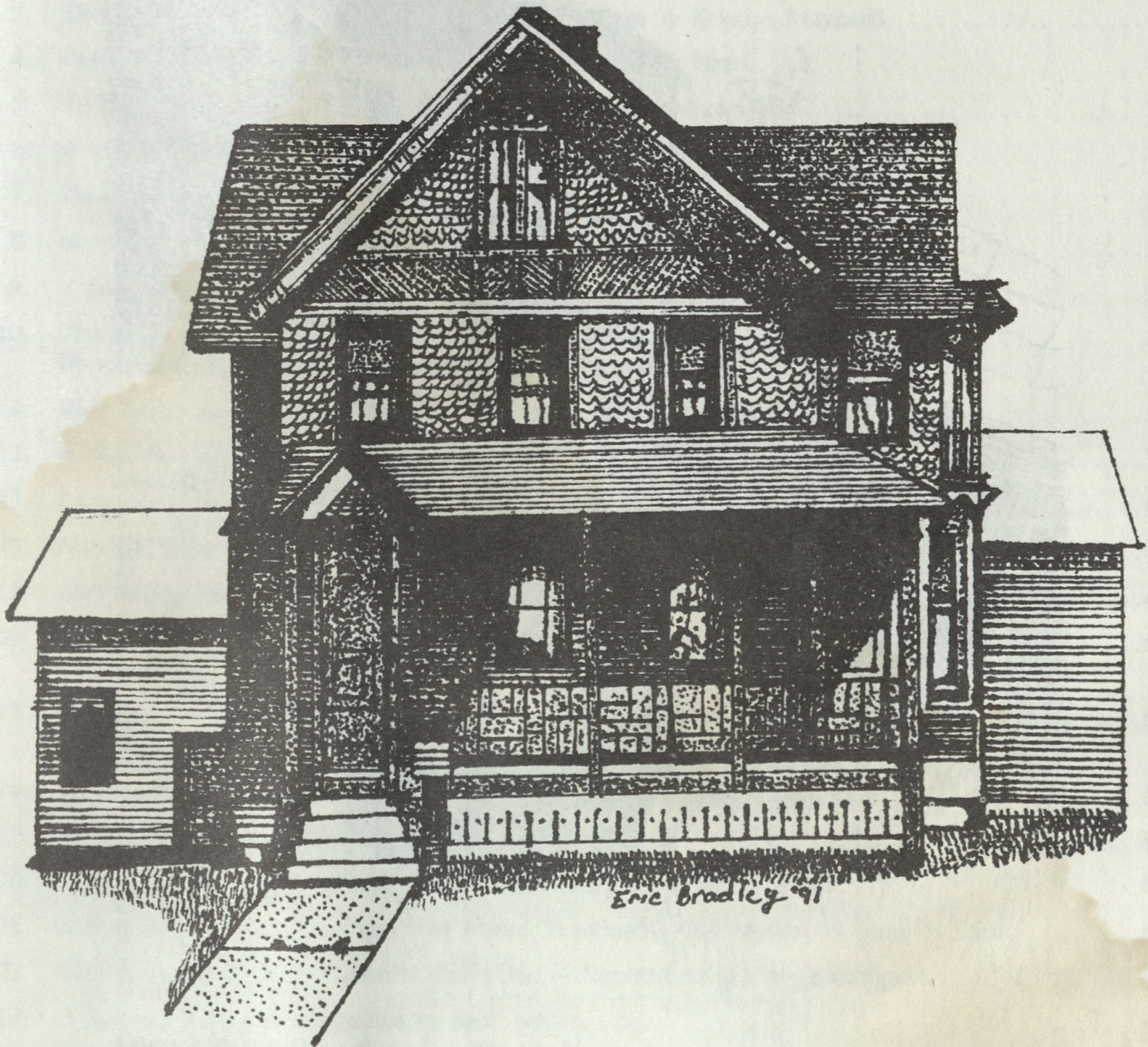
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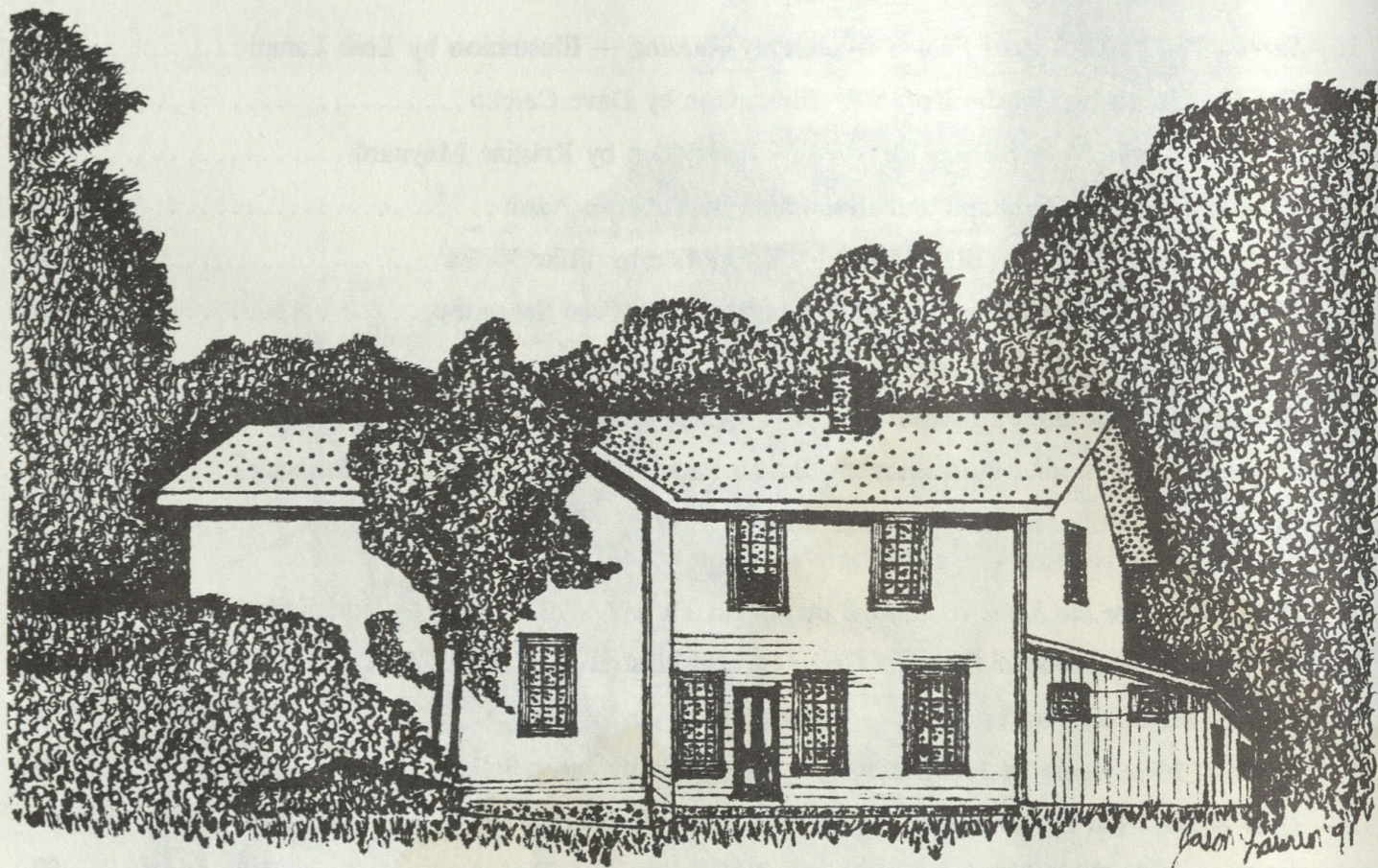
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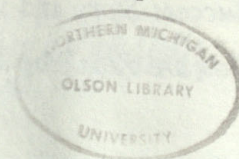
Emily Hill 1991

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This year the National Mine School is celebrating its 75th anniversary. The 1991 RED DUST stories are the reminiscences of the National Mine School family. RED DUST, our integrated curriculum project, continues to provide a firm bond of friendship between our school and community. The 1991 RED DUST staff would like to extend sincere thanks to everyone who contributed in any way to the production of this book.



SURROUNDED BY DEDICATED PEOPLE

"I felt that during my whole career at National Mine I was surrounded with a group of dedicated people. Teachers, support staff, parents, Board of Education, and the administration. They could all be counted on to give that little extra. That is one of the main ingredients to success, and I was proud to be associated with them," said Mr. Ruesing.

My grandpa, Francis Ruesing, was associated with the National Mine School from 1961 through 1987. He held several teaching positions at National Mine: he taught sixth grade, then coached baseball and basketball, worked as a remedial reading teacher, and he taught history, economics, and science.

To prepare for his teaching career Mr. Ruesing went to Northern Michigan University where he received his Bachelor of Science and later a Master's Degree in Administration.

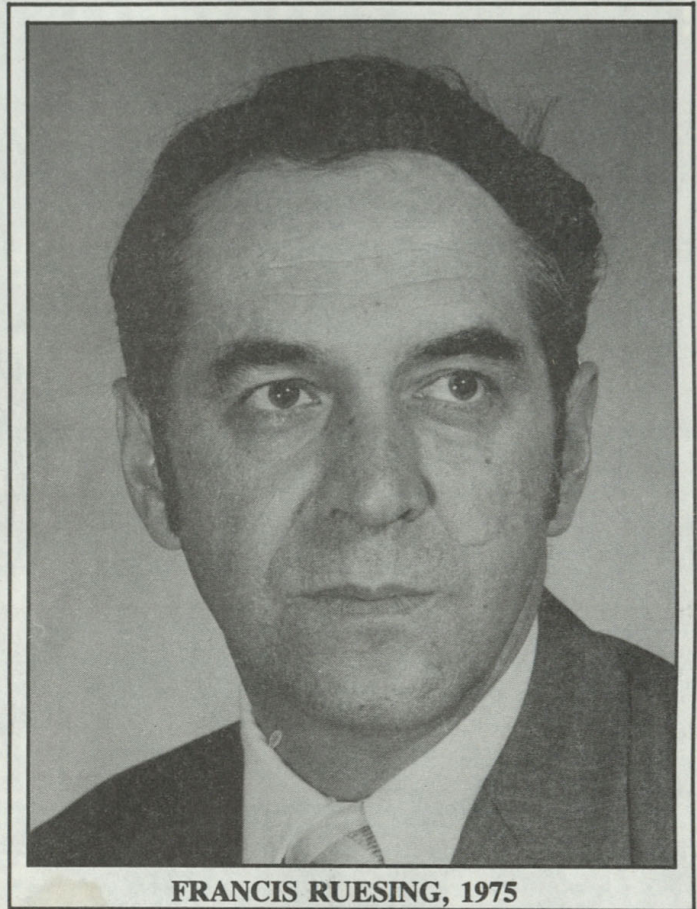
Some of my grandpa's fondest memories of his teaching career were his sixth grade science experiments which included raising chickens and erupting volcanoes.

One of the changes in my grandfather's job over the years was "the National Mine School District merged with Ishpeming Township, and Champion and Ely School Districts. The economy of the area began to expand, the numbers of students increased to where our school enrollment more than doubled what it had been in the early 60's and the teachers' support staff also grew in size," he stated.

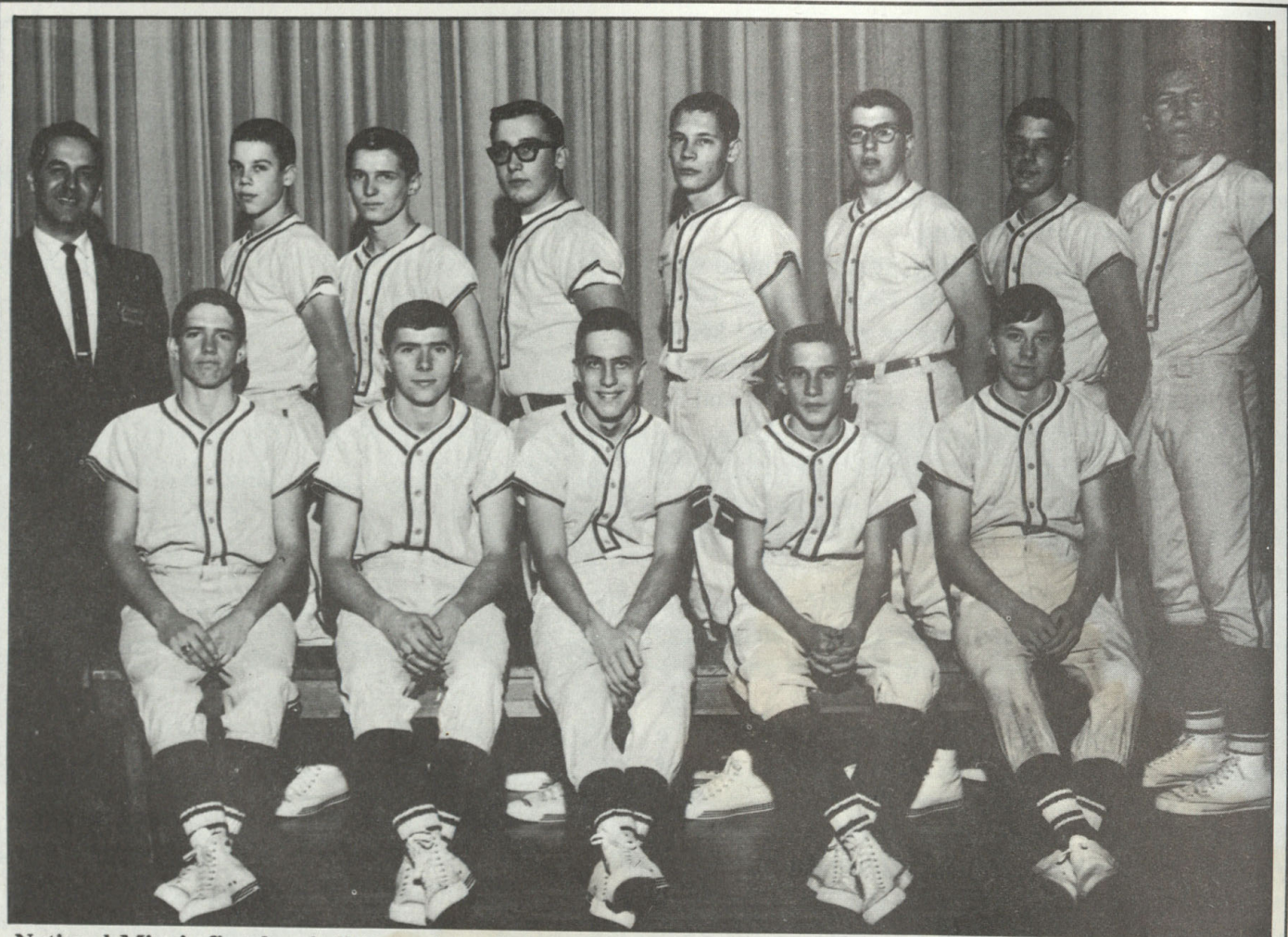
Many humorous events happened during my grandfather's interesting career. He remembered when he was told the school could have a baseball team at National Mine, but they needed a field to play on. Consequently, the students and my grandfather spent the summer clearing a field that was located in the southeast end of the school lot. They cut trees and pulled the stumps and hauled them away. They sawed the wood and removed the rocks. Some of the boulders were so big that they had to go down to the Hercules Powder Mill to get some dynamite to blast them out. They had the County come in with a grader and Mr. Magnuson, one of the citizens of the community, spent a day grading the field. They borrowed snowfence from wherever they could find it, mostly from abandoned fields. He said they built a backstop with chicken wire that Gene Benvenue, one of the baseball players, had donated from his dad's shop. "I guess we were all proud of that field, all except the visiting team. They just never knew where the chuckholes were or where an unexpected rock may appear," stated my grandfather.

The atmosphere at National Mine has always been friendly. My grandfather described his co-workers as dedicated people. The teachers, support staff, parents, Board of Education, and administration could all be counted on to give more than what was asked. This willingness was one of the main ingredients to success of the National Mine School.

Mr. Ruesing went on to become the principal at the National Mine School. He recalled when he and his



FRANCIS RUESING, 1975



National Mine's first baseball team (seated, from left): Dave Cloninger, Bill Ostola, Steven Hill, Glenn Sjo-holm, and James Liubakka. Standing, from left, are Coach Francis Ruesing, Steven Swanson, Roger Kari, Steven Magnuson, Leon Lampi, Dennis Grove, Victor Cox, and Gene Aho.

secretary Mary Johnson got locked in the large walk-in safe by accident. Visiting with teachers, custodians, and cooks during the day made it a family-like atmosphere.

Some of Mr. Ruesing's greatest challenges of his career were, "How to deal with a large number of students that we were getting, and trying to provide them with an education that would make them competitive in the job market, or whatever they felt they were going into," he emphasized.

Mr. Ruesing explained some of the big changes in the National Mine building were the removal of the stage and auditorium. He said, "They were a part of the National Mine School for such a long time." Another room was needed because the number of students increased, and a lunch room which was also used as a multi-purpose room was added. Previously, Mr. Ruesing said, students ate lunch in the hallways, and the cooking was done in what is now part of Mr. Keto's shop room. During his tenure as principal, the district also added a new elementary wing, which housed the kindergarten, first, second, and third grades.

Some of Mr. Ruesing's fondest memories involved the *Red Dust* project, and extracurricular activities. He was a main ingredient in the *Red Dust* development here at the National Mine School. Mr. Ruesing felt that

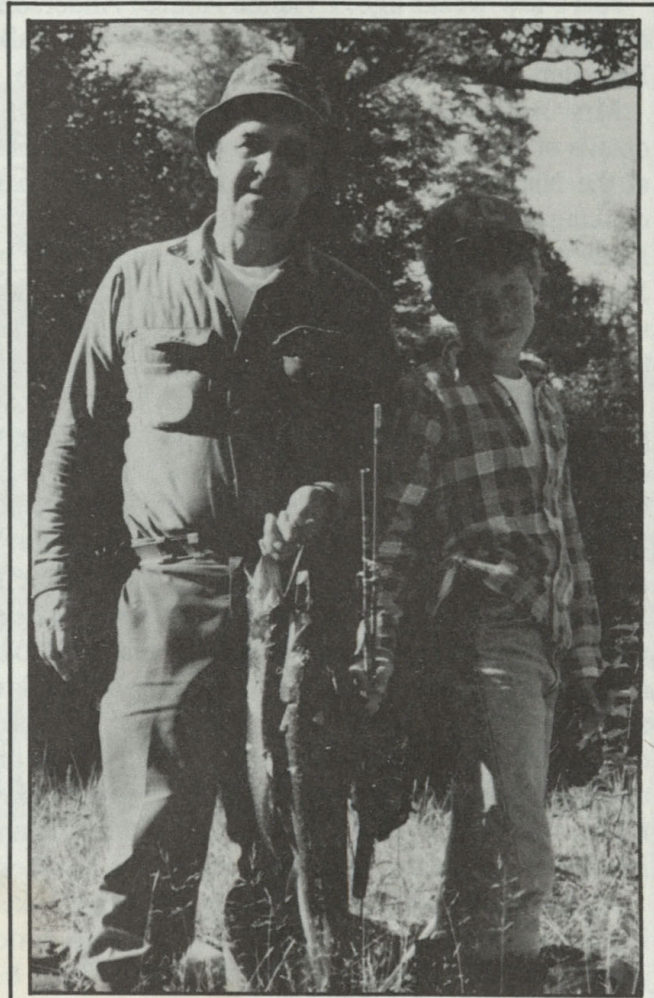
this project was an exciting situation to be in especially being part of its birth and evolvment. He thought it was good for the students, good for teachers, as well as the staff and the rest of the community. He said, "It gave us all a look at what had taken place. As students you began to dig into the backgrounds of parents, grandparents, and great-great-grandparents, and these kids found that these ordinary people, people that they thought were ordinary, were not really so ordinary. They were special. They had participated in a number of events — world, national, local. Students learned first hand about being at the strikes of the 1940's and 1950's, the Depression of the early 30's, as well as the wars of World War I and II, Korea, and Vietnam. These men also worked in the fields and the forests and mines of the area. The women raised families that we were all proud of," he emphasized. He recalled that the trips to Washington, D.C., with 40-plus eighth graders, and winning at the History Day were highlights of his career.

After his many years at National Mine, Mr. Ruesing became superintendent of the NICE District in 1988. His career in the NICE Community Schools district spanned twenty-six years.

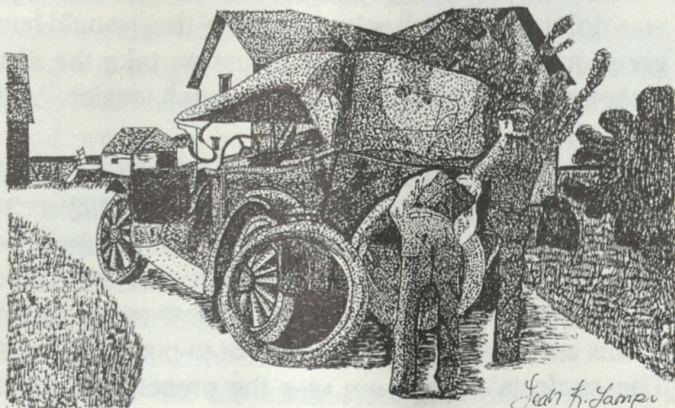
Mr. Ruesing said he still meets with his co-workers or former students, and he gets to visit and talk about what has been taking place since they left school.

Mr. Ruesing's career in education has been interesting and worthwhile. He felt, "The people of National Mine were supportive of the school district education system, and most regarded education and the high priority of their children's development."

— Jeremy Ruesing



Mr. Ruesing with grandson Louie in 1984. Mr. Ruesing's children and grandchildren have attended National Mine School.



THE BEST MEALS

Just a few weeks ago, I visited Andrea Anderson at her home in Green Creek Location. As soon as I walked in, I thought I had walked into the past.

Mrs. Anderson was ready and willing to share all the details of her experiences as a cook for twenty-one years at the National Mine School. At first when she started cooking at the school she was unsure because she did not know much about cooking for a large number of people. She had taken a course in New York City on food but she said, "that isn't cooking." She didn't know how to cook that vast amount of food so she had to learn it, and she did.

Mrs. Anderson chose the job as cook because she had just gone through the Great Depression. She was offered this job by Selma Kroon who was on the National Mine School Board and knew she might be interested. Mrs. Kroon said, "Andrea I know you want this job." Mrs. Anderson stated, "I took it (the job) cause I like kids."

She cooked many kinds of dinners for the students at the National Mine School. The students came back for second and third helpings, for they were allowed to have as many servings as they wanted. Good home cooking including stews, meat pies, biscuits, chicken, and turkeys that had to bake overnight. When she served turkey, she made everything a person might be served at a Thanksgiving dinner, potatoes, stuffing, vegetables and dessert.

Mrs. Anderson offered baked beans which baked during the night. Everyone agreed they were so good! The janitor was nice enough to turn the oven off for her. The pans were so big that they just fit in the oven, and they were very hard to clean then! She also made homemade donuts which she fried one-by-one. When the students walked by the window, they could smell the donuts. Mrs. Anderson couldn't resist, so she often gave them a taste. When Mr. Lindberg became the principal he said, "Mrs. Anderson could you refuse each kid that passes the window? Do not give them a donut."



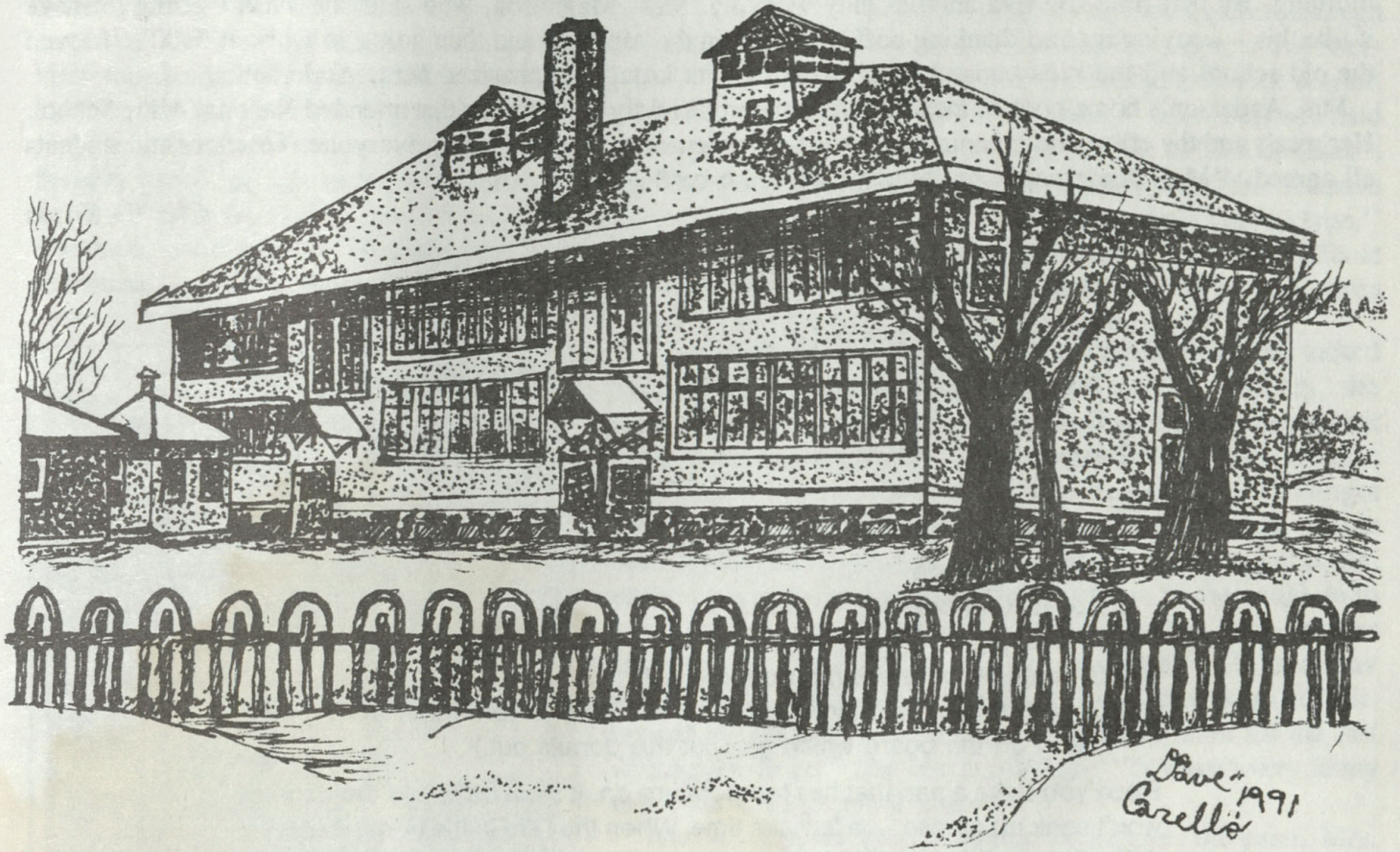
Over the years, many people enjoyed Mrs. Anderson's school cooking.



Andrea Anderson in 1950 (left) and in 1990.

Mrs. Anderson stated that the hardest part of her job was doing all the dishes by hand! "If they would have given me a dishwasher or a helper to take the dirty dishes the job would have been much easier," she emphasized.

The hot lunch program began as a federal project. The school received a certain amount of money every month from the government. The cooks had to break down what was put into the meals in an effort to cut back on expenses. Guidelines stated how many pounds of this and how many pounds of that to put in the meal. The students' lunchroom was the present art room,



One of the earlier National Mine schools.

and later on the students ate in the halls.

During her time working there were many interesting events. She once cut off her finger in a mixer. When she got it caught in the mixer, Mr. Gleason was in the shop room, and he didn't know how to disengage the mixer. He shut off the current running to the mixer, but the finger was still in the machine. However, someone ran down to the bus garage to get Otto, her husband, who was a bus driver. Otto came in and looked at the mixer by kneeling in front of her. She was crying and the tears were going down on him and so was the blood. He pulled the mixer apart and retrieved her finger. Mr. Bath brought her to the hospital where the finger was stitched back on.

Mrs. Anderson said the biggest responsibility of her job was to order food. She did her ordering from the stores in National Mine — Annala's and Ernell & Solka's. She bought food from both of them. One day she bought from one, the next day the other.

"I loved the old auditorium and Mrs. Gleason's plays," said Mrs. Anderson. "I would forget myself

THE BEST MEALS

entirely." She said, "There will never be a place as good as here." She also loved the basketball games.

The players were transported in cars to the games then, and they might return as late as one o'clock in the morning. By that time she had another lady working, Mrs. Magnuson, who said she wasn't going to make it like this — staying up and drinking coffee to 3:00 in the morning and then going to work at 5:00! "I loved the old school and the kids cause I liked to work with kids," emphasized Mrs. Anderson.

Mrs. Anderson's home-cooked meals are remembered vividly by everyone that attended National Mine School. Her meals and the effort and planning it took to make them were appreciated by everyone. Teachers and students all agreed, "Mrs. Anderson's hot lunches were the best!"

— *Charlie Kroon*

ANDREA ANDERSON'S DONUT RECIPE

Beat

- 4 Tlbs. margarine (marked on stick)
- 1 C. sugar
- 3 eggs

Add

- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 scant tsp. soda
- 3 tsp. baking powder
- 1 C. nutmeg
- 1 C. mashed potatoes (no added oleo)
- 3 C. flour (and if your more but 1 cup will be right for further mixing and using on the board which you cut the donuts out.)

Hope you have a pan that has temperature on. It must be hot so the donuts won't soak up grease — a few at a time. When they are in the oil or whatever (I like Crisco Oil), use 2 forks to turn, as necessary. Drain on paper towels on sheet pan — standing them on edge, one against the other.

“THAT WONDERFUL PLACE”

When I showed up for my interview, Mrs. Alice (Annala) Johnson was all smiles. As I walked in to the kitchen I saw a large cardboard box with papers, report cards, folders, and drawings strewn all over the table. When she told me that these were all of the papers and projects that she saved from kindergarten through her senior year in high school, “At that wonderful place,” as she referred to National Mine, I knew this interview was going to be something special. Mrs. Johnson was literally a fountain of knowledge about the school.

“I started when I was four years old, but it wasn’t really legal for me to be there,” Mrs. Johnson said giggling. She spent two years in kindergarten, somewhat like the Young Fives do now. One of Mrs. Johnson’s favorite grade school teachers was Mrs. Marjorie Sundberg. Mrs. Sundberg left an impact on Mrs. Johnson because, “She was young, and I think we all liked her because she wasn’t the usual older school teacher type,” she stated. One incident that stood out in Mrs. Johnson’s mind was when it came time to exchange gifts at Christmas time, the two had each other’s name. When Mrs. Johnson received the little book of dime store paperdolls that she had longed for, that left a mark in her memory that she still remembered today.



Mrs. Johnson (holding the ball) when she was in grade school with her classmates (from left): Carol (Lukkari) Lawrence, Marlene (Kaminen) Flack, and Marlene (Korpi) Anderson.

When I asked Mrs. Johnson if she had any more stories tucked away in her memory about her grade school teachers, she responded, “Oh, we were in such awe of them that I can’t think of anything that was funny.” But one incident that Mrs. Johnson didn’t think was very funny then, was the time when she forgot her mittens inside the school when it was time to go outside after lunch. However, when she asked Mr. Annala, her uncle, and the principal of the school at that time, if she could go to get them, he said, “No way.” So she sneaked back upstairs claiming to “have to go to the bathroom.” On her way downstairs, “Mr. Annala stopped me and there were my mittens in my pocket. So I sat in the office and cried for the rest of the noon hour.” She said laughingly, “It wasn’t very funny then, but I laugh about it now.”

When I asked her how discipline varied over the years, Mrs. Johnson said that supervision changed quite a bit from when she was a student. One time in particular that came to mind was when she and her friends got banged up riding double on a bike. “We could wander all over the community during noon time,” she stated. When I heard that noon time was a full hour long, compared to our half hour, I was curious to find out how long the classes were. “We started at nine, and we had an hour at noon. Then we continued classes at one o’clock until four.”

When I asked what the students did to amuse themselves during noon time, she responded, laughing, that they would go sliding down the bluff in the back of the school. “No wonder our snowsuits wore out. That was our main noon time occupation,” she stated kind of proudly. “And everyone back then wore woolen snowpants, and those would be drying on the radiator all afternoon. They always smelled terrible,” she said laughing.

Extracurriculars took up a large part of Mrs. Johnson’s high school career. She took part in cheerleading and forensics. Forensics at that time were very different than today. Mrs. Johnson told me that she won an award for an oration on the Korean War. “‘The war in Korea is nothing but a bloody stalemate,’ see, I still remember parts of it,” she said. As Mrs. Johnson and I kept reminiscing, she was reminded that even though her hands shook as she gave that speech, she later won first place in the contest. When I asked her if extra-

curriculars took up a major chunk of time at National Mine, she told me about the wonderful operettas that she was a part of, and ironic as it seems, Mrs. Johnson directed the last Senior Class Play from the last high school graduating class from National Mine. That was, of course, twenty-one years later, and times and interests had changed quite a bit.

When I asked her about dress codes, she responded by telling me that it was really a strict time, and that the principal and the teachers ran a real tight ship. The girls had to wear dresses or skirts and that was it, no slacks! The boys could not wear jeans unless they were dress jeans. Not many students fooled around back then, unless they were looking to being suspended.

When I brought up the topic of her favorite subject in school, that led to the teacher she enjoyed the most: "Mr Thomas. I respected him a lot, mainly because he was a really fun, happy-go-lucky type of teacher. I wasn't the best student in his class, but he made science more fun." Another teacher Mrs. Johnson enjoyed while she was still a student was the English teacher, Lydia Dighera, because of the kind of assignments she handed out. One incident stood out in Mrs. Johnson's mind. "We had to write about losing the championship basketball game at Houghton, and she read my paper to the class. Her voice started to quiver like she was going to cry," she said with a laugh. "I thought it was pretty good."

Another thing Mrs. Johnson seemed to enjoy during high school at National Mine was the yearly parties that the classes gave for each other. Every class from seventh through twelfth hosted one party a year. "The younger classes would get Columbus Day or Lincoln's Birthday and the high schoolers had holidays like Halloween and Christmas," she stated. The things that made these parties different from the parties of today were that all of them were planned, carried out, and put on by the students themselves. "We would elect committees for food, games, music, clean up, and decorations." Mrs. Johnson emphasized, the invitations were made and sent out by the students. "It was nice to be invited, but it was even more fun to be on one of the committees," she continued. Mrs. Johnson's favorite committee out of all of them, was the decoration committee. "The best thing with the decoration committee was that each class would try to outdo the other class from the previous party. It was really a good experience; just like managing a household," she explained.

The graduation ceremony was really special for the seniors, and it was a two-day event. One of the programs was the Baccalaureate, on Sunday when the minister came and talked to the future graduates. "The senior class banquet put on by the junior class, was also really special. There we would give our past history and what the future might hold," she said. The graduation ceremony was held on a Thursday. The chorus performed and there was a speech by a school board member, or the superintendent. The welcome was given by the salutatorian, and for their graduating class, Mrs. Johnson was the proud owner of that title. "My welcoming speech was called 'Lasting Impressions' and I quoted Longfellow," she stated. "Lives of great men all remind us, we can make our lives sublime, and departing, leave behind us footprints on the sands of time."

After graduation, Mrs. Johnson worked at Annala's Store before she started working as a telephone operator.



Mrs. Johnson as a graduating senior in 1953 and as a fifth grader (inset).

Method of Grading: A—Excellent—95 to 100.
 B—Good—88 to 94
 C—Average—81 to 87.
 D—Fair—75 to 80.
 F—Failure.

H. H.

SUBJECTS	1ST SEMESTER					2ND SEMESTER				
	1st Pd.	2nd Pd.	3rd Pd.	Exam.	Av.	4th Pd.	5th Pd.	6th Pd.	Exam.	Av.
Days Absent						5	5			
Times Tardy										
Shorthand										
Economics										
Spelling										
Reading	<i>B</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>
Writing										
Arithmetic	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>B</i>
English	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>A</i>
Geography	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>
History						<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>
Physiology	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>					
Civics										
Latin										
Music	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>
Agriculture										
Man. Training										
Algebra										
Pl. Geometry										
Dom. Science	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C+</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>
Biology										
Chemistry										
Physics										
Typing <i>Typ</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>		<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>		<i>B</i>

Mrs. Johnson's seventh grade report card.



A happy recipient of her master's degree in 1984, Mrs. Johnson poses with her husband Clarence (Bucky).

She married Clarence (Buck) Johnson in 1953. They had three children: Jeff, Jill, and Jodi. After her three children were in school, she worked as a part-time secretary at the National Mine School. While she was a secretary, Mr. Millman was the principal, and when

he died, Mr. Ruesing took over. "I was a secretary for the principal, and he felt that I should go to school to be a teacher," Mrs. Johnson stated. Although not sure she was ready to take the daring step into college; in 1968, Mrs. Johnson began college at Northern Michigan University.

Mrs. Johnson realized how much school and education meant to her; "I always think that being in school and being a part of learning is where the action is. That's the kind of action I like." Mrs. Johnson didn't come to this realization until she went back to being a secretary. Being away from education made her realize how much she liked it. "But I kind of got pushed into it," she stated. The reason for that statement is the fact that Mrs. Johnson's husband, sister, friend, and boss were giving her the nudge. "But I was almost afraid to take the risk," she recalled. Mrs. Johnson jumped into the flow of college, and in her first semester she had a 4.0 grade point average. "No one could have stopped me then. In a way I was kinda' bitten by the bug," and she realized what she had been missing. And don't forget that all the while that this was going on, Mrs. Johnson was juggling a full household and a family of three children. "But I really loved it; I was

determined that I would not give it up," she said. In 1973 when Mrs. Johnson finally ended her four years of college, she graduated Summa Cum Laude.

Lucky as it seems, she was already hired by the National Mine School when she graduated. When she started teaching at National Mine, she took the former English teacher and librarian's job who had just retired, Mrs. Mayhew.

When I asked Mrs. Johnson how the duties in her job changed for her over the years, she replied that when she started teaching she was the school librarian and teaching high school and seventh grade English. The next year the high school left National Mine and moved over to Westwood. That summer Mrs. Johnson had to select hundreds of books from the National Mine library to be sent to the new high school. It's a good thing she had the help of her daughters!

After teaching seventh grade for many years, Mrs. Johnson began teaching sixth grade English. "At first I wasn't happy about it, but I found I loved it. In fact, I thought it was even better," she stated. This year Mrs. Johnson teaches four English classes plus managing both the elementary and junior high libraries. Last year, Mrs. Johnson asked for help from the mothers of the elementary students. "We've got the elementary library running nicely," she stated.

When I asked her about friends and co-workers, she responded, "I feel like we're one big happy family here, and there isn't a one of them that wouldn't do anything for any one else." For instance, when Mrs. Johnson's mother recently died, she got the full-fledged help from the other teachers in the school. "They helped the substitute, and with the work load. They are just wonderful, wonderful people, and that's what makes this job so exceptional," Mrs. Johnson emphasized.

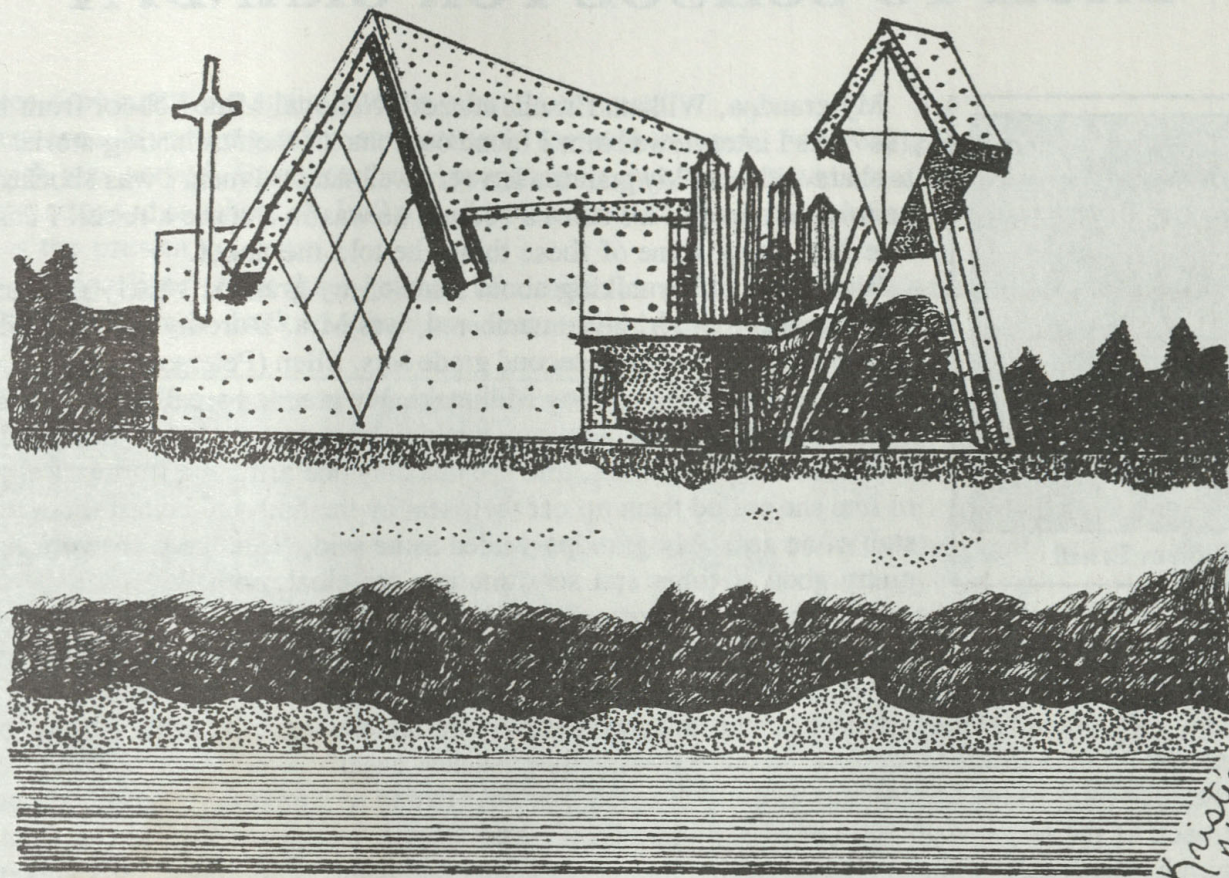
One question I really enjoyed asking Mrs. Johnson was, "Did you ever think about changing careers?" She answered, "No, not after all the work and sacrifice made to get my education. I feel that I'm becoming a better teacher. One has to have experience. Maybe some are born to it, but what I needed was experience." Mrs. Johnson believes she has gotten better, that she has progressed as an educator.

As many of us know, 1991 will be the 75th anniversary of National Mine School, and one of the questions I asked her was, "How does the community feel about National Mine School?" While she attended, it was the center of the community and all students were like one big family with roots deeply planted in the community. However, there was a time when Mrs. Johnson can remember when the construction at the mines (Tilden and Empire) was going on, that many people moved here to work. Of course, their sons and daughters attended National Mine. Because they didn't grow up in this area, they didn't have as much loyalty to the school as the rest of the kids. "For a while, it was almost like a city school where strangers were coming here," she stated.

Another interesting thing about Mrs. Johnson's teaching career was the fact that many members in Mrs. Johnson's close family have also been educators; starting with her mother, Elsie Annala, who taught for three years by just attending summer school; and, of course, her uncle George Annala, who for many years was the principal at National Mine; and her sister, Jean Magnuson, and ending the list is her nephew, Randy Annala, the current seventh and eighth grade history teacher at National Mine.

Because of the school being a "whooping 75 years old, the building has changed just as much as the students and the teachers. One of the most noticeable features that Mrs. Johnson described is the elimination of the big windows in the class rooms and the sky lights in the second floor hallway. The upper halls were not lined with lockers, but the student hung their coats on a long rack of hangers just outside the study hall. "But what we miss the most is the auditorium where all those wonderful programs were held that Mrs. Gleason put on," she stated.

"I think I feed on it," was the way Mrs. Johnson replied to the question, "Did your life slow down from



Mrs. Johnson finds time in her busy schedule to be an active member of the Faith Lutheran Church.

the way it used to be?" Her busy schedule of running the libraries and teaching four classes takes a lot of energy and Mrs. Johnson admitted that she is getting older, and that she really enjoys her days off. Who wouldn't? "Every day is a challenge," she says with a smile. Some of her biggest challenges deal with behavior problems (Mrs. Johnson had me as a student in seventh grade English, and I have been known to make a few teachers climb the chalkboard!). "I am constantly evaluating myself, and although I sometimes have trouble losing my temper, I am finally mellowing," she said.

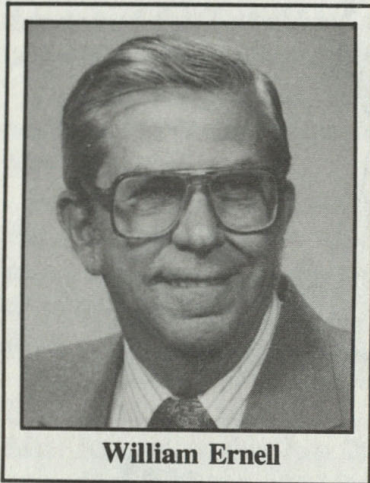
Another challenge Mrs. Johnson faces is maintaining two libraries with one budget. "The fact that I'm using taxpayers' money is a real responsibility. I don't want to spend any money unwisely," she emphasized. Mrs. Johnson's other responsibilities are just as important, such as trying to shape what students have learned in sixth grade and help them be prepared for eighth grade. When I asked her which class was harder to teach, she replied, "I really enjoyed teaching sixth grade." Actually, at the time she preferred not to change from seventh grade, "but that was the wrong way to think. You cannot resist change when you are able to make changes that make you a better person. I learned that lesson from Mr. Ruesing (the principal at that time). He is the person who convinced me to change."

Towards the end of the interview, Mrs. Johnson said that she feels National Mine School is like a best friend. There is no doubt that she is very familiar with National Mine, for she has attended, learned, taught, and helped to improve this school for over a total of thirty years.

Mrs. Johnson ended the interview saying, "When I can't do my job well any longer, I won't; but as long as I can, I will!"

— Eric Bradley

BACK TO SCHOOL FOR GRANDPA



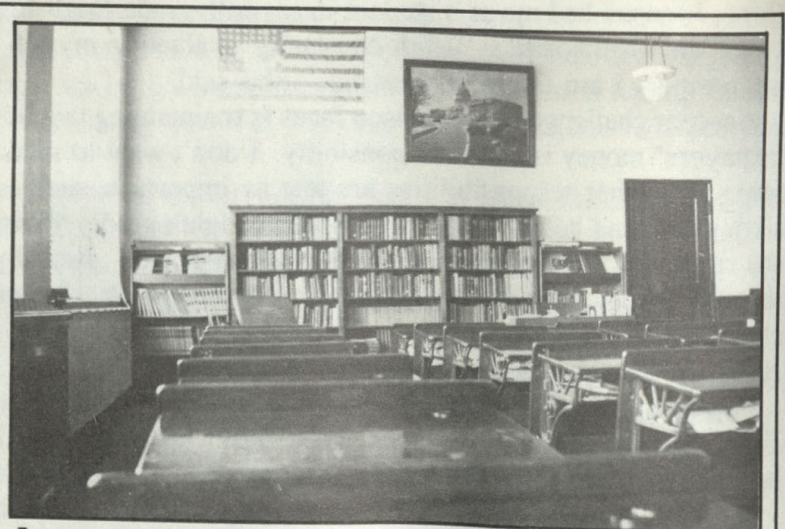
My grandpa, William Ernell, attended National Mine School from 1933 to 1947. As I interviewed him I found out some of the fascinating stories he had to share with me. My grandpa is a very well-natured man. I was shocked when he told me some of his stories because he was in a sense a rebel. I can't picture him doing some of these things he told me about.

We started off by talking about some of my grandpa's early teachers. His kindergarten teacher, he remembered, was Mrs. Dorothy (Austin) Gleason, first grade Mrs. Smarko, second grade Mrs. Ellen (Peterson) Trick, and third and fourth grade Miss Fanny Millimaki. My grandpa recalled Miss Millimaki with a chuckle. "This lady you couldn't give any guff to," he stated. Miss Millimaki was very strict, and she had only one arm. If a student stepped out of line she pulled them up off their seat by the hair and belted them with her stub of an arm. My grandpa smiled as he said, "She used to work me over pretty good at times and send me into the cloakroom."

Elementary school wasn't the only time grandpa was in the hot seat. When in junior high my grandpa remembered Mr. Charles Leckrone and Mr. Lindberg as teachers. Mr. Bath was the superintendent and Mr. George Annala was the principal. My grandpa was greatly influenced by Mr. George Annala. "If I would have had Mr. Annala all along I think I would have been way up in the classes," he said. As my grandpa reminisced about some humorous stories about Mr. Annala I listened eagerly.

There was one time when Mr. Annala told my grandpa that he'd like to see him after school. My grandpa sat in the back of the large assembly and tried to sneak out. Mr. Annala intercepted him at the front door, grabbed him by the scruff of the neck, and hauled him in. Grandpa said he had "forgotten" his appointment with him. My grandpa referred to Mr. Annala as strict. When my grandpa first started junior high Mr. Annala asked him if he knew Charles Nicotine or John Barley Corn. Grandpa didn't know what Mr. Annala was talking about. Mr. Annala replied, "You'll find out if you tangle with John Barley Corn because you will be under the table and I'll be on top. That is booze." Mr. Annala's favorite saying was, "Don't be a humbug. There was only one way to succeed and that is W - O - R - K = success." My grandpa remembered one morning Mr. Annala came into the large assembly, looking more serious than usual. The school had taken up a collection for a Richards' boy who had died from peritonitis. Mr. Annala announced that there was a ghouel among them. Mr. Annala asked the class if they knew what a ghouel was? When there was no response, Mr. Annala said, "A ghouel was a person who robbed the dead." Somebody had taken the collection.

Some things never change. Discipline back then was somewhat similar to today. Kids were expected to be well disciplined, not talk, and to be neat. If a student was caught doing something wrong they were sure to be punished. My grandpa remembered having to sit down and write an essay or a certain



Large assembly, now known as the study hall, on the second floor of National Mine School.

sentence time and time again, usually a hundred times.

After a rough morning many students look forward to lunch; when my grandpa was attending school no hot lunch was served. Bused students brought their own lunches and local students walked home for lunch and then returned to school by 1:00 p.m. The lunch room was not in the same place as now. The former lunch room is the present art room.

My grandpa lived about three-quarters of a mile from the school, on Mitchell Hill. He walked to school, back home for lunch, back to school and then walked home again.



National Mine Class of 1947 — Top row, from left: Melvin Hill, Jack Nelson, and Ray Watters. Middle row, from left, Bill Ernell, Ray Annala, Calvin Korpi, Herb Brown, Ken Alderton, class advisor Austin Lindberg. Front row, from left: Betty Watters, Evelyn Larson, Ruth Kiiskila, Margaret McCarthy, Roslee Peterson, Dorothy Nelson, and Doris Mannikko. Not pictured are Ellen Kiiskila, Burton Toy, and Robert Corkin.

WENT TO SCHOOL FOR GRANDPA

Extracurricular activities such as 4-H, basketball, and the Senior Class Play were very popular. The National Mine basketball teams did not win a district title but they had three good seasons while by grandpa was attending National Mine. My grandpa was on the basketball team that had a record of fifteen and three. When Grandpa was playing basketball, defense was first and offense was secondary. Scores of thirty or forty were really high. The farthest my grandpa and the teams traveled was to Trenary which is roughly forty miles.

When the basketball teams needed to get to a game they took the school bus, except during the war. During that time they traveled by cars which coaches or the superintendent drove to the games. At that time they did not really have a pep bus but there was a bus for students and the cheerleaders.

My grandpa was also involved in 4-H and the Senior Class Play. He remembered his Senior Class Play, *Dear Papa*, and grandpa was the papa. Grandpa recalled during the play he was supposed to leave and comb his hair in one scene. Well, when he re-entered he had forgotten to fix his hair, and it was still out of place.

In order to participate in extracurricular activities a student had to maintain good grades. My grandpa did fairly well in school. The subjects that he enjoyed most were math, algebra, and geometry. But he remembered he didn't care for junior English. "I still can't get my nouns, verbs, and etc.'s straight," Grandpa said with a smile.

In school there was a dress code. Most kids came to school in overalls because this was during the Great Depression, but the overalls had to be clean and neat.

My grandpa's father, Arnold B. Ernell, was co-owner of one of the two stores in National Mine at the time. The store was named Ernell and Solka. The other store was owned by Mr. George Annala's brothers. Both of the store were general merchandise stores which handled everything from "soup to nuts." The Ernell and Solka store was also the post office. My grandpa worked at the store from grade school through high school. When my grandpa reached high school age he was told, "Be like the squirrels and store for the winter." So each summer Grandpa worked on various jobs so he'd have money for "the winter." My grandpa needed the extra money in order to pay for his own class ring and pictures. One day while Grandpa was working in the store a young bakery salesman came in peddling his wares. The young man gave my grandpa's father a half dozen rolls and said to try them and he'd be back in a few days to take orders. When the young man returned a few days later there were quite a few people hanging around the store. My grandpa's father told the young man he didn't taste any of the rolls but he gave some to his dog, Smokey. Grandpa's father told the young lad that the dog licked his hind end to get the taste out of his mouth. The poor salesman was just about to leave, when Grandpa's father said, "I'll take three trays of those goodies."



William Ernell, with a friend, wears his National Mine School school sweater as a graduate of the class of 1947.

"A DEDICATED TEACHER"

During my grandpa's last year in high school the seniors had an event called senior skip day. On senior skip day the whole senior class took off for one day during school and went on a tour of Iron Mountain. This might sound like lots of fun but my grandpa had to make a tough decision, for Grandpa had a perfect attendance record and he was told that if he went on the trip he would lose his perfect attendance. Grandpa smirked and said, "I opted for the trip." While the students were in Iron Mountain they visited the Ford Factory which made wooden parts for the station wagon.

Graduation is the highlight of the year for most seniors. Graduation ceremonies haven't changed greatly since Grandpa was going to school. The graduates walked through a trellis which was all flowered. The superintendent handed out the student's diplomas. Of course, graduating from high school is very exciting and usually calls for a celebration. Grandpa remarked, "We had a beer party and all the fellows in their suits ended up in the lake." Yes, Grandpa was one of them. Graduation can also be a sad time. Leaving high school, friends, and sometimes your hometown can be difficult. My grandpa has been fortunate enough to be able to maintain contact with most of his buddies. When asked what his fondest memory of National Mine was, Grandpa replied, "I believe it would be comradeship. In a small school you always knew what everybody else was doing, and they knew what you were doing."

Grandpa married Ruth L. Saari on March 13, 1954. He is the proud father of two wonderful daughters, Mary Jo and Robyn Lynn. He also has five grandchildren. My grandpa is a retired insurance salesman who now spends time working at the VFW as a bookkeeper and bartender. In the summer Grandpa enjoys picking blueberries and chopping wood.

My grandpa is a very humorous man whom I respect and enjoy spending time with. Grandpa has been very generous by sharing his wonderful stories with me. My grandpa influences my life greatly, and is really special to me. I've had a great time writing about him and spending time with him.

— Rebekah Nardi



“A DEDICATED TEACHER”

“I liked every bit of it. I enjoyed being with little children, and I think I was born a teacher. Actually, I liked it so well that I had planned on being a teacher ever since I was a kid.” These were the words of Mrs. Viola (Mason) Magnuson, a former teacher at National Mine School for thirty-six years from 1937 to 1973. Mrs. Magnuson was inspired by her great-aunt, who had been a past teacher at the National Mine School.

In order to qualify as a teacher Mrs. Magnuson earned a life certificate. She attended what is now Northern Michigan University in Marquette, Michigan. She took many classes including two years of correspondence courses to get her Bachelor’s Degree, as well as attending summer school at Northern Michigan University.

When Mrs. Magnuson began teaching at National Mine School she taught forty-seven students. This included first and second graders combined in one classroom. She recalled this as one of the most challenging parts of her career. She taught all of the required subjects except music. She especially recalled teaching Palmer Method Penmanship using quill pens and ink wells.

Mrs. Magnuson arrived at National Mine School at 8:45 a.m. When Mrs. Magnuson started teaching, she got a ride with another teacher that lived in her neighborhood.

She enjoyed the school lunch in those days. “Now days they seem to have so much of that fast food and we never had it. We had wholesome, wonderful meals,” she stated.

When I asked Mrs. Magnuson what some of the regulations of teaching were she replied, “In those days when I remember practicing teaching we had to have meetings, and the teachers were expected to live in the community.”

I asked Mrs. Magnuson how the community felt about National Mine School, and she replied that the community always had a good feeling about the school, and were very faithful to the school. She referred to this loyalty by calling them “good scouts.”

When I asked Mrs. Magnuson if she had ever thought of changing her mind about her career as a teacher, she replied, “No,” because she loved it so much.

Mrs. Magnuson not only taught at National Mine, she attended the school for her own education. When she was a freshman a tragic event occurred, for the original National Mine School building burned to the ground. This occurred in November of 1923. “I knew when the school burned because I just looked out the window and saw the smoke and flames. It was sad.” No one was in the building at the time of the fire. During this time the students and teachers used churches and other public buildings in the community as temporary classrooms. In the fall of 1925 the students returned to the school, but in a new building. That National Mine School with a few modificationis is the school I am presently attending.

As a past student of National Mine School, Mrs. Magnuson was one of the four generations of her family to attend the National Mine School. Her dad and his brothers and sisters were the first to attend in the 1880’s, while Dan Mason, a great-nephew, was the last of the family to attend.

Mrs. Magnuson had two high school yearbooks dedicated to her — in 1963 and 1973. In 1990, Mrs. Magnuson was honored for her many years as a teacher at an event held at National Mine School.

Now Mrs. Magnuson enjoys talking to her former students to find out what their life is like, and if they have a family. “Sometimes I don’t recognize them, but they recognize me,” she stated.

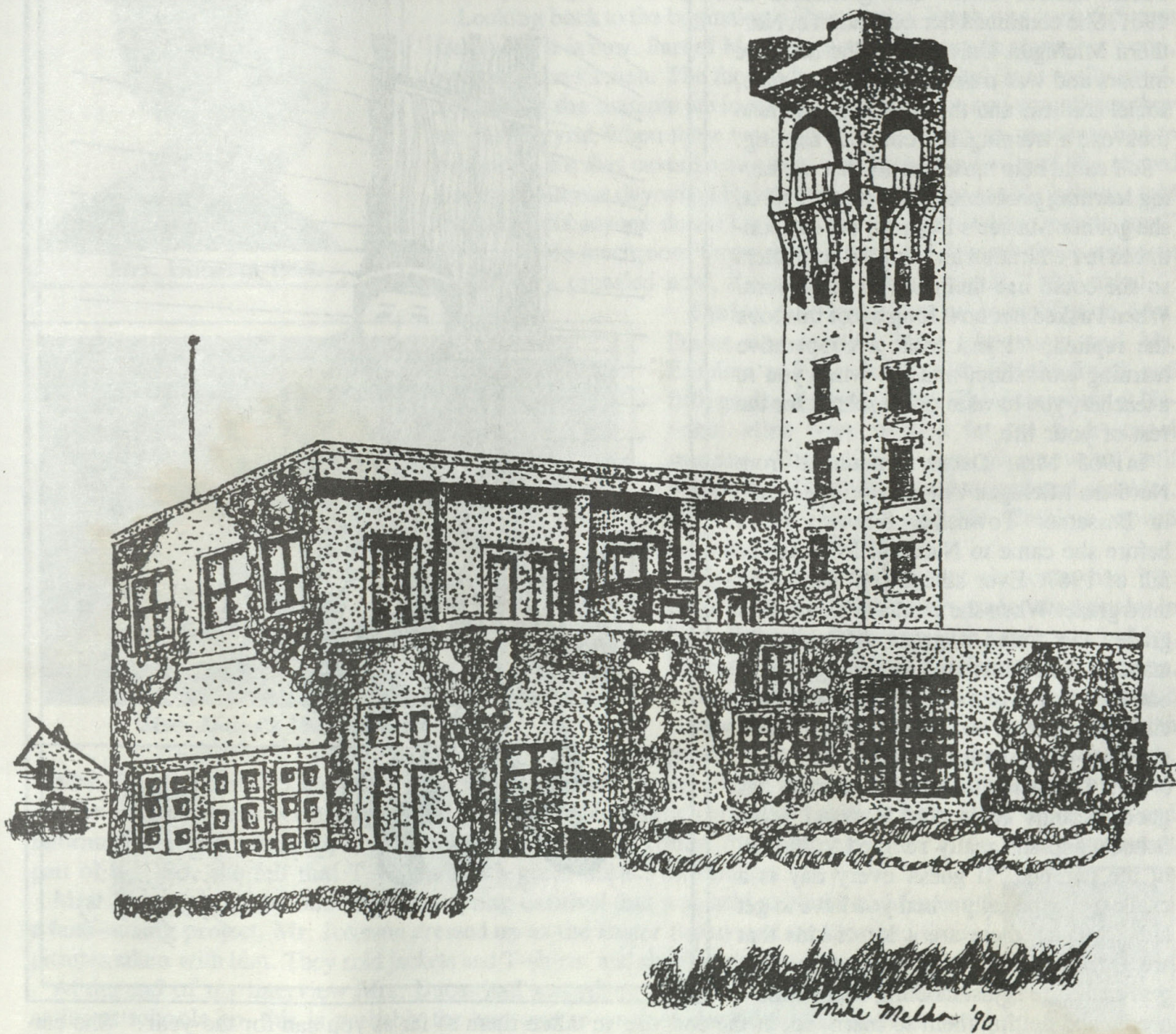


Mrs. Magnuson, October 1964.

A WELL-LIKED JOB

Mrs. Magnuson dedicated thirty-six years to teaching at the National Mine School. She accomplished much, and her works are very much appreciated by all who know here. She is both a wonderful person, and was also a wonderful teacher. Thank you, Mrs. Magnuson, for sharing your gift of teaching.

— Beth Moyle



Ishpeming Fire Hall, Ishpeming, Michigan.

A WELL-LIKED JOB

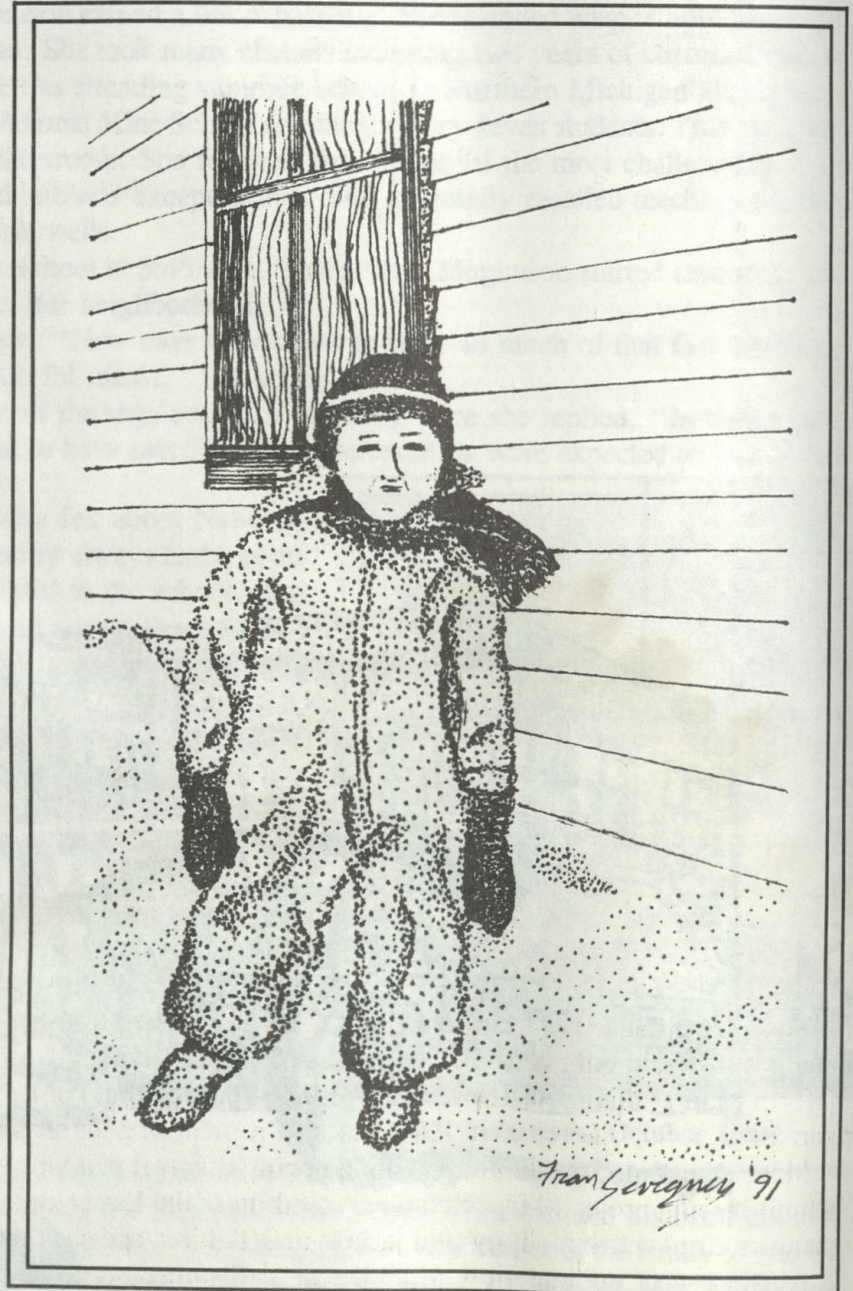
"I have never had a parent that failed to cooperate with me," said Barbara Ducas who is a very proud, happy teacher with a delightful sense of humor. She was born in Ishpeming on November 24, 1943. Her mother was born in Ishpeming, but her family came from Finland. Her father, who was also born in Ishpeming, was French Canadian. She has two sisters, Lois and Nancy, who are also teachers, although Lois has retired.

Mrs. Ducas attended the Ishpeming Public School where she graduated in 1961. She continued her education at Northern Michigan University. She had five minors and was trained in math, science, social studies, and the fine arts. She also took extra training in remedial reading. "So I could help those people that are having learning problems," she stated. Next, she got her Master's Degree, but she continued her education and studied computers so she could use them in her classroom. When I asked her how long all of this took she replied, "I just took a cooperative learning workshop, and so, when you're a teacher, you have to go to school for the rest of your life."

In 1965 Mrs. Ducas graduated from Northern Michigan University. She taught in Bessemer Township for two years before she came to National Mine in the fall of 1967. Ever since, she has taught third grade. When she tried a switch to first grade, she found a great difference in maturity. She illustrated by saying, "This one little boy told me, I dropped my pencil down my back and I can't get my under-shirt out of my pants to get it out!"

Mrs. Ducas felt that the community has good feelings about the National Mine School, and she really seemed to like all of the parents. "I guess every day is a challenge, especially when you have to get kids to learn, there are a lot of kids that are gifted in extra things; I guess the biggest challenge is just meeting every child's needs, and getting them to learn, so, at the end you've taken them as far as you can for the year." She emphasized this was the hardest part of her career.

"Great" is the way she described her co-workers. They are very nice people that like to play jokes as much as she does. She had very strong feelings about the award as one of Michigan's ten exemplary schools that





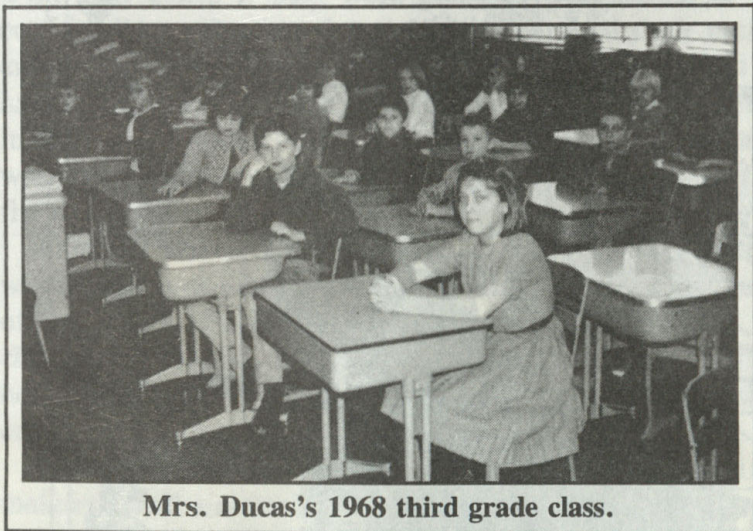
Mrs. Ducas in 1968.

National Mine School received in 1990. "Us getting the award as one of the ten most outstanding schools in Michigan is really a highlight in my teaching career," she said proudly. Her aide, Mrs. Alderton, has been with Mrs. Ducas for twenty-three years, and Mrs. Ducas told her that she was "not allowed to retire," because she is so very nice, helpful, and a special part of the program Mrs. Ducas has set up to help children.

Looking back to the beginning of her career, lunch was very different from what it is now. Part of Mr. Keto's room, where he stores his wood, was once the kitchen. The food, Mrs. Ducas recalled, was really good. Sometimes the students ate in the hall by the office and sometimes they ate in the gym! When there was a gym class going on, students had to be careful, for they never knew where a basketball might land! She related a story about one day when Helmi Maki, one of the cook's helpers, told the kids, "If anyone doesn't want their oranges, throw them to me." So the whole lunchroom threw them at her! "Although the lunchroom is still very crowded now, it was a big improvement," she stated.

During the first years of consolidation Mrs. Ducas was sent to West Ishpeming, and Mr. Emblom and Mr. Johnson taught the fourth and fifth grades at North Lake. The classrooms at National Mine were needed for the high school students. The building was overcrowded until Westwood High School was completed and Mrs. Ducas, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Emblom moved back to National Mine.

Mrs. Ducas told me that she once had Mr. Betts's room and the fourth grade was upstairs in Mrs. Hebert's room and fifth grade was in Mrs. Richards's room. When she first started teaching, sixth grade was a self-contained classroom which is now Mr. Annala's room. The seventh and eighth grades switched classes like the high school kids.



Mrs. Ducas's 1968 third grade class.

Mrs. Ducas stated, "I know the materials that I used to use when I started teaching, I had to throw away and get different ones because boys and girls these days know many more things, have many more facts and information at their fingertips, and probably part of that comes from watching T.V.; it's a very important part of it." So, she felt that T.V. has had a great impact on students.

Mrs. Ducas also mentioned having a spring carnival that was held at National Mine as a fund-raising project. Mr. Johnson dressed up as the Easter Bunny and the kids had their pictures taken with him. They sold jackets and T-shirts, and she thought that was a lot of fun.

At the end of my interview Mrs. Ducas had something to add. "I think that probably as far as schools go, this is probably the best one to work at. Including the students we have and also the people we have to work with and also the parents," Mrs. Ducas stated with great feeling.



Mrs. Ducas

— Jenny Rogers

TAKE ME BACK

When I rang the doorbell at Judy Anderson's house I was so nervous I was sure she could hear my heartbeat. But within five minutes she had me feeling right at home.

This special lady, Judy (Pietro) Anderson, was born on April 20, 1939, in National Mine. Her mother was born in Republic and her father, age eighty-two, was born right in National Mine where he still lives. Judy was raised in a family of four children: two brothers and one sister.

Judy Anderson began attending National Mine School in 1945. During her elementary years Judy recalled teachers such as Mrs. Gleason, Ms. Mason, Ms. Wineburg, Mrs. Hart, and Ms. Fannie B. Millimaki, whom she referred to as "the strictest of the lady teachers." Judy never really had any trouble with her teachers, but she remembered them as being really strict. Mrs. Gleason was the music teacher, and when she was working on a program, students sent her prank gifts and gave her a hard time, but they usually never joked around with any of the other teachers.

All through school, Judy walked over a mile to get to school. She remembered walking on an old trail when she was just five years old. She was often by herself because she was the youngest in her neighborhood. Judy recalled meeting up with some bears and people shooting guns. Often she didn't wear boots or anything to cover her bare legs on the mile walk to school.

If a person walked into National Mine School on a normal day during those years, they would have seen girls in below the knee skirts, boys in dress pants, and male teachers in a suit coat and tie. Judy never saw any of her male teachers without their suit coats on. Girls weren't permitted to wear pants *at all*. Judy recalled the only time she wore pants was under her skirt for warmth in winter. She said, "There you were, standing out there in the hall trying to take those darned pants off." Everybody in National Mine dressed up to meet the standards of the strict dress code.





Mary (Keto) Helsten and Judy (Pietro) Anderson at National Mine School.

Judy often dressed in a long skirt with nylons hooked to garter belts, or anklet socks with saddle shoes or penny loafers that had a shiny penny in them. Her hair was fashioned in a pony tail. Judy was the first girl to wear her hair in pony tail at National Mine. She recalled, "I had really long hair, and I tied it up one day and pretty soon all the girls were tying their hair up too!" Some other fads

all the girls did included wearing a bracelet band with an arrow on it on their ankle if they were going with someone, or wearing a boyfriend's graduation ring on a string around their neck. She recalled most of the boys wearing jeans and white tee shirts with their hair slicked back. Those who smoked carried their cigarettes tucked in their shirt sleeves. By that time the dress code permitted boys to wear blue jeans, but the girls still dressed up with long skirts and flat shoes. Judy stated, "Girls looked real feminine. It was nice."

When it came to the sports that National Mine offered there was, "not too much," Judy stated. All that was offered was a boys' basketball team while the girls could try out for cheerleading. Girls tried out in front of three boys who picked their choice to be cheerleaders for the National Mine School. After Judy made the cheerleading squad, she went to every game on a bus. At that time cheerleaders wore pants to cheerlead in, not short skirts like today. One year the basketball team lost the final game by one point, and all the cheerleaders cried.

After the basketball season was over they had "beautiful basketball banquets" for the whole school. The mothers of all the basketball boys cooked a huge meal, and after the meal they handed out letters, medals, and little basketball charms which the cheerleaders wore around their necks.

Besides basketball and cheerleading, there were plays and programs put on by the students in every grade. Judy recalled having been a Teddy Bear one year. Most of the girls wore fur coats and she had one, so she played the part of the Teddy Bear. Mrs. Gleason, the music teacher, directed these beautiful programs. One year she had all the girls wear formals, which they had to borrow from other people because they did not have proms then.

When a student became a senior he or she had the opportunity to take part in a Senior Class Play. If the student wasn't in the play they contributed toward it, like painting scenery, or otherwise helping out. Whenever the National Mine School put on a program it was "filled to overflowing." Judy still remembered all the people roaring with laughter when the little kindergartners got up to sing.

Judy also served on the Student Council as vice-president of her class. She was excused from classes for meetings to plan activities for the school.

When students were in high school they were required to be in forensics "Whether you were afraid to



Arlene Pietila, Jean (Lauer) Eddy, and Judy (Pietro) Anderson outside the National Mine School.

FACE MOUNTED

speak or not, everyone had to try out," Judy stated, "and that was hard to some people because not all people could stand up there and do that; people are shy."

Judy recalled school parties where everyone in school went to a nice lunch and then had a dance later on. They had to be in their best clothes for these events which only happened on special occasions such as Christmas, Valentine's Day, and other holidays. While the dances today take place on weekends, these school parties were held on school nights.

After school, kids went home and did their homework if they didn't get it finished in study hall. Subjects they might be doing homework in were reading, writing, arithmetic, English, music, biology, chemistry, algebra, geometry, typing, and at one time some of the students took a correspondence course to learn another language. In home economics classes students cooked on little individual burners at each table.

Judy's favorite classes were English, reading, penmanship, home economics, and music. The subject that gave her the most trouble was math, as she stated, "I don't know how I got through them." When it came to reading or spelling, she was a whiz! When the students were assigned a project that had something to do with an encyclopedia, over half the class turned in the same information because the school only had one set of encyclopedias.

When the homework was done all the students headed back up to the school to skate around the sidewalk at National Mine because there weren't any blacktop roads then, and nobody had any sidewalks. However, the National Mine School had a sidewalk around the circumference of the building. Judy and her friends played jacks, and "Russia," which was played by throwing a ball and trying to get it to bounce under their legs. She also played tag.

Lunch at National Mine was important to most kids, for many students depended on the school lunch for a good home-cooked meal. The cooks served meat and potatoes, and they put peanut butter on the ends of the bread which the kids loved. Andrea Anderson, Judy's future mother-in-law, was one of the cooks at National Mine School. Everybody waited eagerly for lunch time. Judy stated, "All the kids could have as much food as they wanted. They could go back for thirds or fourths and all of this food was for a really cheap price." After they ate they had to go outside, for no one was allowed to stay in unless they had a note from home. Lunch was a favorite of Judy's day and as she said, "It was a hot lunch."

During the day if any students misbehaved they were sent down to the superintendent's office where they sat for the rest of the afternoon; or if they were younger, they stood out in the hall.

In the morning when students entered the school, they walked in the room and hung up their coats and put their boots away in the room because they didn't have lockers then. Then they sat down and waited to begin. When the end of the day bell rang, kids were always ready to get out of the room. Judy recalled waiting for that bell to ring, and once when it rang, she shot out of her seat and fell right down on the floor because it was slippery! All the kids laughed at her and the teacher just looked and said, "Well, that's what you get for being in a hurry to get out of here."

During study hall, if a student had to go to the bathroom or get something from their locker, they had to do what was called signing in and signing out. When a student left they signed their name and the time left, and when they returned they signed their name again and the time they came back. Whenever a student wanted to leave, they needed an excuse from the other teacher. Judy was never allowed to chew gum in school, and they weren't permitted to speak in the halls.

Judy graduated from National Mine in 1957. The graduation ceremony was held in the auditorium which was small so only immediate family attended. All the graduates lined up on stage and scenery and curtains were added for extra effects. Judy wore a nice dress and her robe with a blue and gold tassel. Blue and gold are still used as the colors of the National Mine School. The band played the processional as all the gradu-

ates came on stage. The valedictorian gave her speech and then the Glee Club sang some songs. After all this the class memorial was presented as a gift to the school. Next, the superintendent presented all the diplomas, and then the other valedictorian gave her speech. They had two valedictorians. Finally all the graduates lined up in back of the gym where people congratulated them. Judy went home that night a graduate of National Mine and proud of it.

I would like to thank Judy for sharing a very special time in her life, her school years at the National Mine School.

— *Tori Sodergren*



Judy and her husband, Ray, in October, 1990.

REMINISCENCES OF MARY JOHNSON



Mary Johnson

As I was invited into Mary (Aho) Johnson's house, I felt very nervous. She was sitting on the floor wrapping Christmas gifts, and she told me to take a seat in the dining room. Her home is very beautifully decorated. She had antiques, dishes, and dolls. I could tell that she really loves animals.

Mary Johnson was born in Negaunee, Michigan, on August 31, 1943. She had one brother who died young, at age thirty-nine. Her father was born in National Mine and her mother was born in North Lake.

Mary lived in the Green Creek Location all her life and started attending school in "probably about 1950, because I didn't go to kindergarten," stated Mary. "So I just started with first grade." Mary's school days began with first grade because the National Mine School did not have any bus service to the Green Creek Location for kindergartners.

Mary's first grade teacher was Mrs. Viola Magnuson. "I still run into her every now and then; she hasn't changed a bit," said Mary. Another teacher that stood out vividly in her mind was her fifth grade teacher, Mrs. Fanny Johnson. "Everybody was afraid of her," emphasized Mary. Mrs. Johnson had only one arm. "Any little bit of noise or cracking of anything, she had her ruler handy and you got it right across the hand," Mary said. Mary was very fond of Mrs. Gleason who put on the "greatest plays in National Mine ever."

The children at the National Mine School acted with respect to their teachers. They didn't talk out of turn. "If you wanted to say something you had to raise your hand and wait to be called upon," emphasized Mary. If the children acted badly they stayed after school, and their parents transported them home. The subjects they studied were mostly like the subjects taught today. They had typing, science, chemistry, history and home economics.

The children went to the lunch room which is now the art room. Mary described the lunch as "made from scratch and delicious." After her tasty meal, she went back to her classes.

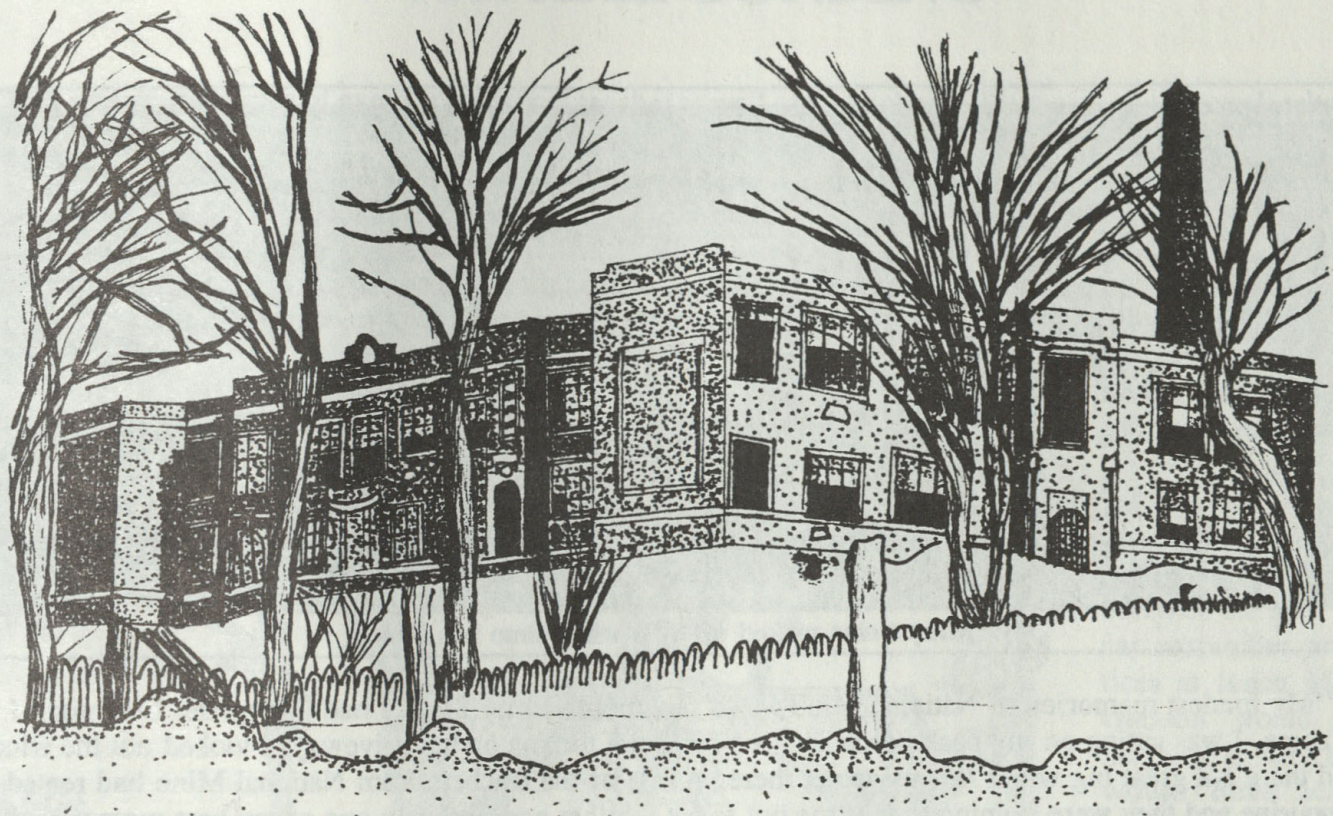
When school was over, Mary caught the bus and rode for ten minutes to get home. After Mary arrived home, she went to her room and did her homework. "I came home with four or five books every night and that's all I did at night time was homework, and I loved to read so I read books or did my homework," recalled Mary.

Mary had a junior high school teacher, Mr. Coke Thomas, who she also worked for when she was a secretary at the Champion School in 1974. Her favorite high school teacher was her typing teacher, Stewart Oja. "Everybody called him 'Scrammy.' Every day when it was time for our typing period we used to race to the class and he'd lock the door on us. We kept on knocking on the door before he let us in," said Mary. Mr. Oja's room was where Mrs. Luehmann's room is today.

In high school, Mary participated in band, and her teacher's name was Mr. Bill Tonkin, who was a "super guy," said Mary. "We had to play when there was a (home) basketball game. The band always got to play, and your usual concerts," stated Mary.

Mary's class of 1961 was the biggest graduating class up to that time from National Mine. "It was a whole total of twenty-five students," said Mary. Graduation was a sad affair for the students. Mary kept contact

"A WINTER BONDING"



Hattie Pennala 1991



Mary Johnson, 1972.

with her childhood friends. "A lot of my friends still live in the area, so I get to see them every now and then, and the ones who had moved away we still usually keep in contact during the holidays," said Mary.

Right after Mary graduated she got a job in Kansas City, where she worked for Transworld Airlines. When she decided to move back to Michigan, she found a job opening at National Mine School for a secretary. She applied, was interviewed, and she got the job. Mary Johnson started working at the National Mine School in July of 1969 and she worked at National Mine for about twenty years.

Mary's secretarial job at the National Mine School involved "Well, the usual secretarial duties," stated Mary. She typed, kept books organized, filed, sold lunch tickets, and worked at basketball games. "The most rewarding part of my career was getting to know all the students that were coming through, watching them grow up, and going to their graduations and a lot of them come back to visit," Mary said. Mary was very close with her co-

workers. "We were just like having one big happy family, we all got along pretty well. We'd help each other out and anybody had a problem we'd help them work it out," stated Mary.

REMEMBRANCES OF MARY JOENSON



Mary being picked up by a white limo for dinner.

“My fondest memories of National Mine was a few months after I left. I had a surprise. One night I was at home, I was sitting on my back porch and this car came tooting up my driveway. I looked out the window and there’s a great big white limousine out there. A few of the teachers from National Mine had rented this limousine and they were coming to take me out to eat, so that was probably one of my best memories of the school,” stated Mary.

Another of her memories of National Mine School involved a particularly busy day, when many things had gone wrong. National Mine had a walk-in safe in the office. Mary was going into the safe to bring some money, and the principal, Mr. Ruesing, followed her into the safe. He closed the door by mistake, so they both were locked in the safe. “We couldn’t get it open from the inside so we waited about ten minutes, and we heard somebody out there hollering, ‘Dad, where are you?’ ” Mr. Ruesing’s son, Timmy, walked into the office and they told him to not to touch anything and to just go find someone to help them. Timmy found Judy Solka, who happened to be working in the kitchen, so she came into the office. After she got through laughing at them, they told her how to open the safe. “I bet we were in there for at least a good fifteen to twenty minutes,” said Mary.

Mary shared another interesting story. She was having problems with her duplicating machine in the office. Mr. Ruesing, trying to fix it, blew on the hose to clean the tube leading to the fluid. He sucked in, instead of blowing out, and he swallowed some of the poisonous fluid. “So he had to hurry to the emergency room and on his way there he was speeding and the police chased him all the way to the medical center. Well, then when he got there, he got rushed in. He had his stomach pumped out,” stated Mary.

As soon as I walked through Mary’s doorway, I knew she’d be an interesting person to interview. I really enjoyed having her take time for me; she’s a good person to listen to.

— April Engman

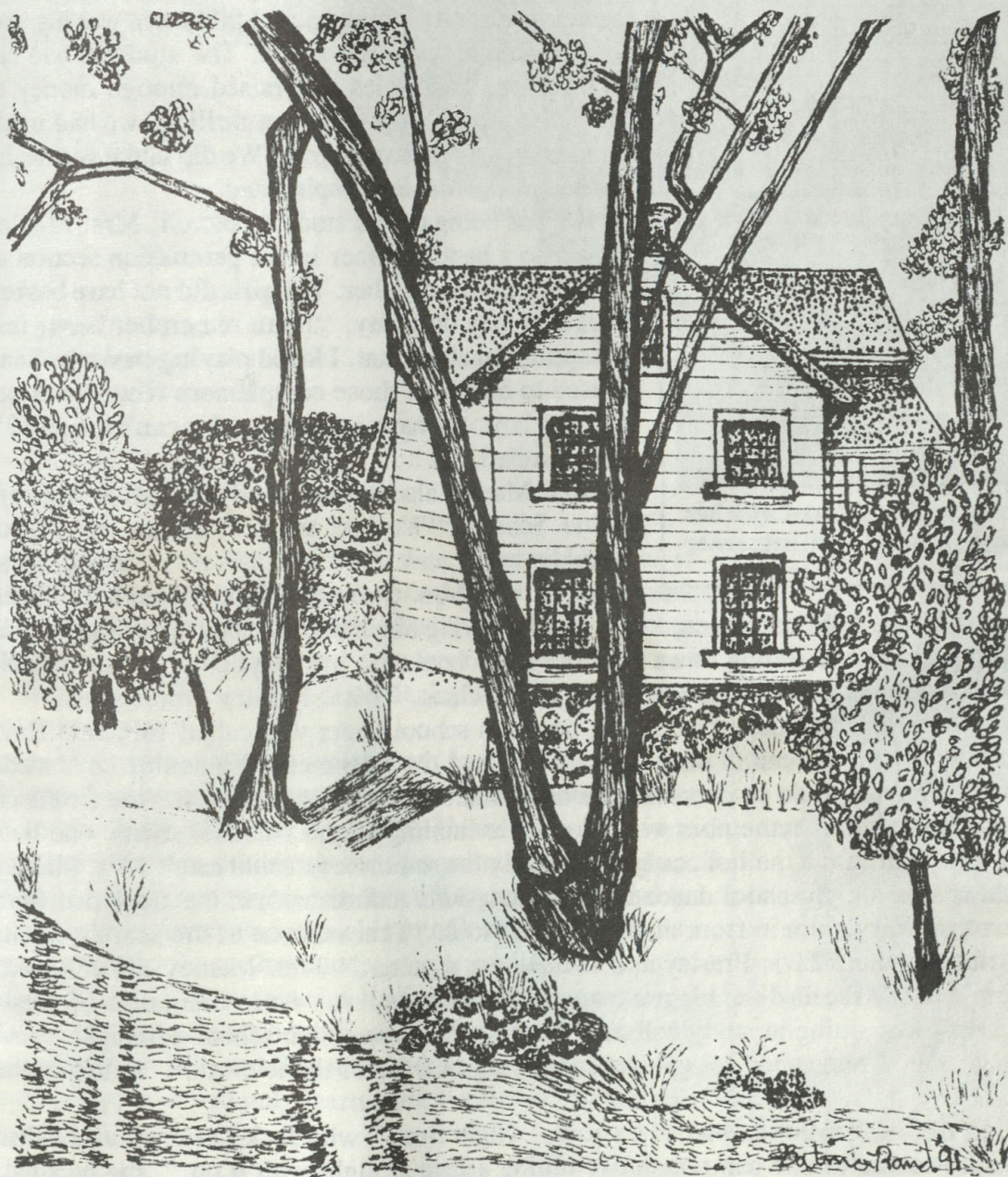
“A SPECIAL BONDING”

“I remember the names of every grade school teacher as well as high school. When you go to a small school as we did you are very closely knit and you have a special bonding.” These words were spoken by Patricia (Thibeault) Manley who fondly recalled her school years at the National Mine School.

One teacher Mrs. Manley remembered was Mrs. Gleason. Mrs. Gleason taught the morning kindergarten class, and in the afternoon she taught first through twelfth grade in music. Every year Mrs. Gleason coordinated a spring play and a Christmas play which involved the whole school. Mrs. Manley recalled one year Mrs. Gleason wanted to present the Christmas play *Scrooge* but she could not cast a boy to act the part of Scrooge in the play. “She asked if I would take the part of Scrooge in the play,” recalled Mrs. Manley.

Mrs. Gleason pleaded with her to take the part because she had a low voice. Mrs. Manley, despite her embarrassment, accepted the part. “I can remember practices at lunch Mrs. Gleason would be laughing so hard she would have tears rolling down her face because I’m trying to have this low voice and be this really crabby, grumpy person,” Mrs. Manley told me.

Other teachers brought back memories for Mrs. Manley. Mrs. Waara was her fourth grade teacher. “She was always so bubbly, and always greeted everyone in the morning.” Mr. Benzie was her sixth grade teacher. “He was one that tried to get the best out of everybody,” she stated. Mr. Tonkin was the band teacher.





Patricia (Thibeault) Manley (right) pictured with her childhood neighbor Frank Lundin and her sister Barb.

“He included us kids in so many things that he got the most out of us,” she stated.

Mrs. Manley also shared with me some of her memories of National Mine School. Mrs. Manley was a member of the student council which decided there should be a prom at their school. The members of the student council approached their principal, Mr. Lindberg, with the idea, and he just kind of rolled his eyes and said that there wasn’t enough money and it would never work. “As I think back, I think this was his way of challenging us,” she stated. The students had car washes and bake sales and raised enough money to have the prom. “We were just thrilled, we had made enough money to have a prom. We did and it was really nice!” Mrs. Manley emphasized.

Besides being on the student council, Mrs. Manley was also a band member in the percussion section as well as a chorus member. The girls did not have basketball like they do today. “I can remember being real disappointed about that. I loved playing basketball and I used to be one of those complainers who would say that the boys can have basketball why can’t the girls?” she recalled.

Mrs. Manley also remembered the staff at National Mine School. “We had the best cooks any school would want to have. The cooks were so caring. Mrs. Anderson or Mrs. Culbert walked through the lunch

room and made sure every child ate.” She continued, “I remember during lunch hour the boys playing marbles or baseball and the girls jumping rope or sliding down the hill. The school took pride in being a clean school. It was always kept clean with the windows shining and the floors clean,” Mrs. Manley emphasized.

One of the most memorable events that occurred during her high school years was called Initiation Day. It was usually held in October when the seniors of the school initiated the freshmen. The senior boys made a list of things the freshmen girls had to do or dress like, and the senior girls did the same for the freshmen boys. “It would be really crazy things. I remember we had to wear hunting clothes, flannel shirts, one boot with one sock, rags in our hair, and carry a pail of candy which only the senior boys could eat,” Mrs. Manley recalled. In the evening there was a high school dance in the gymnasium/auditorium and the freshmen were called on the stage one at a time to perform in front of the whole school. “That was one of the scariest nights of our lives. They asked me to imitate Elvis Presley and handed me a guitar,” Mrs. Manley remembered.

During high school, Mrs. Manley recalled the biggest tragedy that occurred was the assassination of President Kennedy. “I remember I was sitting in study hall and Mr. Lindberg, our high school principal, came in to say Kennedy had been shot. I remember going home and lying in front of the television, watching the news constantly,” she stated.

Mrs. Manley also recalled the local radio station had a show, “Night Beat,” with Jack LaForest as the disc jockey. “Everyone enjoyed listening to it. I can remember falling asleep at night with it on,” she recalled.



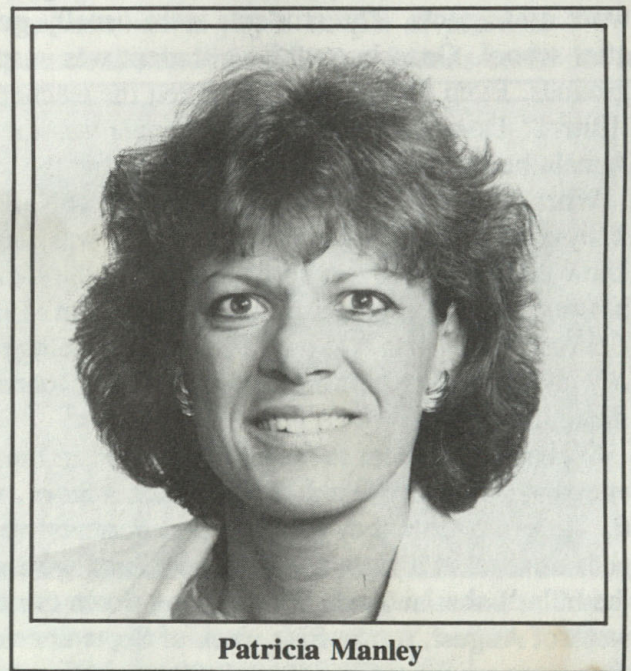
Cory Bushong '90

The students at National Mine School were required to dress up for school. The girls wore dresses and skirts because pants were not permitted. Mrs. Manley came from a large family of eleven children and there was not a lot of money to spend on clothes since Mrs. Manley's father died when she was young.

In 1965 Mrs. Manley graduated from National Mine School. She married James Manley in 1969 and they have two sons, Scott who was born in 1972 and Chad who was born in 1974. Mrs. Manley is the Marquette County Register of Deeds and is currently a resident of Ishpeming Township.

It was very fortunate I was able to talk with Mrs. Manley as she shared with me her fondest memories of the National Mine School. I have gained a lot from our interview and I will always remember her advice. "If you want something bad enough in life, try. There is nothing wrong with trying and failing, you will only learn to be a stronger, better person for it."

— Batina Rand



Patricia Manley

“TEACHERS ARE ROLE MODELS”

“Teachers are people of high integrity. They are good role models,” were the words spoken by Mrs. Donna (Annala) Maki while I was learning about her fulfilling life and school days.

Donna Annala was born on May 25, 1926. Donna grew up in National Mine, living with her father, Donald Annala, and grandparents, August and Josephine Annala. This was because her mother died when Donna was very young.

Donna attended National Mine School all her school days. When she attended the National Mine School it was a K-12 school. Donna started kindergarten when she was five years old. Miss Austin was not only the kindergarten teacher then, but she was the music teacher too. Miss Austin was Donna’s favorite teacher in grade school. During the time Miss Austin was teaching music classes she left the school because she married. Miss Austin had to leave her teaching job because women could no longer teach at National Mine School if they were married. Although she left during Donna’s grade school years, Miss Austin came back when Donna was in high school. In fact, she was there for Donna’s class graduation.

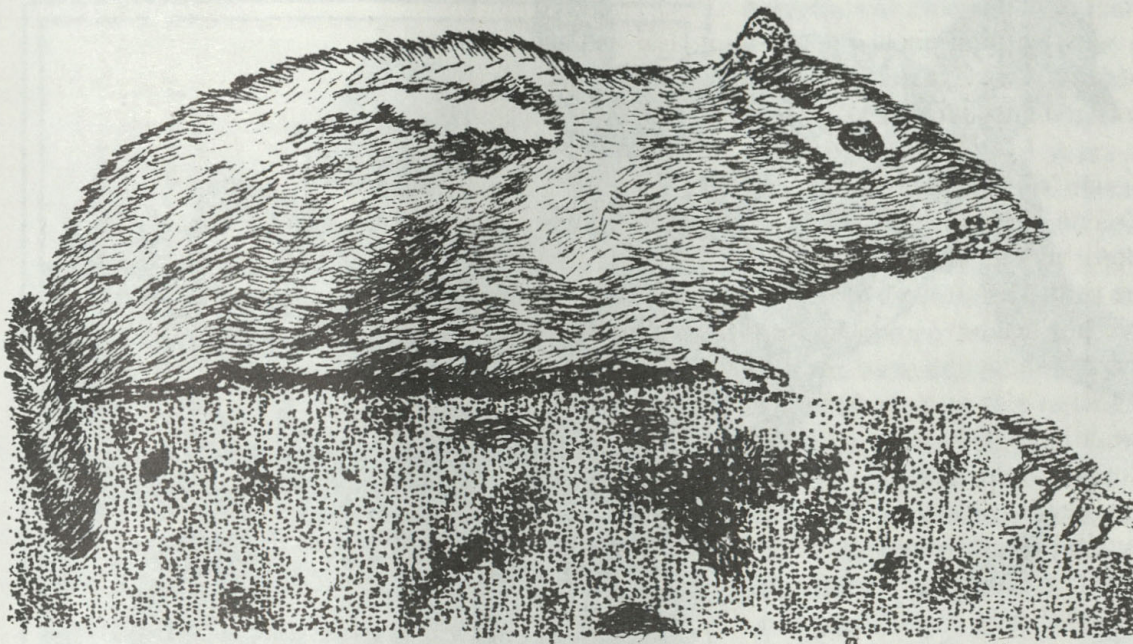
Even though she especially liked Miss Austin she had many other great teachers in school. Through grade school she had Mrs. Heiring for first grade, Mrs. Stolen for second grade, third grade was with Margaret Solka, Ellen Peterson for fourth grade, and Fanny Millimaki for fifth and sixth grades. As Donna went through junior high she had many different teachers just like today.

When Donna continued her education through high school, she had Ms. Brown for English. Donna really liked English. She especially liked Ms. Brown because she was very interested in literature. During class, Ms. Brown read to them quite dramatically. Donna thought she was a very interesting English teacher.

As Donna was remembering her days in school and the teachers, she stated, “Teachers are people of high integrity. They are good role models.” When Donna was in school the teachers knew all the students well. This was because Donna’s class only had nine people in it. She emphasized, “When I went to school you weren’t just a number, they knew you.” Students really respected the teachers then. The teachers demanded the kids respect but not in a cruel way. Students were expected to keep quiet and to be attentive during class. Students were also disciplined about clothing because they had to dress up. The girls wore skirts, and guys wore dress pants. The students were usually good but when they didn’t behave, the discipline was to stay after school. Once in a while a student was suspended for an infraction of the rules like smoking on school grounds. Even though they respected the teachers, Donna remembered all of them calling her uncle George, “Bitty.” Donna’s uncle George Annala was the principal of the National Mine School. Along with George Annala being the principal, Mr. Bath was the superintendent all the while Donna was attending school.

When Mr. Bath was the superintendent at National Mine School, Donna said students called him “Sauna.” They called him this because bathhouse was sauna in Finnish, and bath means sauna. Mr. Bath, of course, knew this because everybody called him the nickname. Mr. Bath was also their class adviser. They thought he was very interesting, and they liked him. Donna thought Mr. Bath was one of her favorites. Her uncle George Annala was also a teacher besides being the principal. Donna had him as a teacher, and she was afraid of him. However, he was a good teacher. Donna’s stated, “It is kind of hard having a relative for a teacher, though.”

While Donna went to school, she lived in the National Mine area which meant she had to walk to school everyday. Donna walked from Annala’s Store, which is the Country Market now. Donna told me about all the little shortcuts they took. “The shortcuts we took are all fenced in now because of caving grounds. The path used to lead right to the school, and we used to even take our sleighs in the winter and ride down all the hills,” she laughed. While going down these paths, the first time they walked it every year was the last week of August, or the first week of September right after Labor Day when school started. Donna stated that they were on the trails before 9:00 a.m. every morning because that’s when school began. Although school



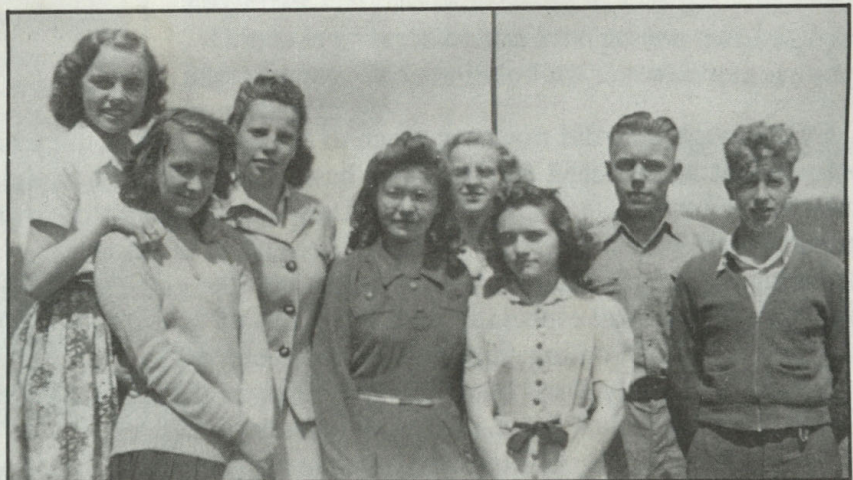
*Jerome
1941*

ended at 3:30 p.m. in grade school and 4:00 p.m. in high school, they walked the paths during noon hour for lunch also. They walked the path two times a day back and forth!

As Donna remembered, walking those paths at noon hour took about fifteen minutes. The only time that Donna took a lunch was if it was really cold, or if they had to practice for a play, or she had some other activity. If she did have to eat her lunch at school,

she ate in the lunchroom. Although the bus students ate lunch at school there were no hot lunches at that time. National Mine began serving hot lunches in the 1950's. The lunchroom was located in the first room to the right of the north entrance. The lunchroom was quite big with big tables that had the seats attached. This is the present art room. They had a milk program for which students had to pay a couple of pennies!

After Donna got through with her homework there wasn't much she and her children friends could do. If they really wanted to hang out somewhere they had to go to Ishpeming. Activities in the summer were roller-skating and baseball; although in the winter, they had lots of fun ski jumping. Donna explained how the kids built a hill and they rode the landing. While the others just skied the hill, a girl in Donna's grade jumped bumps. Donna did ski and they had a tournament on Little Bluff, the local ski hill. While Donna was in school, the students were excused from school on a February day. On this day they all went to Suicide Hill and watched ski jumpers from the ski club. Donna remembered that being a fun day of the year!



Donna (Annala) Maki, second from left, poses with classmates, from left, Evelyn Lukkari, Jean Trebilcock, MaryAnne Larson, Elaine Millimaki, Lois Toy, Lloyd Kroon and Raymond Maki.

"TEACHERS ARE ROLE MODELS"



Even though they did not have much to do out of school, they had activities at school. The extracurricular activity that was offered for boys was basketball. Although the girls could not play on the basketball team, they were allowed to go on the fan bus. They went to the out-of-town games with the team and the cheerleaders before World War II occurred. This was because of the shortage of supplies for the bus. Donna really enjoyed watching the games. Some other activities that the girls got involved in were volleyball, No He Club, and forensics. Donna had especially fond memories of the No He Club which was a club only for girls. One fond memory was of an outing they took with the club. The girls and the teacher stayed overnight at someone's camp out on County Road 581. The girls enjoyed themselves by having a weiner roast, and just having fun. Donna recalled lots of fun with the No He Club! Besides the No He Club, she also took part in forensics. Although forensics is optional now, Donna remembered forensics being required when she went to school. This was because there were so few students.

Besides all the fun they had with these activities, students had plays and programs to be involved in. The kinds of programs they had were Christmas and spring operettas and different kinds of plays. The Christmas



A last day of school outing at Champion Beach was enjoyed by (from top) Jean Trebilcock, Lois Toy, Elaine Millimaki, and Donna (Annala) Maki.



Donna plays with her grandson, Marc Maki.

operetta was more of a musical. Classes performed for a school assembly for these programs. Donna participated in these. Another thing Donna liked was the class play they put on when she was a senior.

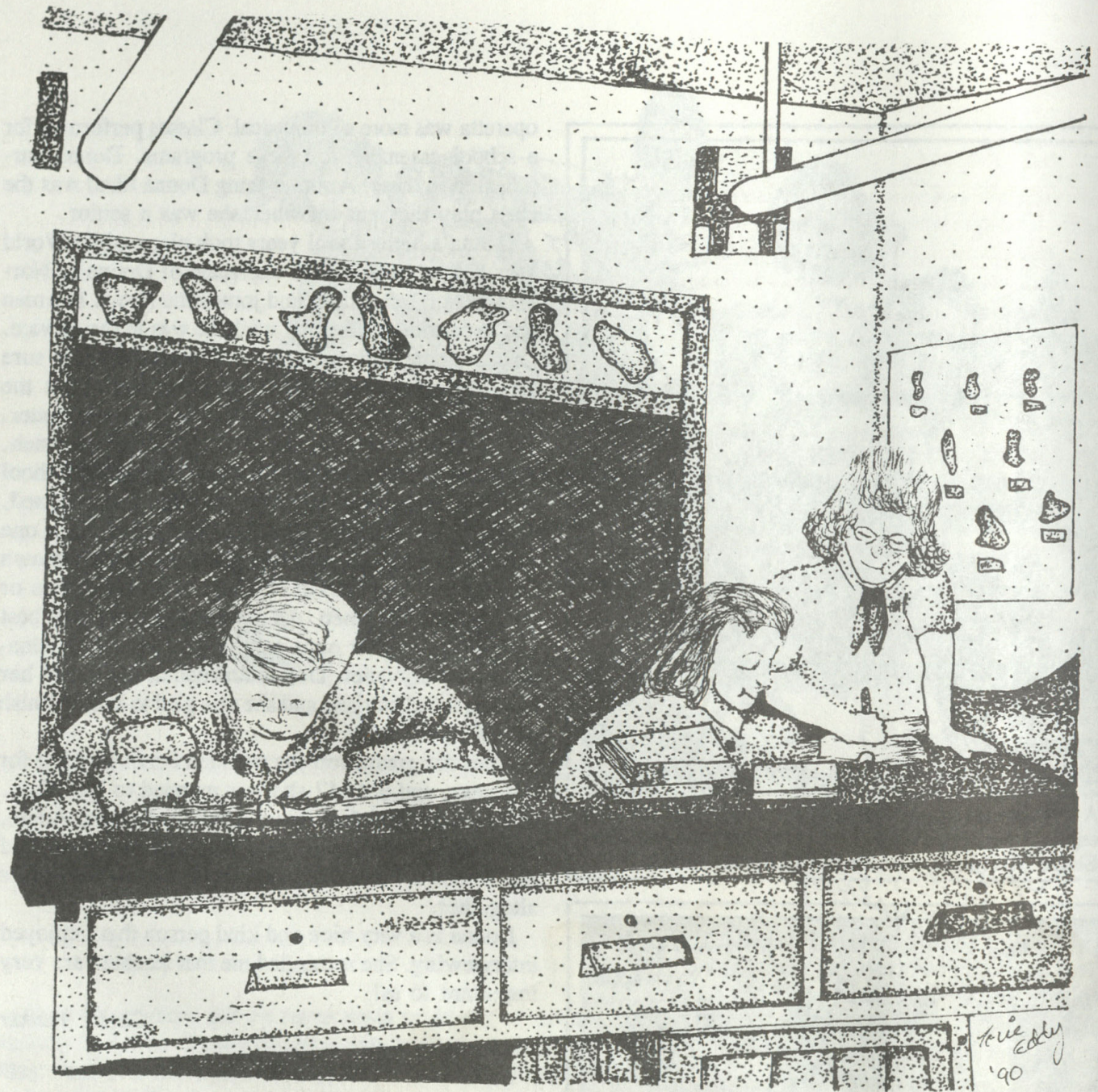
Donna's high school years took place while World War II was going on. A classmate of Donna's, Norman Korpi, left school and joined the Navy. Norman had to continue schooling while he was in the service. One thing the National Mine students did to make sure the servicemen from National Mine knew that the students were behind them, was to write a newsletter. The students sent this newsletter to the servicemen.

Donna graduated from National Mine High School in 1944. Because of the war, gasoline was rationed, so six of the students from her class piled up in one car. They drove all over the place, and to downtown Ishpeming "to goof off." There were no parties or open houses back then. All the students wore their best clothes under their caps and gowns, and the graduation was very quiet. Donna finished at the top of her class as valedictorian, and she was glad to finally finish school.

After her graduation she attended Ferris Institute for one year, and in 1947 she was married to Bill Maki. She and Bill had four boys: Donald, Robert, Adam, and Vance. Donna worked at the Negaunee Bank and the Miner's First National Bank for twenty years altogether.

Donna is a very nice and kind person that I enjoyed interviewing. She reminded me that teachers are very important to us!

— Carrie Yunker



**“KIDS TODAY ARE THE SAME
AS THEY WERE BEFORE . . . ”**

“When (Dr.) Spock came along and said, ‘let kids decide what they want to do and should do’ he made a big error! Kids are too young to decide for themselves. Adults have to make the decision until children become adults. Then they make the decisions.”

These inspiring words came from a very distinguished and interesting individual, Mr. Kenneth Lindberg,

who was born in Ishpeming on December 20, 1926. Mr. Lindberg was one of five children. Both his parents were also born in Ishpeming. His father died at the age of ninety and his mother at the age of sixty-four. Now surviving are one brother, one sister, and himself.

Mr. Lindberg decided that he wanted to pursue a career in teaching when he was in high school. He stated, "I enjoyed working with kids and it was something I thought I would like to do." He attended what is presently Northern Michigan University for four years. He continued his education at the University of Michigan where he earned his Master's Degree and in the years that followed picked up forty-one additional hours. He felt the additional education was necessary to better himself in the performance of his job. The last class he took was in 1975; but he continued to read magazines and books so that he wouldn't "fall behind."

Mr. Lindberg, having three years experience, started teaching at National Mine in 1954. He was hired at National Mine as a high school principal and teacher. He stated, "I taught seven classes and I was principal during an eight-period day. I was expected to teach seven classes, plus be the principal. So I had one free period to prepare and do all the principal's work. Which was impossible!" Fortunately for Mr. Lindberg, changes were made after several years. So instead of seven classes to teach, he only had to teach three.

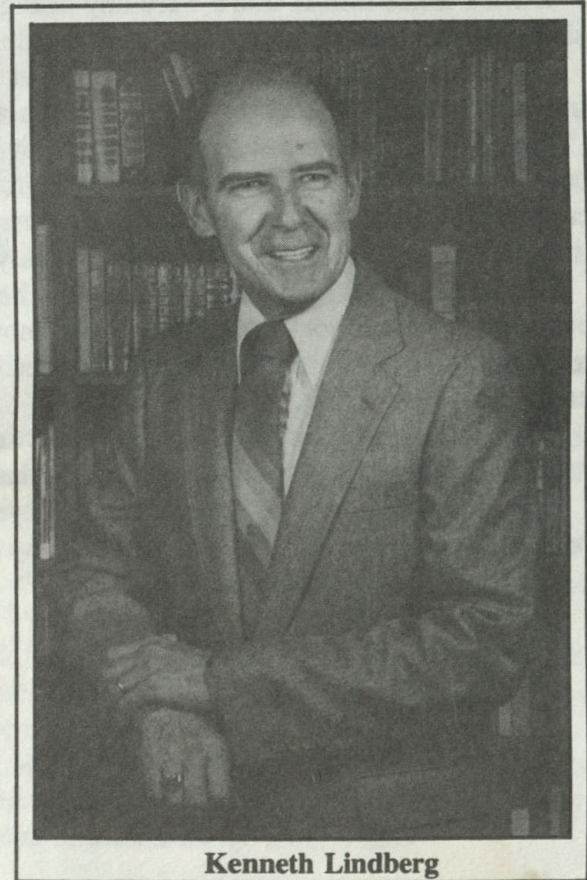
When asked what was the most difficult part of his job, he said, "Really nothing was difficult, because when you enjoy what you do, it isn't hard to do it."

Mr. Lindberg explained the growing enrollment of the National Mine School. When Mr. Lindberg started teaching in 1954, there were about 277 students in the whole district K-12, all located in the one building in National Mine. By 1972 there were about 368 students. The increase was due to the growing area along and near County Road 581.

Believe it or not, the National Mine School was the center of activity during this time period. Many people were sorry to see the National Mine School undergo reorganization. However, citizens realized it was the best thing for their children to be provided with a more complete curriculum. Mr. Lindberg was a part of that important change. He stated, "It took a lot of time and study before it actually happened." Now Westwood High School is the center of activity. But Mr. Lindberg stated, "There is still a lot of admiration towards National Mine School, because of the many projects and things like *Red Dust* that happen there."

One of the reasons the people didn't want the school to reorganize, was because of the sports teams. Mr. Lindberg seemed proud of the basketball teams they had. Patrick Gleason was the coach when Mr. Lindberg's career began. In the latter years Fran Ruesing and Gordy Chinn coached the teams. They also had a baseball team for about ten years. The baseball team didn't continue because of the expenses and short season. The track program was started so many more students could compete for individual and team honors.

Mr. Lindberg was responsible for hiring over a hundred teachers! He stated, "I think my association with them was a fulfilling experience because they were doing things that I felt were good for the children. And that made me feel good to think



Kenneth Lindberg

that I had a responsibility of hiring them and they were doing a good job for me in giving our students an excellent educational experience.”

He must have been doing a good job, because the Michigan Education Association gave him an award for being the outstanding administrator in the Upper Peninsula in 1969.

When I asked Mr. Lindberg what his fondest memories of National Mine School were, without hesitation he said, “. . . music programs that Dorothy Gleason put on.” He spoke with pride as he told me about the programs. “She was an untiring teacher and really worked hard to do it.” He told me of the many times they had to turn away spectators because there wasn’t enough room to seat all of them. He said, “It gave you a good feeling inside. To think that the parents loved their school as much as the kids.”

He then began telling me about the excellent cooks. He bragged, “We had the best cooks in the Upper Peninsula.” The chief cook at the time was Andrea Anderson. Along with many mouth-watering dishes, she made prune pie with whipped cream on top. She also served shepherd’s pie with mashed potatoes and ground meat! I wonder if Mrs. Anderson would consider returning to the National Mine School?

Mr. Lindberg believes strongly in a school having discipline. He feels that the students should have respect for their teachers who should never try to be their “buddies.” If a student did not show respect, Mr. Lindberg did not acknowledge them. The first day of school he gave his students a lecture on his expectations of student behavior. Mr. Lindberg taught like that throughout his whole teaching career. He believes that’s why he succeeded in the classroom. Mr. Lindberg stated, “. . . kids today are the same as they were before. It’s the teachers who have changed and become too lax in their demands.”

When I asked him if there were any changes in the building, he replied “. . . I would say it was in good shape when I was there and it still is. I think it looks good now.”

Mr. Lindberg played an important role at National Mine School. He was a teacher, principal and superintendent during the eighteen years he was at the National Mine School.

Though Mr. Lindberg was confident about his job, he sometimes wondered if he was getting to the students or not. But when they returned twenty years later and told him what they were doing, he knew he had accomplished a lot. “When they came back and tell you what has happened and let you know that you had a little influence in their life, it really makes you feel good!” he emphasized.

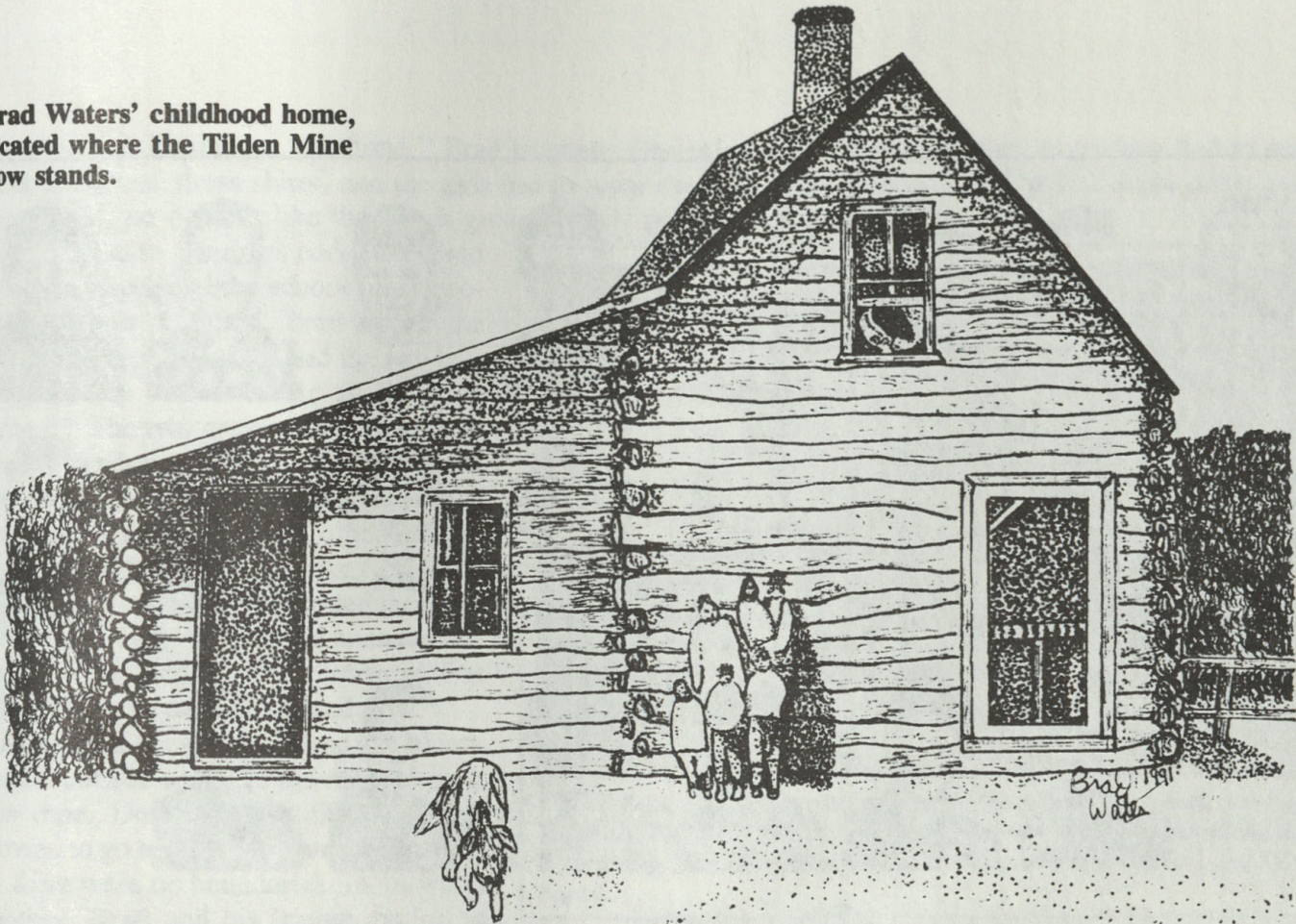
When I asked Mr. Lindberg if he would become an educator all over again, he said, “Yes. I didn’t retire because I disliked work. A person never knows how many years they have left. So I decided to retire from teaching, but I didn’t retire because I disliked teaching. I retired so I could do other things and get some other enjoyments out of life,” he emphasized.

Interviewing Mr. Lindberg was a wonderful experience for me. I learned many things from this important man. It is unfortunate for this generation that he isn’t teaching anymore.

He ended the interview by saying, “I enjoyed the people that I’ve met there (National Mine). And as I look back to it, they were the better years of my teaching life.”

— Amber Farley

Brad Waters' childhood home,
located where the Tilden Mine
now stands.



IT WAS JUST THE GREATEST PLACE THERE WAS TO GROW UP

As I talked with William "Brad" Waters I could easily recognize his affection for the National Mine School, and the great time he had growing up there.

Brad was born in 1951 in Negaunee, Michigan. He was one of two brothers and a sister all of whom attended National Mine School. As a young child he and his family moved to a farmhouse in National Mine. This farmhouse was located where the Tilden Mine now stands.

Brad first attended National Mine School in 1956 at the age of five years. Brad fondly remembered all of his grade school teachers and some of his favorites were: Mrs. Gleason, Mrs. Magnuson, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Ruesing.

From the time Brad was in fourth grade, until he graduated, he was in the school band, and he vividly remembered his band director, Mr. Pieti. Brad stated, "Mr. Pieti didn't have much discipline with us." Many times Mr. Pieti told the class to take out a piece of music so the class fumbled through their papers and pretended to take out that piece of music. Mr. Pieti raised his baton and expected the class to start playing the piece he requested. Instead, the class began to play *Marching Down Main*, a song they knew almost by heart. This went on two or three times before Mr. Pieti walked around and took away their music.



Brad's Waters' first grade class.
Brad is pictured in the bottom
row, far left.

Brad also remembered a comical story from his history class concerning a boy who had a speech impediment. This boy also liked to make spitballs. One day their teacher, Mr. Gleason, walked by the boy while he was coloring a picture. The boy had just put a big piece of paper in his mouth to make a spitball. When Mr. Gleason walked by he said, "Oh did you ever do a nice coloring job." He patted him on the back. When Mr. Gleason turned his back the boy turned to Brad and said, "I twallowed my pitball!" "He swallowed that whole big juicy gob of yellow paper," chuckled Brad.

In addition to all of his teachers, Brad deeply respected the three principals he had during his school years. They were Mr. Lindberg, Mr. Millman, and Mr. Ruesing. Of the three of them, Brad liked Mr. Ruesing the best. "He was strict in his own ways but there was leeway," emphasized Brad.

Brad also shared with me his sadness at the death of Mr. Millman. Mr. Millman was dying of cancer while Brad was in school. "He was a real good guy. He was kind of strict but he was fair with everybody," said Brad.

As for the discipline, Brad thought it was more lax when he was in school. Brad said there were a lot of pranks and fun times but they never did anything to hurt anybody. Brad said if a student was caught doing anything minor they probably just wrote spelling words. "I wrote spelling words for the last four years of

"I LOVED THE SCHOOL"

my education I think, at noontime," Brad laughed. One rule of the school was that every boy had to wear dress pants and dress shirts, and the girls had to wear dresses or skirts. Brad thought that dress codes were good ideas; he doesn't like the "rock group shirts" that some kids wear now.

In addition to the dress codes that Brad liked, he also liked the school lunch program. When I asked Brad about the lunches he replied, "We had the two best cooks in the world as far as I'm concerned!" The two cooks at that time were Andrea Anderson and Vi Culbert. Brad described the chili and the sloppy joes as the "world's best." Some other lunches Brad remembered were turkey, chicken noodle soup, sandwiches, potted meat and fresh vegetables. When Brad attended National Mine School, the cafeteria was where the art room is located now.

After Brad ate lunch, he and his friends rushed outside to make the most of their free time. During recess the kids were allowed to go anywhere around the school, for there were no boundaries. In the warm weather, Brad and his friends ran up to

the Number Three Pit in National Mine and went swimming. The girls walked around National Mine on the roads.

Brad still laughed at a story he told me about one winter day at recess when the kids were jumping off the bluff. Brad, Paul "Dooner" Nault and a few other kids were there jumping. It was Paul Nault's turn to jump so he "bailed" off the bluff and when he hit the ground he started to scream, "Oh, my leg, my leg!" Everybody else who was there was afraid they would get in trouble so they all made Paul walk on his leg up to the school. Brad was holding Paul up while he was still screaming. When they got up to the school, the safety patrol walked over to them. When Brad saw the patrol coming he let Paul go, Paul stood for a few seconds and then he fell over. Brad said to Paul, "See your leg ain't broke — you stood on it for awhile." When Paul was taken to the hospital they learned his leg was broken in two places. Brad said Paul got his revenge with his crutch.

One other story Brad told me was about this chemistry class, taught by Stan Roberts. In the classroom there were tables with four chairs at each one. The person each student sat by was their lab partner. Brad told me that the partners on the opposite side of the table liked to play tricks on Brad and his partner. One day the opposite partners played a trick on Brad so he decided to get back at them. On Brad's free period he went in the lab and got an eyedropper and a bottle of sulfuric acid. He put them at this desk and waited for the other kids at his table to come in. When the kids got in they set down their books and started the experiment. When they weren't looking Brad took a drop of sulfuric acid and put in in the middle of the opposite partner's workbook. It was a long time before they opened the workbooks again, but when they did Brad described the workbook at totally destroyed. "It looked like little moths floating out of there when they opened the book," Brad laughed.

Not only did Brad like his chemistry teacher, he really liked all of his teachers. Brad thought the teachers



Brad Waters and classmates in 1969. Standing, from left, are Ken Roberts, Nancy Wheeler, and Janet Brown. Seated, from left, are Rita (Aho) Niemisto, Brad, Rita (Culbert) Emanuelson, and Paul Nault.

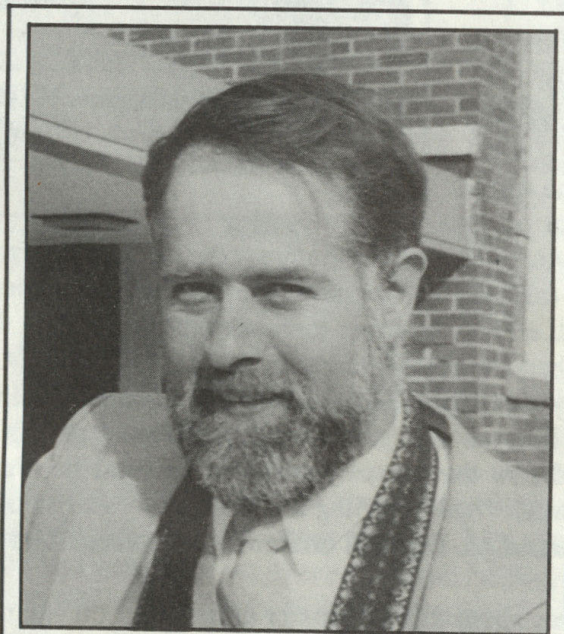
that had the greatest impact on his life were Mr. Ruesing, Mr. Millman, and Mr. Chinn. Brad thought they were very fair, and they had good discipline with kids. Brad told me how he was friends with Mr. Chinn before he became a teacher and when he did start to teach it was hard to stop calling him by his first name.

Brad graduated from National Mine School in 1969. He told me how before he went on stage a teacher told all the students not to look at their graduation certificates. Well, when it came time to go on stage, Brad was a little nervous to see if he graduated so he looked in his certificate to see. Brad saw there were enough signatures to graduate so he gave the thumbs-up sign.

Three years after Brad graduated, he married Katherine Korpi. That year they had a boy named Warren and four a half years later they had a boy named Bradley. The Waters family now lives in Ishpeming, Michigan. Brad currently works at the Empire Mine.

Brad wished to tell all the students that attend National Mine School now to make the best of their school years and just to have fun. "It's a great time of life when you don't have any cares or worries so why not have as much fun as you possibly can!" I had a great time talking to Brad and learning about his fun times at National Mine School. Thanks Dad!

— Brad Waters



Brad Waters

“I LOVED THE SCHOOL”

I was nervous as the door was opened after my knock. I was greeted with a smile and a hug from a little lady dressed in a jogging suit. I knew that I didn't have to be nervous as she began to tell me about her life and school years at the National Mine School.

Pearl (Solka) Arola was born in 1919 in the house she's living in now and where she has lived all her life. She grew up “poor” with three brothers, two of whom are deceased.

Pearl started her years at the National Mine School in 1925 as a kindergartner. “I started when they opened this new school,” she stated.

Pearl remembered many favorite teachers. One of them was Phyllis Lynn. “My home ec teacher was Phyllis Lynn, I just loved her! She helped me so much!” she said. Another favorite was “My music teacher was Dorothy Gleason, and she was marvelous!”

One of the funny stories she told me occurred when she was in sixth grade. She was dressed as a pirate for one of the school plays, and she almost lost her pants up on stage! “That was kind of embarrassing! I caught 'em but I had to hang on to them!” she laughed as she remembered that day.

Another humorous story she remembered occurred in about fourth grade. The students were studying about mines and a girl brought a railroad spike for display. The teacher went to put it



Pearl Solka, c. 1948.

in the garbage and the spike caught the hem of her dress, and tore it. Pearl said she can still remember the dress. “I could still picture it. It had airplanes on it!” she laughed.

Not everything was funny in fourth grade, for Pearl remembered one misfortune. One of her friends was crippled with a club foot and the family sent her away to get the foot operated on. Pearl recalled that the operation wasn't a total success but the girl was much better than before.

Though Pearl had fun during her school days, work was also necessary. She recalled an incident from Latin class. The class was given the assignment to write a dialogue in Latin. She hadn't done her lessons, so she and her friend planned as they were walking into class that Pearl would be the dog, and her friend the master. Her friend said, “How old are you?” in Latin and Pearl barked. Then she said in Latin what Pearl had said when she was barking. “We got away with it!” she laughed as she remembered.

Discipline was also a major part of school. “We had discipline, but they were also our friends,” she stated referring to her teachers. An example was when she had to learn the *Star Spangled Banner* and missed one word. Consequently, she had to write the word over twenty-five times. After that, anyone who missed a word wrote it over fifty times. “These were the ways we were punished in school,” Pearl stated. If students were caught chewing gum, they had to wear it on their nose all day long.

A dress code was also enforced. The boys wore dress pants while the girls wore skirts or dresses. Pearl remembered the clothing restrictions for boys. “We used to call them overalls; you'd get them for a dollar a pair, but the boys were not allowed to wear them to school! They had to wear dress pants!” she stated.

While they had dress codes and rules, Pearl remembered there was also time for extracurricular activities such as basketball games, and she attended all the home games. The opponents included Palmer, Michigamme, Champion, Republic, and Gwinn. Just the team members rode on the bus to different schools. Pearl recalled rivalry and excitement at those games. She and Verna Lampi led the cheers, but there were no real uniforms

or official cheerleaders. Most of the boys in National Mine High School were on the team, and they did really well she stated.

Another extracurricular activity she remembered and loved was the Glee Club which was a singing group that put on a couple performances a year. They received a pin and a certificate every year for participating in a certain number of concerts. At Christmas time, students had a party, exchanged gifts and received an orange and a small bag of candy. "An apple and an orange and a small bag of candy meant a lot to us," emphasized Pearl.

In addition to school and the fun extracurricular activities, Pearl remembered many games she played in her youth. Some included "Auntie, Auntie-I-Over," "Kick the Can," "Hide and Go Seek," and "Run, Sheep, Run." When they skied, they didn't have expensive ski outfits and skis, for they used what they found. If they were lucky, they had an old pair of skis with inner tube back straps for the bindings. Another winter "toy" was "skippers." A "skipper" was made from a barrel with "feet" on the bottom made for one person. Pearl remembered a lot of fun on those.

During her senior year, Pearl worked in the superintendent of National Mine School's office and at the National Youth Demonstration. She walked the three miles to and from school and work every day. Pearl graduated with eleven classmates in 1937 and was married a few years later. She and her husband, Jack Arola, opened a dry cleaning business. They bought the J & L Cleaners in Ishpeming in 1960. She sewed for her customers, and fixed clothing that needed repairs. She still does repairs for some of her old customers. "They're real good to me, and I'm real good to them," she said as she remembered her customers. Pearl's husband died in 1980, and she sold the business in 1984.

After Pearl retired in 1984, she did a lot of volunteer work which she still does. She works at the gift shop in the Bell Memorial Hospital, and she belongs to the Business and Professional Women's group. She's on the advisory board for the Salvation Army, and on the Social Administry Board at church. In the year 1984-85, she was named "Woman of the Year" by the Business and Professional group out of 123 members from Ishpeming, National Mine, Negaunee, Republic, and Champion. She was presented a plaque, a corsage, and a pin imprinted with "Woman of the Year." "I never dreamt that I would be picked," she stated. Pearl loves to sew and do handwork, reading, and travel. She and her niece went to London last spring. She recalled taking trips to Nova Scotia, out East, and to the Smokey Mountains.

Pearl recalled many changes to National Mine School and the town. The biggest change to the school occurred when Westwood High School was built and the district consolidated. At one time, Pearl knew almost everyone in National Mine, but now she says there's so many new families whom she doesn't know. Other changes include the loss of other businesses such as the Hercules Powder Plant which employed a lot of her friends' husbands. When it closed, many moved to Salt Lake City in Utah.

When asked about her years at National Mine School, she concluded, "It was great! I loved the school!"

— Tina Hill

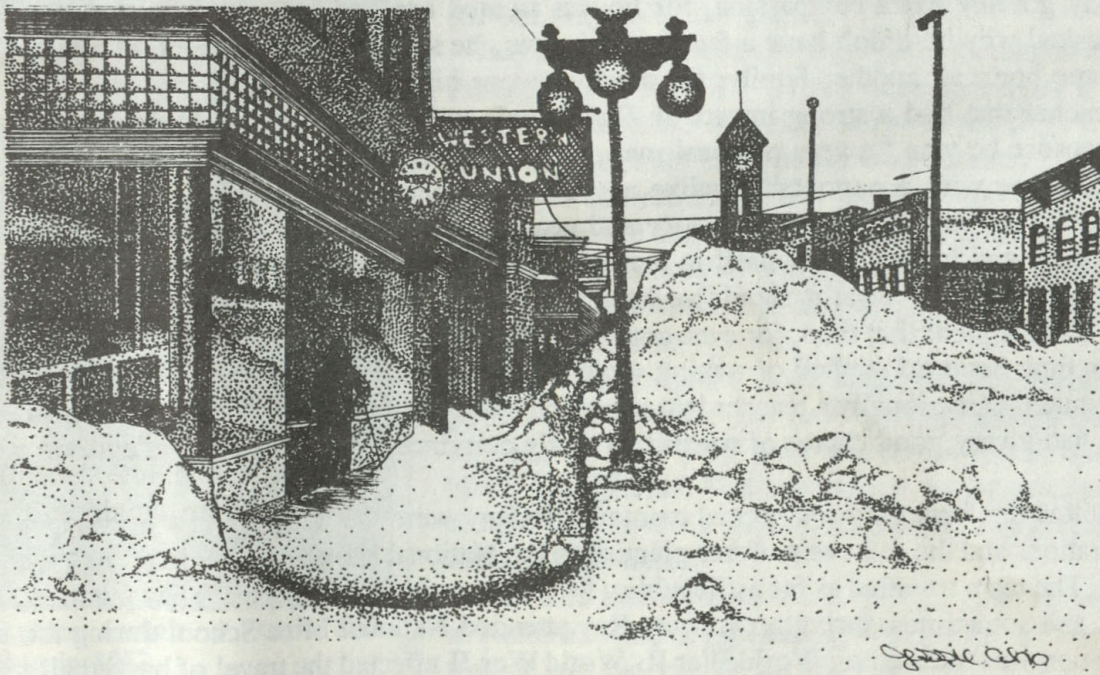


Pearl Arola (right) and friend Nelma Kangas pictured during a Champion Beach outing with their Girl Scout troop in 1942.



Pearl (Solka) Arola

Mr. and Mrs. Arola's business was located just a few blocks from this historic Ishpeming scene.



NATIONAL MINE ROOTS

"It's real interesting how the whole Annala family has roots in the National Mine School," Randy Annala said as Ray Annala, Randy Annala, and I sat around the kitchen table at Ray's home.

"There have been Annalas here at National Mine School since the early 1900's. My grandfather, my great-uncles Andrew, Donald, and George Annala, and my father and his sisters all graduated from National Mine. And Alice Johnson returned to teach here," stated Randy Annala, the next generation of Annalas, who is presently my history teacher.

Ray Annala's experience as a student at the National Mine School started as a kindergartner in the fall of 1934. His first day of school was quite comical because another boy had the same kind of jacket, and they got the two jackets mixed up. As a kindergarten student, Ray had Dorothy Gleason as a teacher. She was a very patient person and a good music teacher. After Ray's kindergarten year, she left school to raise a family. She did not return until his senior year.

Mrs. Gleason was not the only elementary teacher that brought back a strong memory. His fourth grade teacher, Miss Fanny Millimaki, was a handicapped person who had lost one of her hands. She was a "strict disciplinarian and wouldn't hesitate to use a ruler on the back of the hands," he stated.

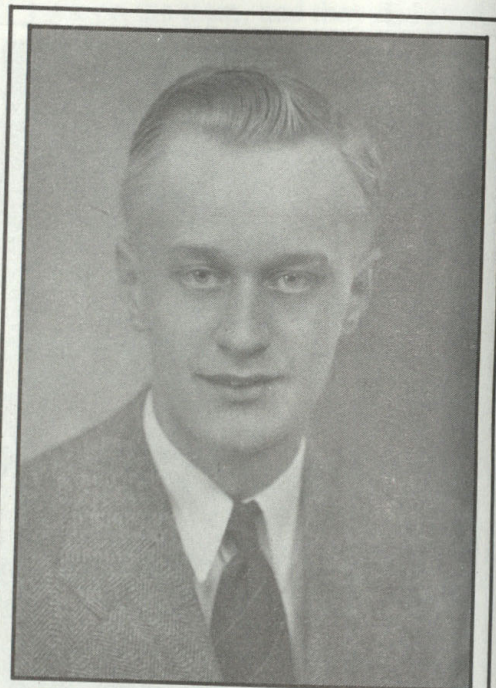
As he moved on to junior and high school, Ray Annala had other interesting people for teachers. His uncle, George Annala, was his history and geography teacher. He was a good teacher, who appreciated a good effort, and was fair in grading. "There was no horseplay in his class; it was all business," he emphasized. Being the principal at the same time made George Annala a strict disciplinarian. Just because he was a relative didn't mean that Ray got any extra compassion, for he was treated exactly like any other student. When George Annala was asked why he didn't have a family of his own, he said, "We had enough of a family at school." He didn't come home to another family; the students were his family.

Another teacher that had a strong impact on Ray Annala was Mr. Austin Lindberg. Ray appreciated him very much because he was "a very personal man, and being one of the few boys in a 'girl-oriented' typing class, he treated me with a partnership unlike any other teacher," he recalled.

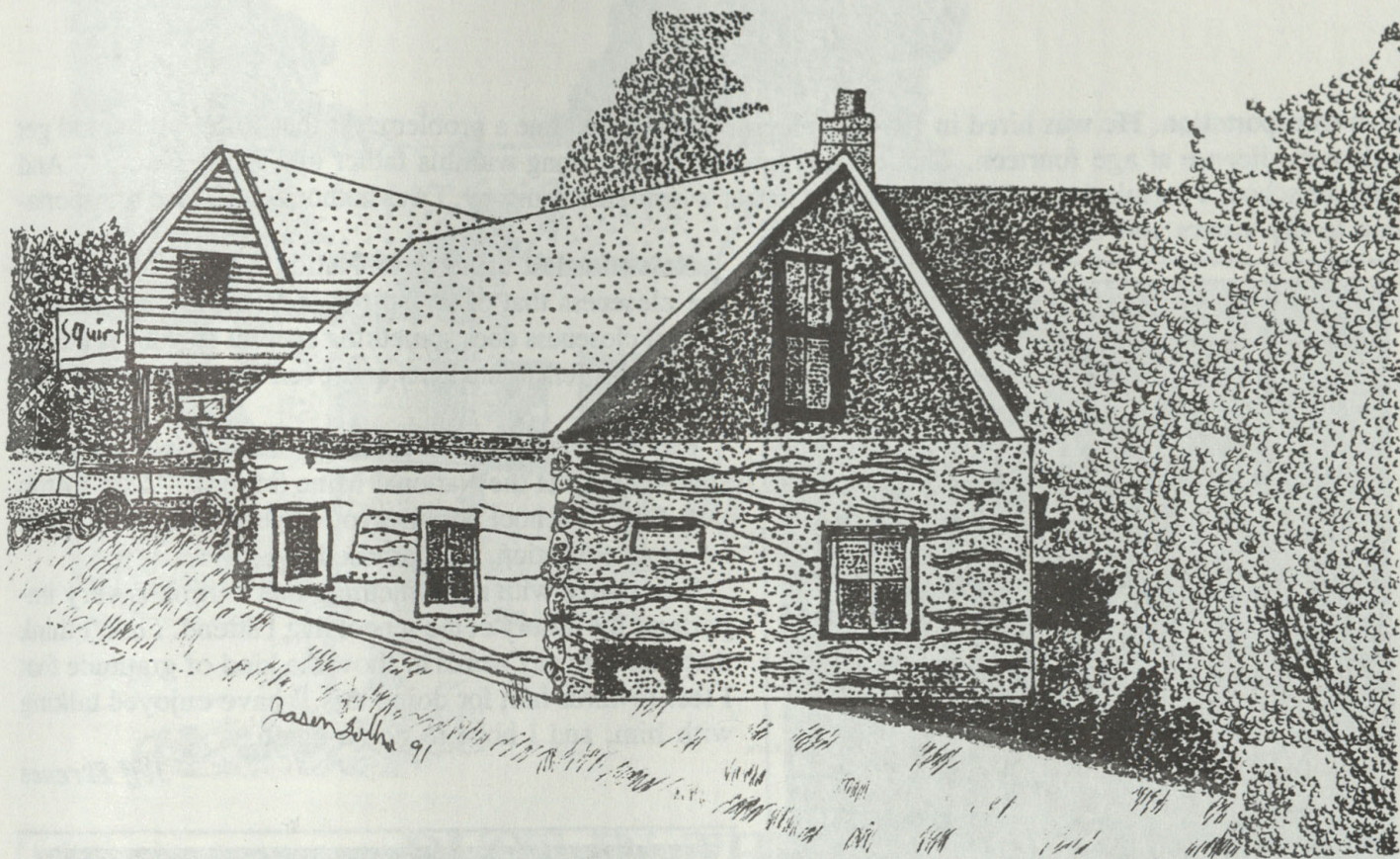
Two of Ray's favorite subjects were history and geography. These were his favorite subjects because he was good in them and he applied himself in these classes. He had trouble in geometry and algebra because his attention span "wasn't what it should've been," he stated.

Discipline was taught at that time, for even conduct in the halls was strictly regulated. The main punishment given was the time-honored method of writing something one hundred times. As far as corporal punishment, there wasn't much. Occasionally a teacher laid a hand on someone, but that was considered normal discipline. "Mr Annala had a very good choice of words that easily convinced you that your one episode was enough," Ray stated.

Some activities that brought back special memories to Ray were the field trip to the Prison Dairy Farm to view the operations and the fall event of tree planting in the National Mine School Forest. Ray also participated in basketball. The team traveled as far as Republic, Michigamme, and Marquette. They practiced after school, after supper, and sometimes during noon hour. Ray attended National Mine School during the time that the nation's attention was focused on World War II. World War II affected the travel of basketball teams because



Ray Annala's graduation picture.



Ray and Arlene Annala at Ray's 10th Class Reunion in 1957.

the school was not able to furnish transportation after a certain point in the war. Mr. Bath and Mr. Gleason both furnished rides for the players to the games.

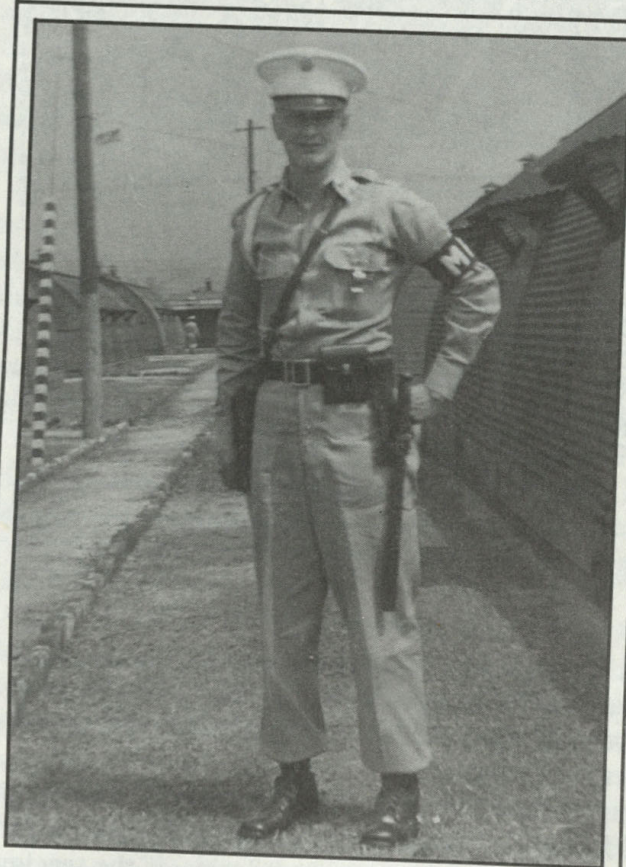
Ray also experienced shortages and rationing in the classroom during World War II. "There were shortages in lumber and metal. All defense materials were on priority. If the teacher allowed, we could bring in our own lumber." Because of the shortages and rationing, half the year was spent on blueprint reading and the other half was spent on drafting. Some teachers required students to do current events. The school subscribed to *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Life* and the *Mining Journal*, for their information about the war.

What is unique about Ray's story is that he was also a military policeman during the Korean War. He was on a train going into Nagasaki after it had been bombed in World War II. "It was bleak and desolate. Nothing was left on the outskirts of the city except for maybe a cement slab. The inner city was being rebuilt," he stated.

Ray also had a job as a bus driver while he was a student at National Mine School during World War II. The school contracted two individuals for the job. They had to furnish their

NATIONAL MINE SCHOOL

own transportation. He was hired in 1944 when gas rationing became a problem. At that time, you could get a driver's license at age fourteen. The job was offered to Ray along with his father and Rudy Kemp. "And with the school's permission and an o.k. from my father's insurance company, I was authorized to give transportation to my sisters and three other students."



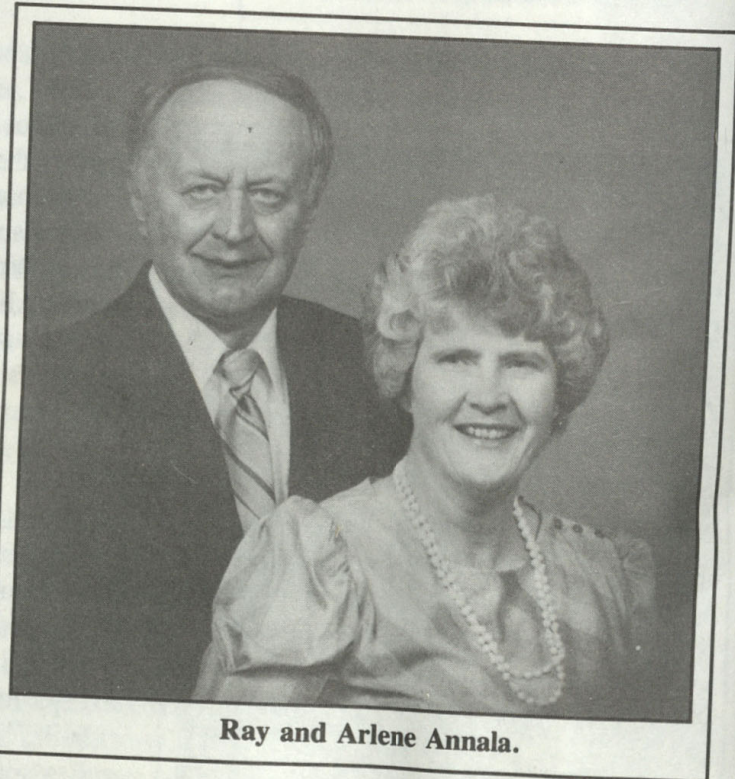
Ray Annala in Kobe, Japan, 1952.

Ray's fondest memory of National Mine School was the closeness that often isn't evident in a large school. "That closeness does something special to your relationships with fellow students and even the teachers," Ray emphasized.

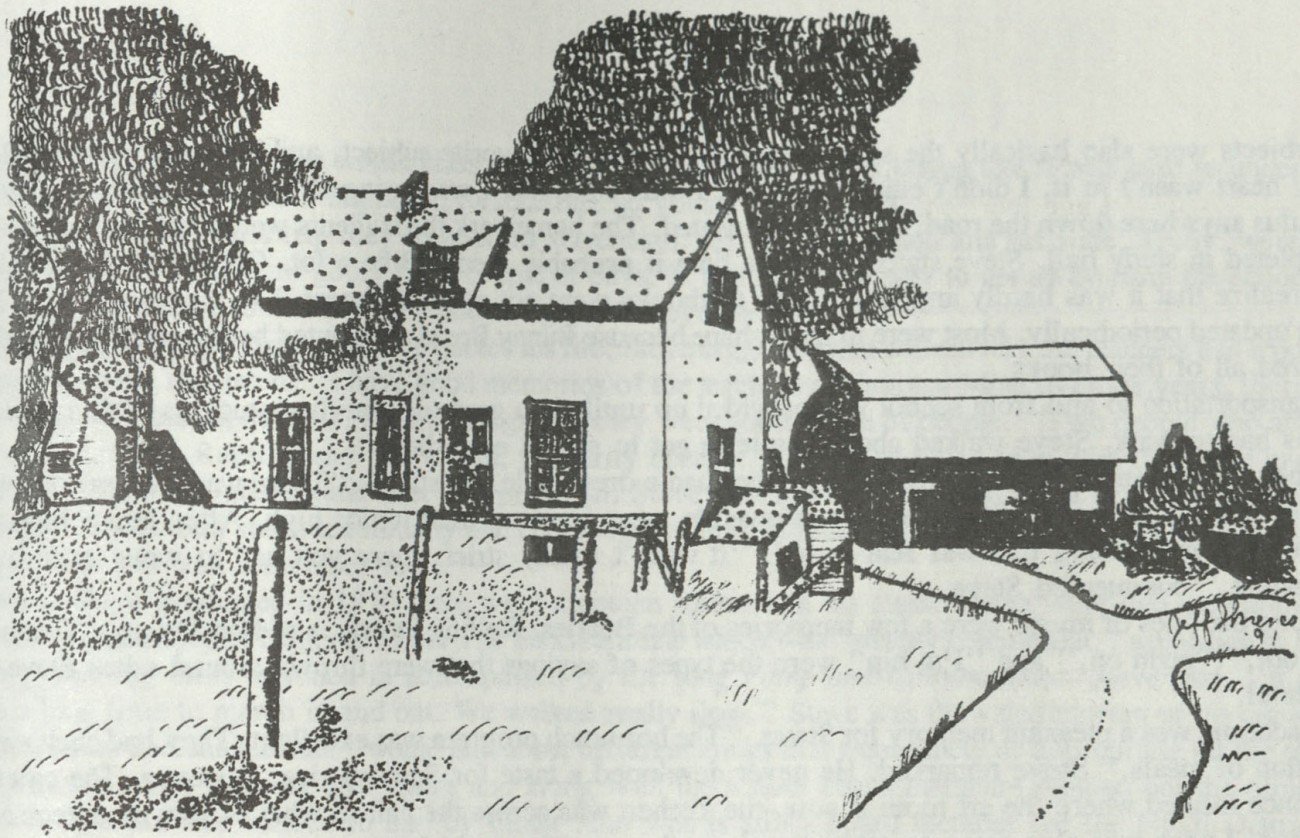
Ray also has a special message to share with the present students at the National Mine School. "Don't drop out. Stay in school because your livelihood will depend on your education," he advised.

Ray shared with me something that I think is very important: the history of the school that I attend. I don't think that there are any words to show the kind of gratitude that I feel towards him for doing this. I have enjoyed talking with him, and I hope to do so again.

— Jeff Skrenes



Ray and Arlene Annala.



DUST IN THE WIND

“If you couldn’t get interested in the classes the friends always made it enjoyable,” was Mr. Steve Swanson’s response when asked about his fondest memories of National Mine School.

Steve Swanson was born in Ishpeming on September 24, 1952. Steve has two younger brothers, Jack and Kevin, who both attended the National Mine School.

When Steve was five he started kindergarten at the National Mine School. His teacher was Mrs. Gleason. As he got older and continued on to elementary school, he recalled most of his teachers: Mrs. Magnuson, first grade; Mrs. Waara, second grade; Mrs. Mayhew, third grade, and Mrs. Wasberg, fourth grade.

Sixth grade science was a vivid memory for Steve. It was taught by Mr. Fran Ruesing, a well-remembered teacher of Steve’s. “We did some really neat projects in the classroom,” stated Steve. One he specifically recalled was incubating eggs. “We incubated eggs right from the stage where they were laid over the several periods, and every couple days we would break one open and see what kind of development was taking place.” History was also taught by Mr. Ruesing. Another junior high teacher that was remembered was Mrs. Braamse. A few high school teachers that came to mind were Mrs. Hebert, Mr. Chinn, and Mr. Keto. Mr. Lindberg was the principal when Steve started school, but Mr. Ruesing soon took over.

Good behavior was a major priority in the classroom. “Probably the one thing that I remember most was just how in charge all of the teachers were, especially the women!” exclaimed Steve. The teachers expected the students to respect them as a teacher and they really believed in discipline. “For the most part none of the kids really stepped out of line. The teachers were the bosses in the classroom. You were there to learn and that was what was expected,” Steve stated. Punishments were similar to those used today. Students were suspended if they didn’t follow the school’s rules.

Subjects were also basically the same. Science was Steve's favorite subject, and math the most difficult. "My heart wasn't in it, I didn't enjoy it because I didn't see that I was going to be using trigonometry and calculus anywhere down the road," Steve commented. The homework the students were assigned was usually completed in study hall. Steve stated, "At the time it probably seemed like a lot. Once you get to college you realize that it was hardly anything." The textbooks were not much different than they are today. They were updated periodically. Most were in good shape because Bunny Bread distributed book covers and students covered all of their books.

Transportation to and from school was provided up until sixth grade. From then students within a certain radius had to walk. Steve walked about a mile to get to school each day.

When Steve went to National Mine School they had a dress code. He stated, "There was a dress code when we got into junior high." Students were allowed to wear jeans up until junior high. After junior high they couldn't wear anything that was real casual. "It wasn't totally strict where you had to wear uniforms or something," commented Steve.

Along the lines of music were a few memories of the Beatles, Rolling Stones, and Bob Dylan. "Groovy," "far out," "right on," and "I'm hip" were the types of sayings that were thrown around when Steve was in school.

Lunchtime was a pleasant memory for Steve. "The hot lunch program was excellent. They had such a good selection of meals," Steve remarked. He never developed a taste for Spanish rice, however. The cafeteria was once located where the art room is now, the kitchen was across the hall in what is now an extension of the shop. Lunch was also eaten on tables set up in the gym for several years.



Steven Swanson's Senior Class Play, 1970.

Extracurriculars were a favorite of Steve's. He participated in basketball and was captain of the team in his senior year. He also was active in baseball and track. Steve also participated in both his junior and senior class plays. "There were no extracurriculars for girls to speak of as far as sports go, but everybody was able to participate in something if they wanted to," Steve commented. Winning in tournaments pulled the school together and encouraged people to get more involved in the extracurriculars.

There was only one major tragedy while Steve was in school, and that was the death of classmate Patty

Ostola in eighth grade. The whole class attended the funeral. At such a young age it was hard to understand death and to realize that it happened to someone so young.

For their senior class trip they traveled to Wisconsin. Mr. Peter Johnson and his wife, Trudy, were their chaperones. "We just got goofy for a couple of days. It was kind of a way to get away from the school and spend a little bit of time with the students again," Steve commented.

When asked about teachers who impacted his life, Steve suggested that collectively the teachers had a positive impact on him. He stated, "I have good memories of the teachers at National Mine over the years, there isn't one that really stands out, but, I think as a group, they were good bunch of people." Two people who affected Steve were Mr. Ruesing and Mr. Chinn, primarily because he spent so much time with them. He had Mr. Ruesing for several classes and later as a principal. Steve remembered Mr. Chinn as a new teacher who also "coached basketball and track initially and ended up coaching baseball as well" Steve also stated, "It's people like that you remember more."

When Steve graduated in 1970 there were nineteen students in his class. There were two ceremonies involved in graduation at National Mine. The Baccalaureate which was "strictly ceremonial," according to Steve. The graduating class marched in accompanied by the song *Pomp and Circumstance*. Steve said, "It didn't take a long time to march in and out. We walked really slow." Steve was the valedictorian of his class. The valedictorian and salutatorian "would talk about different things that were timely or appropriate for the class." As principal, Mr. Ruesing also spoke and along with the school board members handed out the diplomas. Steve's diploma was handed to him by Elmer Aho who is still a board member for the NICE District.

For Steve, graduation was not just a ceremony. It was a sense of accomplishment. He felt, "There's a kind of sadness in graduation," he stated. "You know that you're not going to be close to a lot of the friends and the people in the school anymore. You know life is changing for you, things are going to be different." Steve also realized that graduation also meant growing up. "You felt you finally reached the stage where you're going to become an adult, where you felt like an adult, and hope you'll be treated like one." Steve emphasized at the end of thirteen years at National Mine he felt "happy" and that it was "time to accept the next challenge."

Steve's fondest memories are of friends that he made and grew up with at National Mine. Steve stated, "The fun of knowing these characters you grow up with, and personalities you go to school with make school enjoyable when at times school didn't fire you up."

Steve has maintained contact with some of his fellow students. He said, "It's always fun to get together with people you went to school with." Steve compared many fellow students to "dust in the wind, they go in different directions . . . to different walks of life." He said, "Most people are like my family . . . your children become the most important people in your life in addition to other family members." Although he had strong ties to many of his friends, Steve stated, "It's just a lot tougher to maintain those ties," when you don't see each other as often as you did in school.

Steve Swanson graduated from Central Michigan University and married Lori Soderberg. They had two girls named Jessica and Jennifer. He is currently working for Michigan Financial Corporation and is the marketing officer for the corporation. Steve is also the President for the NICE Community School Board of Education.

— Lori Ovink



Steve Swanson and his mother are flanked by Steve's brothers Jack (left) and Kevin (right).

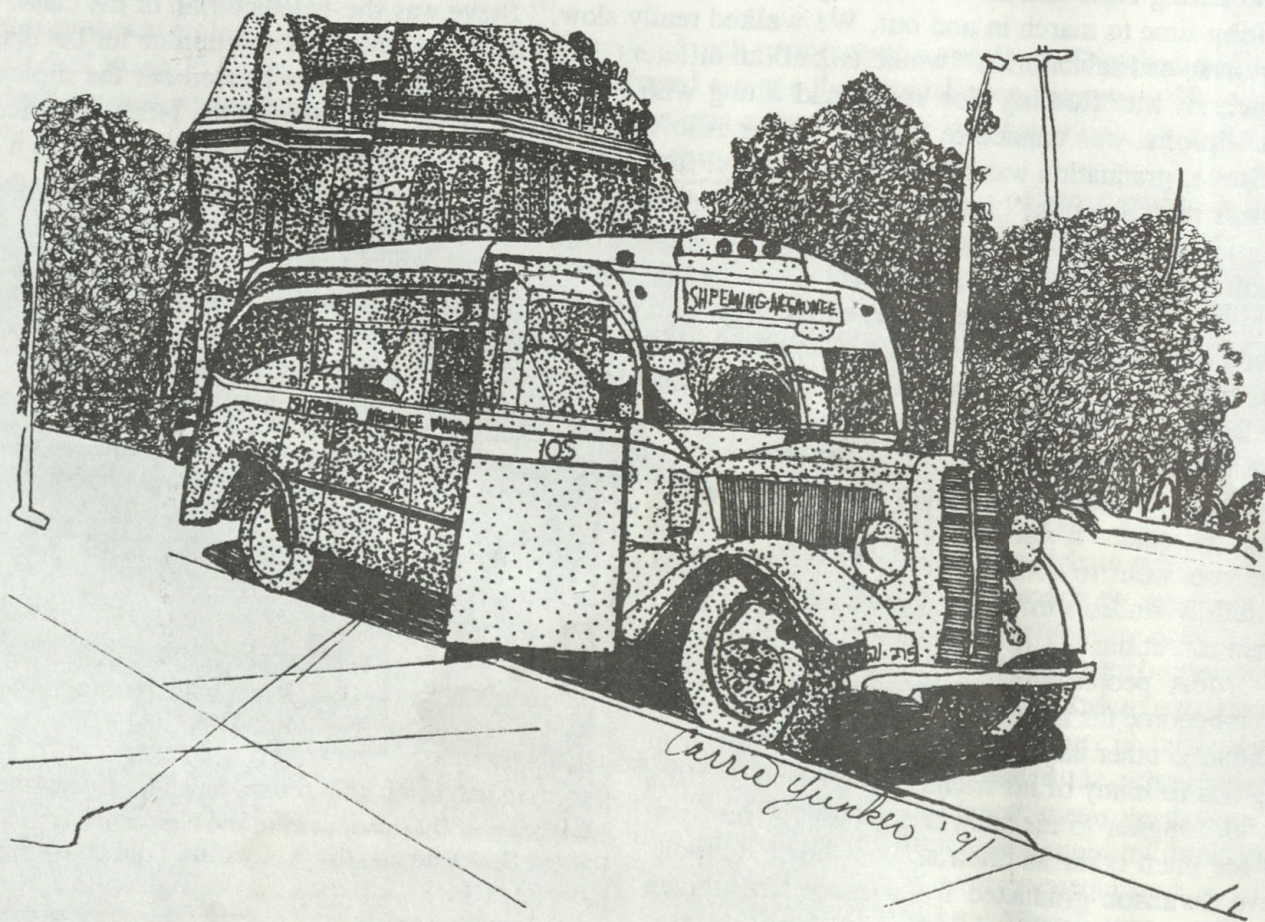
“I HAVE ONLY GOOD MEMORIES OF NATIONAL MINE”

When I talked to Dan Rintamaki I saw that he had really positive feelings about the National Mine School. Dan Rintamaki was born on August 11, 1935, which would make him fifty-six in August of 1991. Dan has three sisters, twins Marlene and Margaret and another sister Kay.

Dan started first grade at National Mine School in 1941. His teacher was Mrs. Magnuson who was Miss Mason at that time. Dan recalled that in first grade Miss Mason had the class divided up according to their reading ability. One group was called the squirrels while the other was called the bunnies.

Mrs. Sundberg, Dan's second grade teacher, was a very good teacher. She had the class monitoring the weather. They took measurements, and they kept a diary of the weather. Dan said, "It helped hold the class together during the World War II years." Some of his other elementary teachers were: Mrs. Gleason, who taught music, Mrs. Warnberg for third grade, and Mrs. Johnson who taught both fourth and fifth grade.

In sixth grade Dan's teacher was Mrs. Trick. In junior high, Mr. Gleason taught shop, where Dan got to



Bus transportation to and from school years ago was very difficult. Pictured here is an old bus that serviced the Ishpeming and Negaunee area.

make things out of metal and wood. Dan recalled that Mr. Bath was the superintendent. Mr. George Annala, Dan stated, was "A very dedicated person. He had very high standards, and he was an excellent teacher. He expected his student to put forth their best effort and when they did they were rewarded for it. He was a very fair teacher in marking. If someone tried real hard even though they weren't doing real well, he gave them a lot of credit. He was a very, very good teacher and principal." I realized that Mr. Annala had a great impact on Dan's life. He stated this very strongly, "Mr. Annala who was also the principal had a very sound, stable attitude toward society, toward learning, and I carried that respect for him even onto this day."

Dan's favorite subjects were math and history until they started to get too complicated. He recalled that another favorite subject was shop, which did not offer as much as today's classes, but it was still fun. His most difficult subject was chemistry, and the more advanced math classes. He did not recall having any serious trouble in those subjects, but the subject he really disliked was economics.

Discipline wasn't a real problem when Dan attended school, for he said everybody had a very high respect for teachers; and the teachers had a firm control over the students. Consequently, there were very few discipline problems. The school was not perfect, for there were some trouble makers. Sometimes the bigger kids picked on the smaller kids. If a student did something wrong they were either talked to by the principal or the superintendent in the office. If the infraction was something of a more serious nature or maybe a second offense the student was expelled from school and required to have their parents come to school to discuss the matter and resolve the problem.

Of course, in the middle of the school day came lunch time. A lunch ticket cost ten or fifteen cents for a good meal. The cook was Mrs. Otto Anderson. Much of the food was government surplus which was cooked right on the premises in the cooks' room which is presently part of the industrial arts room.

Students enjoyed a morning and afternoon recess of fifteen minutes. The lunch hour was one hour. Dan played either baseball, basketball, or in the spring football during the afternoon recess.

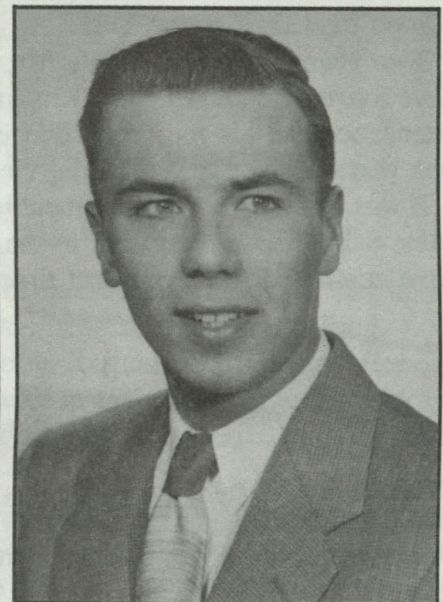
Dan stated that the only extracurriculars at National Mine High School were basketball and forensics. Dan played basketball and the National Mine team won the tournaments in 1951-52, and in the 1952-53 seasons they were district champions. The team was nearly the runners-up in the U.P. finals which in those days was called the state finals. National Mine was a Class E school.

The team traveled from game to game in a driving trainer's car and the superintendent's car. All the fans rode in a bus, "At that time there were only two busses in the district, one privately owned and one owned by the district," said Dan.

The most awaited program at National Mine School was the Christmas program, which was directed by Mrs. Gleason who was the kindergarten and music teacher. Everyone who went to National Mine School participated in one way or another. Another program at the National Mine School was the Spring Operetta.

One funny story Mr. Rintamaki remembered involved one of the Christmas plays. "Santa had made a mistake and for Christmas we all received dolls, we acted this out through the whole play and the final part was the three of us on stage rocking out little dolls," Dan replied laughing.

At the end of the high school years came the graduation ceremony; Dan graduated in 1953. "The graduation



Dan Rintamaki graduated from National Mine in 1953.

ceremony," recalled Dan, "was very simple and it didn't last very long. The class valedictorian and salutatorian gave a short speech. There were a few songs by the girls' music classes. The processional was pretty much the same as it is now."

The biggest change in the school since Dan attended is the number of courses that are offered and especially the vocational courses now available at Westwood High School. Another change is in the variety of extra-curricular activities available to the students.

"I have only good memories of the National Mine School, I don't have any bad memories," Dan emphasized. It was a little closer relationship being that the school was small — kindergarten through high school — there weren't many students. "It seemed as though you knew everyone so there was a little more like a family atmosphere which seems to be lacking today. I'll hold those as good memories," stated Dan.

Mr. Rintamaki's message for the students of today was, "Take advantage of your school years, try to work at those things you might be especially good in, try to learn all you can about them and if you have some ideas about further education to take all the preparatory courses and things that you can now that would really help you if you go on to school. Even if you didn't go on to school, I think it is important to make the most of your school days and years because they only happen to you once."

"The National Mine School as it is now and as it was in those days was high, high standards and was recognized in the education field. Many people who graduated from National Mine High School became successful in the education field and the business world and so on. I think all in all the National Mine School district was a good district," stated Dan.

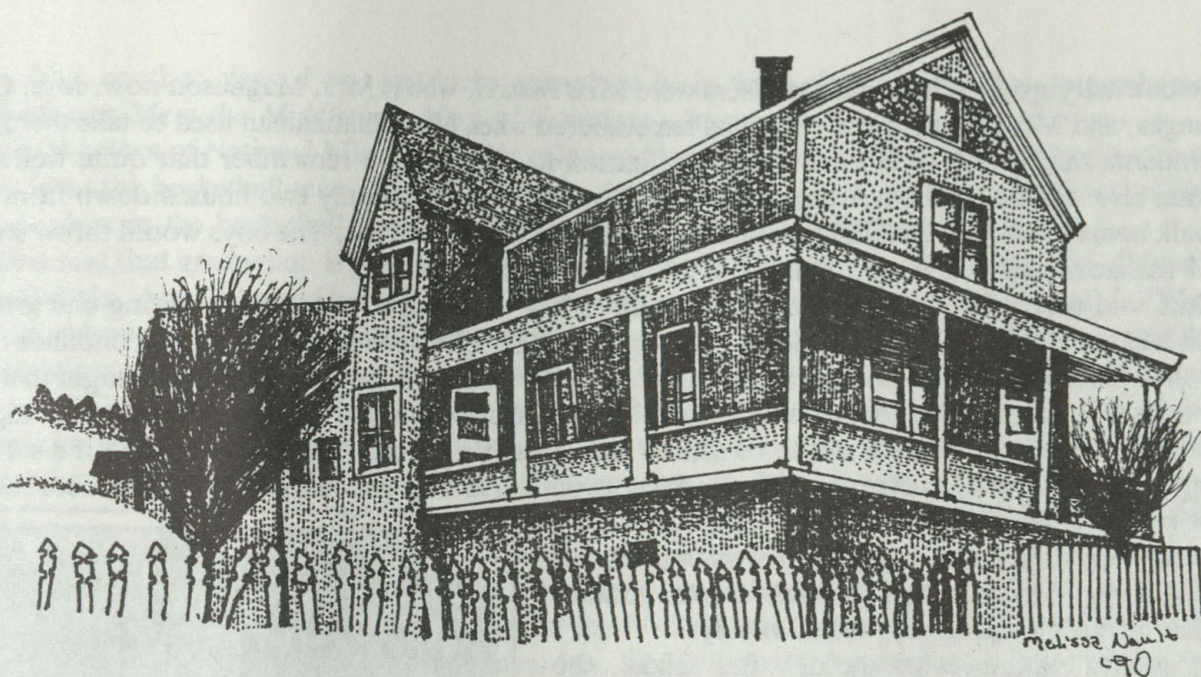
Two years after graduation, Mr. Rintamaki married Marilyn Huotari, a Champion native. He and his wife have fourteen children. The Rintamaki family has many years invested in the National Mine School; for his attendance and his fourteen children's attendance totaled together adds up to over one hundred and seventy one years at the National Mine School!

It was a pleasure and an enjoyable experience to be able to talk to Mr. Rintamaki. He made the old National Mine School seem very real to me. He made me realize that the high standards and expectations of the past have continued to the present time.

— Eric Bashaw

The Rintamaki family — back row, from left: Martha, Peter, Matthew, Ed, Curt, Carl, Aleta; seated, from left: Lois, Cheryl, Mrs. Marilyn Rintamaki, Mr. Dan Rintamaki, Corinne, Cathy; front row, from left: Eva, Brett and Tim.





“GOING TO SCHOOL IS THE BEST TIME OF YOUR LIFE”

Pat (Pietro) Kroon is “one of a kind.” When I walked in she gave me a big welcome, as always. Her house is decorated with all kinds of crafts, from wooden cows to big fern plants hanging from the ceiling.

Pat Kroon, my grandma, was born on August 26, 1932, on Cherry Street in Negaunee, Michigan. Her dad was born in National Mine in 1900. “I think my mother was born in Negaunee in 1906,” she stated. Grandma has one sister, Mary Kent, who lives in Marquette, and two brothers. One brother, Joe Pietro, lives on Little Perch Lake. The other brother lives in Grand Junction, Colorado.

Grandma married Lloyd Kroon in 1950 and had three children. The oldest is Douglas Kroon who lives in the Green Creek Location and has his own trucking business. Daughters Donna (Kroon) Harris and Pam (Kroon) Michaud also live in the Green Creek location. Grandma has four grandchildren, “Who I dearly love,” she emphasized.

Grandma started to go to the National Mine School in 1937. “School started promptly at 9:00 a.m. and got out at 4:00 p.m., and had one hour for lunch,” said Grandma.

There was a hot lunch at the school but Grandma went home for lunch every day. Therefore, Grandma had to walk a total of four miles a day. “Sometimes I ran, sometimes I walked,” Grandma recalled.

When Grandma was in kindergarten she had a dog who came to meet her all the time and protect her, “So that if any stranger came near me, that dog would really growl, and they would be scared away,” stated Grandma.

Grandma walked to school every day but there was a bus for other students if they lived a mile or more away from school. Most of Grandma’s friends rode the bus she walked with some girls. When I asked if the roads were paved yet, Grandma replied, “If I remember rightly, they weren’t paved — they were still gravel.”

If the elementary grades Grandma's teachers were Miss Mason, who is Mrs. Magnuson now, Mrs. Gleason, Mrs. Kangas, and Mrs. Raatikainen. Grandma remembered when Mrs. Raatikainen used to take them on field trips. Grandma said, "We went once to the fire station in Ishpeming. I remember that quite well."

Grandma also stated, "I always remember when Mr. Bath who lived only two houses down from school, would walk home for lunch or would be walking to school in the winter time. The boys would throw snowballs at him. I realized later that wasn't real nice. We all laughed at the time."

Grandma said when she went to school that the three R's were taught — reading, writing and arithmetic. They also had penmanship, "and I think that was a good idea," Grandma said. She liked economics the best, because she turned out to be a bookkeeper. Algebra gave her the most trouble. Mr. Bath taught that as well as economics. Grandma said, "I had a hard time with it, and I still don't know anything about algebra."

At school the worst punishment was to be sent to Mr. Annala's office. This only happened if a student did something really bad. When someone did something even worse they got suspended from school, but when a student reached age sixteen they could quit school.

At school, Grandma wasn't allowed to wear pants, or shorts, and everyone wore the same kinds of clothes because families had about the same amount of money.

When I asked Grandma what she did after school, she replied, "I worked at Annala's General Store during the summer. I worked full time and also, we used to go in the woods a lot. We used to have a lot of potato roasts. We would take a potato from home and build a little fire and roast that potato til it was as black as coal, no butter, no salt, no anything, and we really had a good time." Grandma did these things with a lot of her girlfriends around the same age. "We used to go in the bush and swing on cedar trees. We'd climb on top the cedar tree and bend it til it would almost touch the ground, then it would come back up again." Grandma said that was a lot of fun but she would not like her own kids to be doing those sorts of things.

"We also used to skate on Big Pond, it was called, and then you would go over there at night after school to skate in the winter time. They'd have a big bon fire. You'd go up the creek and sometimes, you fall in. Where if the ice was not just right, you could get wet."

Grandma said she could not remember a lot of fads or sayings but she remembered, "If something was really nice and you really liked it, it was called, 'Peachy Keen'."

Grandma was invited to a prom at the Republic High School. "I couldn't go. I never had a dress, never had a date, never had a car, but our school never had proms. Our school never had yearbooks at the time either. It was a long time after when they did come out," Grandma recalled.

When Grandma was in school they had a small paper called *The Echo*. Grandma contributed to the news, and was on the staff working as a typist.

When I asked Grandma about extracurriculars she replied, "Well they used to put on plays. If you were in any of the plays, you had to practice after school time usually." But when I asked her if she was in any plays she replied, "Oh yes, the senior class would always put on a play and I was in three of those because, the classes were so small, they didn't have enough people. So if they needed someone, they just took



Pat (Pietro) Kroon at age 16 in 1948.

someone from another class. I was just lucky enough to be in three plays.” Grandma remembered one of them which was *Meet the Middletons*. Most of Grandma’s friends were in the plays she was in.

The school colors of National Mine used to be gold and blue and still are. Grandma’s future husband, Lloyd Kroon, was on the basketball team. Grandma went to the pep rallies so that she and her friends could answer the cheerleaders at the basketball games. The cheerleaders wore skirts below the knees.

Grandma said that graduation is a solemn occasion in your life. She wore a gown and a cap. Grandma made a speech that Mr. Annala helped her with. Her class motto was, “Launched but not anchored.” “We covered letters with colored paper and we had flowers on the stage. Afterwards all the rest of the class went to a party at somebody’s camp, but I was going with the man I’m married to now. So we went to the second show and came home.” Grandma said, “It’s a sad time in your life too, because you’re ending your school years, and going out into the world as an adult, and that’s not always an easy thing to do. You might never see your classmates for many years. Going to school is the best time of your life. But you don’t realize it.”



Pat (Pietro) Kroon’s graduation picture.

I asked if any teachers had an impact on her life and she replied, “Oh yes, Mrs. Gleason for one — I liked the programs she put on. She was a very talented lady. She could play the piano better than anybody else I knew, and she produced and wrote her own plays. Mr. Annala was a very, very strict disciplinarian; he made a big impact on my life, but I didn’t realize it til long after I was out of school. He used to give a little talk right before class would start every morning when we were in high school when we were in study hall. I will always remember he liked to call tobacco ‘Lady Nicotine’ and whiskey was ‘John Barley Corn.’ He always said don’t ever get hooked on any of those, and luckily I never did. But that stayed with me. It’s a long time after you’re out of school before you realize that some of those teachers left an impact on your life. You don’t appreciate them when you have them.”

Grandma gave me a lot of information about her school days. She also gave me a lot of special things to think about. One is that I have to get more serious about my “best years”.

— Harmony Michaud



Pat (Pietro) Kroon on a recent vacation in Minnesota.

MY FONDEST MEMORIES OF NATIONAL MINE

Mrs. Carol (Aho) Cox has strong roots in the National Mine School system, for her parents and her brother graduated from National Mine, and currently her two children are attending the National Mine School; Michael is in seventh grade, and Christine is in sixth. Mrs. Cox also married her high school sweetheart from National Mine, Victor Cox. I knew when I walked into her classroom at Westwood High School that she would be a valuable source of information about the hopes, fears, and joys of a National Mine student.

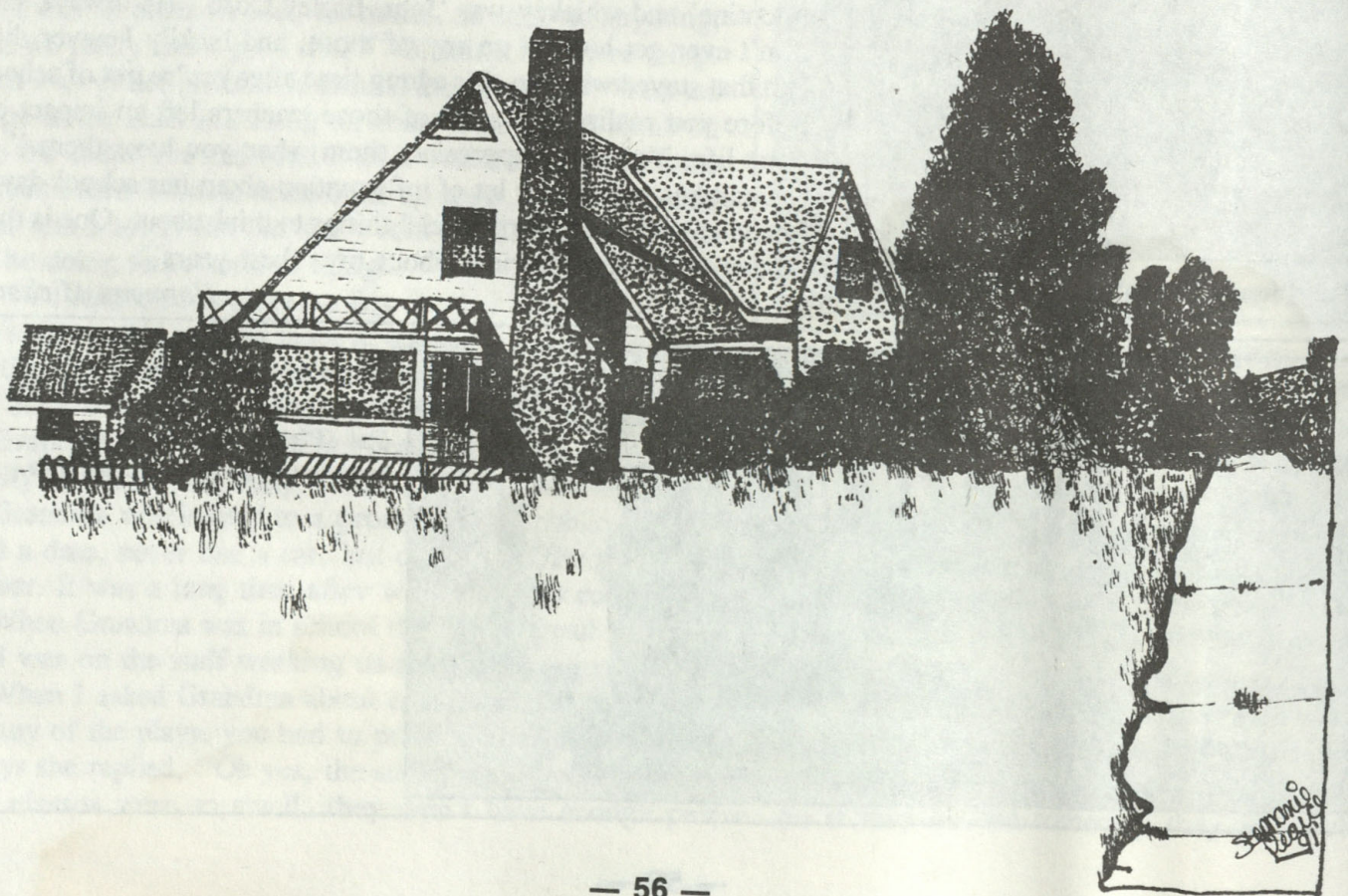
Mrs. Cox was born in August of 1953, in Ishpeming, Michigan. She started kindergarten at the National Mine School in 1958. When Mrs. Cox thought about it she said, "Wow, that was a long time ago!"

Mrs. Cox remembered almost all of her elementary teachers. She recalled some fond memories, and some not so fond. At that time, Mrs. Cox told me, the teachers seemed real strict, and they seemed old. Some of them are now maybe in their seventies, and they do not seem so old anymore Mrs. Cox reflected. Mrs. Cox remembered being scared of them in a way, because of their strictness, but they were always kind, and gentle.

"We were all kind of mushed together there you know, and I think even some of the junior high teachers taught in high school," stated Mrs. Cox recalling her junior high years at National Mine. At that time junior high was the seventh and eighth grade. Currently the junior high includes sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. "Work! Work! Work!" is how Mrs. Cox recalled a lot of paper work in her years attending National Mine. She, also, remembered being involved in many things.

Mrs. Cox played the clarinet and the saxophone a little. She even played the tuba one time at a graduation ceremony. The National Mine band was quite small, and the tuba player was graduating in the ceremony. So Mrs. Cox took over. Mrs. Cox was one who enjoyed music a lot, and she read music easily.

At that time National Mine was a small class D school, and there was not a lot of extracurricular activities



SCHOOL DAYS

available for girls. Girls had the opportunity to be cheerleaders, or be on the yearbook staff. Once a month the students published a newspaper called *The Echo*. There was a French club which was limited to those studying French. For the most part, these were about all the activities that the girls had to choose from.

Mrs. Cox took part in all of the above, because being in a small school a student could do that. One important memory Mrs. Cox recalled was her junior class play. The play was titled *Dinny and the Witches*. The class performed for full houses for three nights. The play was directed by a student teacher from Northern Michigan University. The student teacher involved the class with elaborate staging, and costuming.

Mrs. Cox was a cheerleader, and a music buff. She took part in forensics and she was on the yearbook staff and *The Echo* staff. "We tried to get a girls track team going; at that time we were kind of rebels." Although this spunky group was not successful that year, the next year a girls track team was formed. Maybe the efforts of Mrs. Cox's group of girls contributed to that, they hope they did.



Carol Cox (right) and Julie Waters participated in a class play in 1970 called *Dinny and the Witches*.

When Mrs. Cox was a freshman in 1968, the National Mine basketball team won the district basketball championship, which Mrs. Cox recalled was pretty exciting. National Mine's opponent was Channing, who were kind of rivals, but the National Mine team won with a last second shot. Her brother, Gene, and her future husband, Victor, were important members of that team. This big win brought up the excitement level in the school quite a bit. The team had a tremendous amount of support. Everyone went to games. When the team played at Hedgcock Fieldhouse at Northern Michigan University, Ishpeming High School played the same day in class B. Since many of the Ishpeming fans also supported National Mine, this small school had a huge fan club. It was a real positive thing for the school. It was a real magic moment for National Mine; they brought a big trophy home. Mrs. Cox said, "I think it did a lot for the pride of the students, we were really proud of that team."

Transportation for the players and fans to basketball games was by bus, for students did not have their own cars. Fortunately, fan buses were available for almost every game. Mrs. Cox explained that students considered it entertainment to travel on the school bus to a basketball game which is a lot different than our idea of entertainment now.

During Mrs. Cox's time at the National Mine School the nickname of the school was the National Mine Nats which was kind of an unusual name. Mrs. Cox recalled some "corny" cheers based on the Nats. Mrs. Cox also said she remembered the old school song which began, "Let's sing for National, fling the banners high." There was one "choo, choo" cheer, Mrs. Cox added. "That was kind of silly." This squad was daring, and adventurous. Mrs. Cox remembered building pyramids and doing cartwheels. "We'd build pyramids,

the pyramid just totally collapsed," Mrs. Cox added.

Mrs. Cox's grandmother was a cook at the National Mine School. Many times Mrs. Cox went home for lunches, because her house was so close. At other times Mrs. Cox stayed and ate lunch. "They had delicious lunches." At that time the cooks peeled potatoes, and served fresh, crisp vegetables. The cooks actually cooked from scratch. Mrs. Cox said they made a most delicious chicken, and an "out-of-this-world stew." The lunches were something the kids at National Mine looked forward to. It was a real treat to come to school and enjoy a home-cooked meal. The cooks also made a chocolate cake, which students smelled baking in the oven while in classes.

The lunch tables were set up where our gym is today. The kids set up tables, and ate their lunches in the gym. The kitchen was part of Mr. Keto's shop classroom. Mrs. Cox stated, "It was a small kitchen."

The principal was Mr. Ruesing. Mrs. Cox liked him a lot, for he was an interesting person. He always seemed to want to know about the student and how they were doing. She recalled him taking time to become involved with the students, and activities. Mr. Ruesing, Mrs. Cox said, had a real nice personality. It sounded like he was very well-liked among the students.

I asked Mrs. Cox if they had a prom. The year Mrs. Cox was a senior, students attended their first prom which was not as elegant as they are today. However, it was a very exciting thing for these seniors in high school to have a band, and dress up in formals. A lot of the girls, Mrs. Cox remembered, borrowed dresses from other girls, as she did.

Mrs. Cox has remained in contact with some of her childhood friends. Some close friends who have moved away she keeps in touch with on a special occasion with a holiday card; or they may pop in, in the summer occasionally. Many of her friends in school were her relatives. In fact, it is kind of ironic because one of her son's best friends is the son of one of her best friends.

Mrs. Cox was in the graduating class of 1971 which consisted of twenty-two graduates. All of them fit upon the stage right across in a neat row. Mrs. Cox recalled being serious and sad, and she remembered crying, rather than being happy. Being in such a small school students did not want high school to end because they had formed such close friendships. She remembered taking part in the ceremony, especially in the music part.

"I think one of the biggest changes that I see is the opportunities that kids have now-a-days," Mrs. Cox added, comparing the present to the choices she had. Girls, especially, did not have many extracurriculars that they could become involved in and not a large selection of classes. It seems that at Westwood many choices and opportunities are available to young adults today, especially the classes they can take, and the experience that is available before they graduate from high school. Those thoughts were expressed by Mrs. Cox the day I said she sat down in her Westwood High School classroom. She added that she likes that change, and stressed that kids should reach for the stars, and become anything their dreams take them.

As Mrs. Cox strolled down memory lane of her days at National Mine, she said the fondest memories had to be the close friendships formed in such a small school. The teachers must have had an impact on Mrs. Cox's life, since she is currently a teacher. She added she certainly enjoyed cheerleading, basketball, and music, as the fun things, but the most enjoyment came from relationships formed at this small class D school in National Mine.



Carol Cox

— Stephanie Pearce

SCHOOL DAYS

My grandfather, Ted Sjolholm, has a full and happy life. He had several careers, has a beautiful wife, three fine children and a good memory of his school years at National Mine School.

Ted Sjolholm was born on June 23, 1914, in National Mine, Michigan. He had one brother, Arvid, and four sisters: Gina, Betty, Barbara, and Bobby Jean. All the Sjolholm children attended the National Mine School.

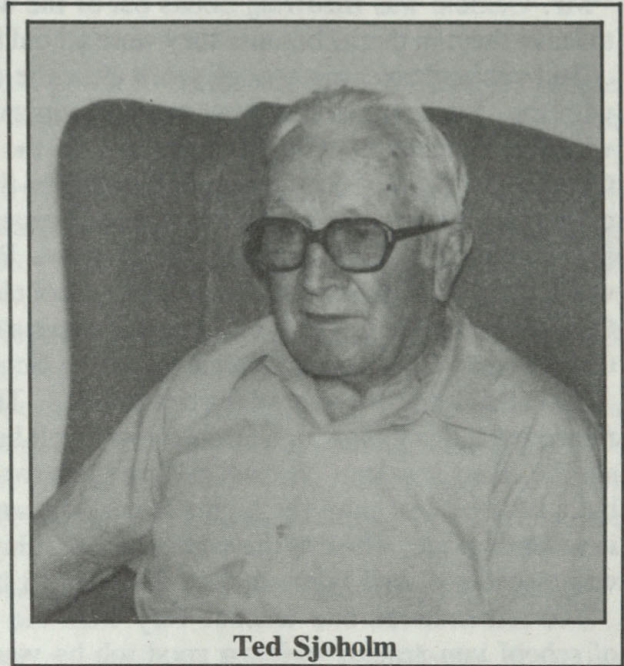
Ted's attendance at the National Mine School began when he was five years old. He remembered his kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Hammar. Ted continued on to second grade where Mrs. Willma Lunblad was his teacher. She also taught him for third and fourth grades, for she moved up to be a third and then a fourth grade teacher.

As his school years continued in fifth grade his teacher was Ellen Peterson. His sixth grade teacher was Fanny Millimaki. His junior high years were in the new school (the present building) because the old school burned down in the year 1923.

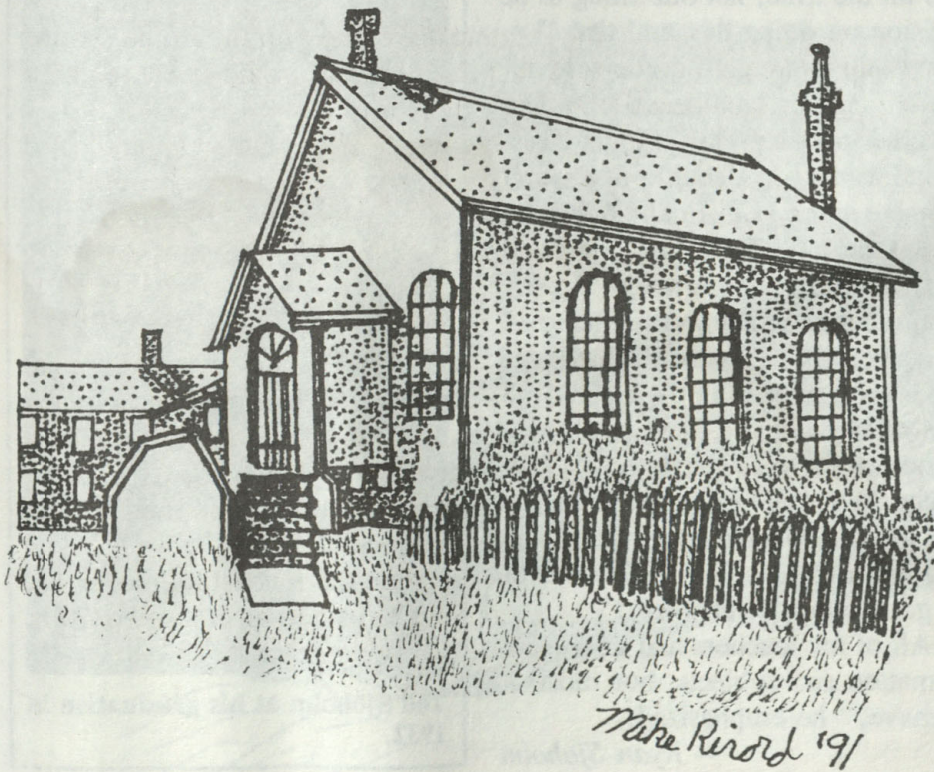
Ted Sjolholm recalled the original National Mine School building as a frame building with a first and second floor. He also stated, "There was a new gym on the north end by where manual arts is now." To that original building a gym and shower rooms, with a balcony above that for seating, had recently been added. He also

recalled that there wasn't much seating, because "They were going to put some in there when they got enough money." Also on the north end there was an auditorium, with an assembly room that was used for study hall upstairs.

When I asked him if he knew how the school fire was started, without hesitation he replied, "I don't know, because I wasn't there, but the old part burned first. I was over (at) the store when someone called and Matt Annala told Chester Brown the school was on fire. So Chester and his friends went up there and I went up there with my dad. We were standing by Toy's house, boy, were the flames shooting high!" Later on Chester told him,



Ted Sjolholm



“Mr. Gemble was throwing books out of the window, and one of the school board members was telling him to leave them in there, because they were all old books, that needed to be thrown out anyway. So let them burn.”

Ted remembered his school years after the fire had destroyed the building. As he shared these thoughts with me, I was amazed at how much organization and caring was needed to have the students continue on with their education. Classes were held in the Finnish Church, Town Hall, Norwegian Church, Methodist Church, the Sons of St. George Hall, and the Swedish Church. He recalled, “I was in the Methodist Church class, then I went on to the Sons of St. George Hall.” On Brooks’s Hill the Swedish Church had a building for seventh and eighth graders. There was a Brooks’s house for classes. Where one of the Aho boys lived was a class for high school. Other high school classes were held in a building across the street from the Swedish Church. In the back of that building there was a stone building where shop classes were held. Ted remembered that Thomas Clayton was president of the School Board at the time.

Ted stated that the school burned in 1923. The 1924 class graduated from the Tilden Township Hall. Ted remembered his junior high teachers very well because he was in the new school building (our present building), and he liked it a lot. “In junior high there was going from one room to another, same as the high school but a little bit less than the high school.” He continued with a smile, “Mr. Vogan was principal when I was in seventh grade, while at the same time Mr. Guy Schutte was the superintendent of the school. George Annala was also there, and later on Mr. Bath got to be superintendent when Mr. Schutte went to Republic.”

Ted remembered one teacher very well. He stated, “Mr. Annala was awful strict, but after you got out of school you realized what a good job he was doing for you.”

Ted recalled his junior high and high school classes as algebra, geometry, science, American history, world history, English, manual arts, and a small amount of gym. When I asked him what his favorite class was, he replied with a laugh, “My favorite class was manual arts, because there was more different things to do all the time, not one thing to be stuck with; you made your own decision on doing this and that.”

After school was out, Ted played seventh and eighth grade softball. He stated they were classified by weight classes, and because he was so light, he was a little older than the other players of his weight class. Ted also remembered that the basketball team won a couple of District tournaments, and they went on to compete in the U.P. finals. When he was a freshman the basketball team won the U.P. finals and competed downstate in the 1929-30 season. Ted also stated there weren’t many pep rallies but people followed the team, because they were concerned with what the students were doing. Teams traveled by car at that time. Mr. Gleason and Mr. Bath took four or five players in their cars, but the only compensation they took was money for gas.

Ted recreated the graduation ceremonies for me. He stated, “Well in those days we used to have like a church service on Sundays before graduation. Then they had class night, where Ted gave the giftatory and they gave a history of the class. The kids would go, and say whatever they wanted to. The people used to get a kick out of them.”

Ted closed the interview saying, “All of my teachers had an impact on my life.” They taught Ted information and subjects, but most of all . . . “They taught me how to behave,” he emphasized.

— Ryan Sjöholm



Ted Sjöholm at his graduation in 1932.

THE INTERESTING LIFE OF GEORGE WATTERS

“I think all the people that went there (National Mine) could go on to college without difficulty.” These were Mr. George Watters’ feelings about the National Mine School, spoken as an ex-student and employee of National Mine School.

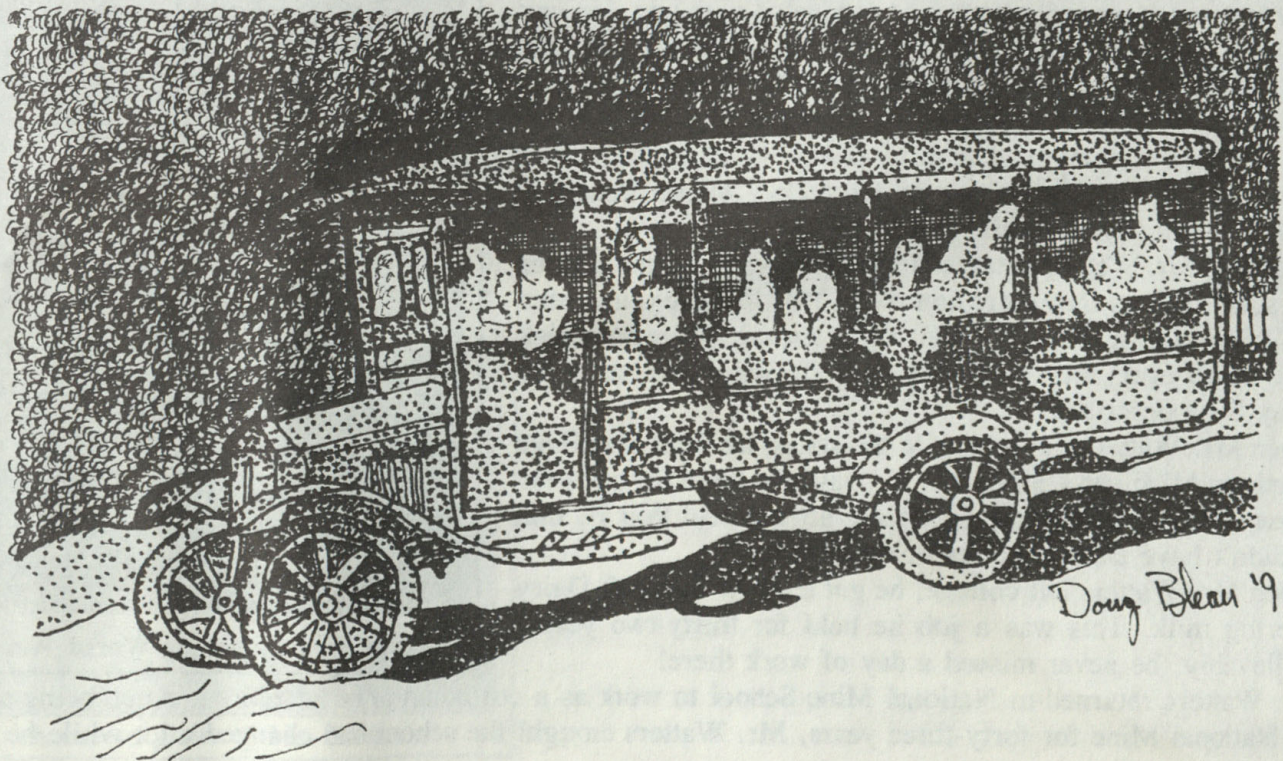
In his childhood Mr. Watters lived on a farm with his four brothers and five sisters. He recalled the chores he had to do which included milking their four cows, and feeding the horses and cattle. The unusual thing is that they had to do these chores before they left for school. “The students today don’t have that kind of work schedule,” he stated.

Mr. Watters started school when he was “four or five.” He went to the Ely Township School which was three miles from where they lived. He had to walk back and forth to school each day.

Mr. Watters described the Ely Township School as, “a one-room, cold school, with one teacher, and a woodstove that would go out at night, and the teacher would have to start it up in the morning. I think a couple hours we used to work with gloves, and for our drinking water we had a bucket with a dipper, and everybody drank out of the same bucket. There was only one outhouse for everybody.” At this school there were twelve to fifteen students.

When Mr. Watters started going to the National Mine School, he described it as “like going to a big city.” He also stated, “It was a good school.”

Mr. Watters stated that the school was, and is, in near perfect condition. He credited it to the discipline at the school spearheaded by administrators — Mr. Annala and Mr. Bath — and emphasized by all the other teachers. There wasn’t any running in the hallways or throwing papers or pencils on the floor. “Everything



was really kept in shape," he told me.

Usually punishments at the school weren't too bad. Often Mr. Annala only took students to the office and spoke with them. However, one teacher's punishments did stick out in his mind. "She only had one arm but she could really use that arm at the same time. I don't think anybody ducked," he stated. Even though the punishment may seem harsh, that teacher was considered one of the best teachers at National Mine.

Mr. Watters thought that the curriculum at National Mine compared favorably with some of the larger schools. The boys had typing and shorthand available. On the other hand, the girls had home economics, sewing, and cooking.

National Mine also had a good musical program. The cover of the 1990 *Red Dust* book featured one of the programs put on by Mrs. Gleason. "There was something going on in the community, the people really attended these events," he explained.

Mr. Watters played on the basketball team at National Mine. He recalled that the main thing they had in those days was basketball. Some of the teams they played were: St. Paul's of Negaunee, Champion, Michigamme, and Palmer. Palmer was considered a powerhouse at that time.

Mr. Watters had one story about a teacher he remembered most. "I think we were really small, only about the third grade. We had a man teacher and he went into the outhouse. A couple of us took a big stick and hit the rear of the outhouse with the stick and it made a big wham! He came bailing out the front door with his pants down, and we caught heck for it anyway," he said enthusiastically.

Mr. Watters' favorite subject was geography, taught by Mr. Gleason, while his least favorite subject was algebra. Mr. Watters said, "When we were in school, they taught the three R's more: reading, writing, and arithmetic." He also thought the penmanship of today's students is bad. He thought penmanship should be emphasized more.

Mr. Watters graduated from National Mine in 1942. There were only about seven other students who graduated with him. He was seventeen years old and would turn eighteen in the fall. He then went on to the service. Going to the service was interesting because it was the first time he was ever out of Marquette County.

Mr. Watters was stationed in many places which included Fort Sheldon in Illinois, Fort Knox in Kentucky, Miami Beach in Florida, and finally Iceland.

One thing Mr. Watters recalled from the service was the actions of the soldiers when they were homesick. "Of all these young men there, there were some crying and crying and they were homesick and it made everybody feel that way. I guess they survived anyway," he described.

When Mr. Watters came back to the states, he went to college at Northern Michigan University. He was only there for one year because there were so many GI's there after World War II, that they didn't have enough books or other materials.

When Mr. Watters left college, he got a job at Bancroft Dairy delivering milk. This was a job he held for thirty-two years. Unbelievably, he never missed a day of work there!

Mr. Watters returned to National Mine School to work as a custodian after he retired. After being away from National Mine for forty-three years, Mr. Watters thought the school had changed a lot while he was



George Watters during World War II.

gone. Many new classrooms had been added. "With the addition on there, it makes the school a lot different," he stated.

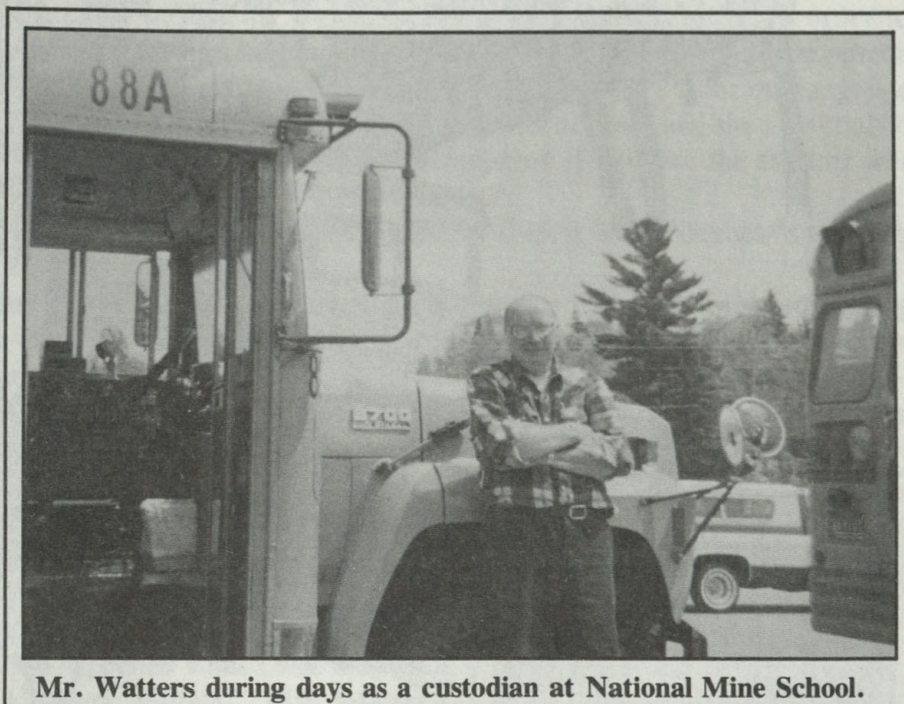
As a janitor at the school, Mr. Watters' greatest challenges were to keep the school clean in a limited amount of time. During the holiday seasons, the rooms were used a lot because of school parties. That's when there was the most cleaning to be done.

Mr. Watters' fondest memory of National Mine was how everyone in the community was so close knit. He considered the school a kind of binding. If something happened at the school, everyone was there.

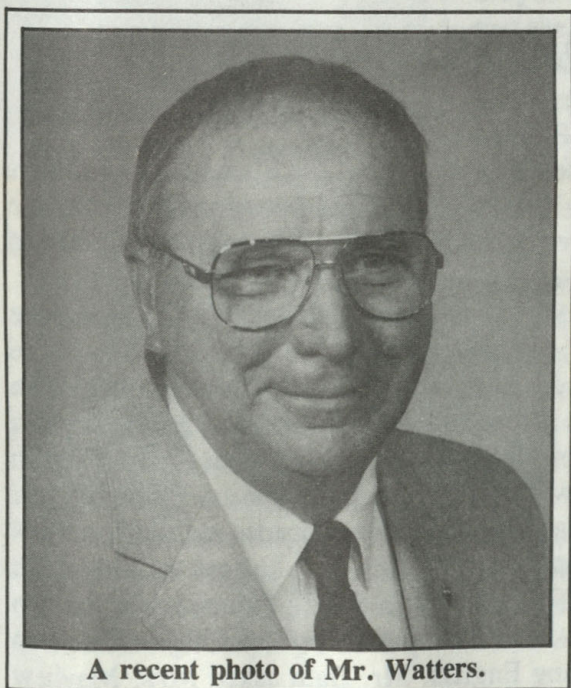
These days, Mr. Watters enjoys helping charter Boy Scout troops. A while back, he was a Scout leader for thirty to thirty-five boys. They went on many outings in Munising, by Ross Lake, and even Isle Royale.

The interview with Mr. Watters was a fun and exciting experience. I enjoyed learning about his life and what school was like then. Thank you, Mr. Watters, for sharing your memories with me.

— Doug Bleau



Mr. Watters during days as a custodian at National Mine School.



A recent photo of Mr. Watters.



A WORKING WOMAN OF THE SIXTIES

Juggling to keep a family going and beginning a career at midlife was a major feat for Elsie Mayhew. Interviewing Mrs. Mayhew was an inspiring encounter. I found her to be a very warm, compassionate person due to tragedies suffered by her and those she cared about. Due to her husband's severe heart attack she had to become the main bread winner for her family of six children.

Having completed high school in Norway, Michigan, Mrs. Mayhew continued her education in Marquette at Northern Teacher's College which is today known as Northern Michigan University. Mrs. Mayhew chose a teaching career because she felt she would make a good teacher. Even as a child she played school with the neighborhood children. She graduated in 1929 with a certificate in teaching. Many years later Mrs. Mayhew continued her schooling for four more years and earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree. Her majors were English and French, and her minor was history. When the need arose, she was well prepared to begin a teaching career. After completing her education, Mrs. Mayhew stayed home to raise her six children because at that time married women were not permitted to teach. Only after her husband had a heart attack did she seek employment.

When Mrs. Mayhew was hired by National Mine District in 1960, she was a third grade teacher for two years. The superintendent, Walter Bath, asked Mrs. Mayhew to teach in the junior high and high school, so Mrs. Mayhew taught English there. After several years of teaching English, Mr. Bath asked Mrs. Mayhew

to introduce a French course because there was no foreign language in the school at that time. In order to get accreditation for the National Mine School a foreign language was needed. Mrs. Mayhew was the person who helped start the French course which she found difficult because she had been away from the language for over twenty years. Therefore, Mrs. Mayhew returned to college for a refresher course, and she also studied on her own. When Mrs. Mayhew went back for refresher courses, she enjoyed it because the teacher was right from France. Mrs. Mayhew was a lady who always wanted to learn.

Mrs. Mayhew was assigned library duties in addition to her teaching duties. During Mrs. Mayhew's teaching career, she also helped coach the forensics program.

Mrs. Mayhew felt the most important part of her job to students was "to see that they knew something when they left school." Mrs. Mayhew felt it was no laughing matter when students left school, and they were on their own. She wanted to make sure they were prepared for life's difficulties.

During the time Mrs. Mayhew taught at National Mine School there was a dress code. Girls' skirts needed to be a certain length, and blouses were worn inside. The dress code did not last throughout her career.



Elsie Mayhew, September 1960

While Mrs. Mayhew was a teacher she was very purposeful. When I asked her if she had any interesting or humorous events that happened during her career, she said, "Well many things happened while I was there, but I was very serious." Mrs. Mayhew was serious because her husband's heart attack and her subsequent problems came on so suddenly. She knew students must be prepared. Mrs. Mayhew's biggest responsibility was that the students learned the material presented and could be proud when they graduated from the National Mine School prepared to face up to any student from another district.



Elsie Mayhew, 1989

Mrs. Mayhew found her co-workers at National Mine to be very friendly people and also very cooperative. Mrs. Mayhew also felt the comradeship was like a family affair.

The community of National Mine was very responsive to the teachers and very supportive. The people of the community helped and attended plays, sporting activities and other events. They also helped out if people of the community needed help when tragedies occurred in the family.

When I asked Mrs. Mayhew what her fondest memories of the National Mine School were, she recalled graduation. Mrs. Mayhew felt at some times her students gave her a little bit of trouble. However, they were usually good. Mrs. Mayhew stated it was hard to discipline the boys because they were much bigger than her. The high school boys were boisterous at times and often loved to disrupt the class with their loud jokes. However, many were very kind and thoughtful. Mrs. Mayhew was particularly impressed and touched when they came to her on graduation day and thanked her for helping them.

Mrs. Mayhew is a fighter and a wonderful lady who never gave up. I enjoyed listening to her. She gave an excellent example of determination and a constant willingness to learn.

— Renee Tuominen

“CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM”

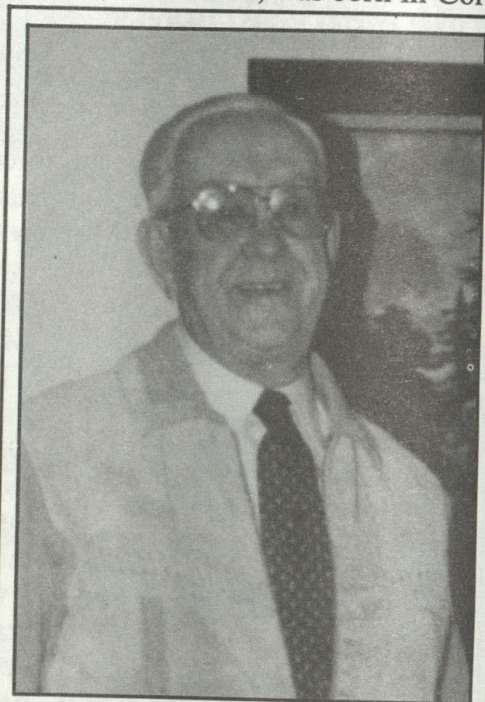
Recently I spoke with a very interesting person, Bill Dally, who had many fascinating things to tell me about his early childhood and especially his memories of the National Mine School. Mr. Dally had a wonderful childhood, I could tell. His parents, I'm sure, were caring people. His father, he told me, was born in Cornwall, England, and his mother was born in National Mine.

Mr. Dally attended National Mine School from 1917-1930. From his warm and caring personality, I can safely assume that Mr. Dally had a lot of wonderful teachers starting with Mrs. Julia Jeffries, his kindergarten teacher. He also mentioned Ms. Millimaki and Mrs. Nelson.

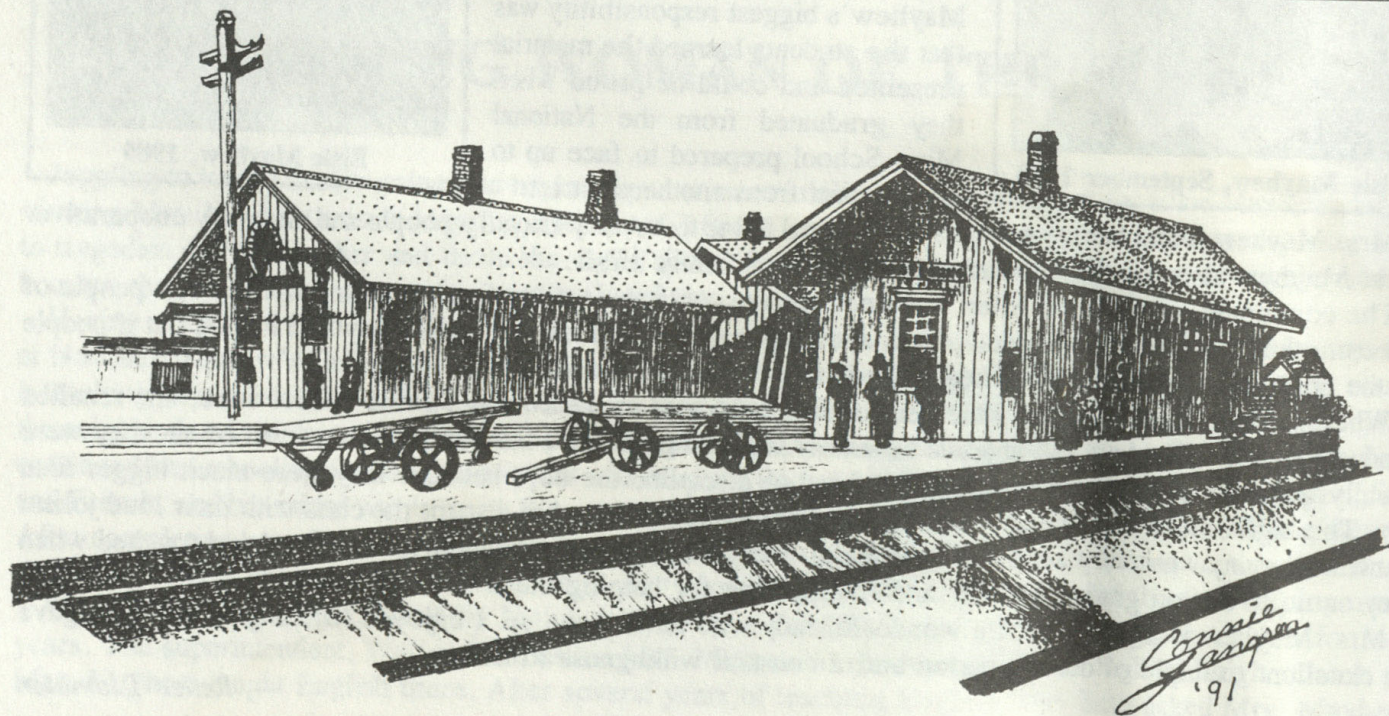
He had a very interesting story to tell me about Ms. Millimaki. “Our school burnt in 1923 the day after Thanksgiving and so our classes were held in the town hall. Ms. Millimaki lived about two miles from the town hall and in the winter when she couldn't walk, Ms. Millimaki used to come to school on skis,” he stated.

When I asked Mr. Dally if he remembered his junior high or high school teachers, he recollected one in particular, Mr. Annala. Mr. Dally said that math was his favorite subject because “We had such a wonderful instructor. Mr. Annala, he was easy to learn from. He would just give you all the instruction you needed.” He also remembered Mr. Schutte as the superintendent and Mr. Johnson as the principal.

When the question of his least favorite subject came up he didn't hesitate at all. “English, the verbs and adjectives and stuff like that didn't interest me at all,” he said.



Bill Dally



A SUCCESS STORY

School isn't all he had on his mind, for in those days Mr. Dally was also thinking about sports. Mr. Dally played both baseball and basketball. He especially recalled one incident in basketball. "We played quite a few games with Champion or Republic, and Palmer. One game we played Champion, one of the players was pushing one of our fellas around, so I told him not to push him. So we got in a fight and both of us got ejected," he emphasized. The farthest the National Mine team traveled to a game was L'Anse, and they went by train. When asked if his team won any championships his reply was, "I was fortunate to play as a sub on the 1928 team and in 1929 we won the U.P. championships and we went to Detroit and played in the Olympia Arena in the state tournaments. The following year we went right into the finals and got beat by Rock by one point," he recalled.

I can't imagine what an effect all that had on our small little city, but after talking with Mr. Dally I think it was a very exciting time for National Mine students. Mr. Dally was really excited when he talked about this subject, and his face just lit up. He recalled vividly that Ishpeming had hired a band to play on the platform at the station in Ishpeming the day the team left. He also remembered that the team was served poached eggs before they left, and when they came home they had turkey.

In order to play in those games students' grades had to be good. To keep the kids involved in their work, a strict discipline plan was necessary. If students disobeyed they were sent to the superintendent's office. "The kids back then respected their teachers more than they do today," Mr. Dally stated. "Back then National Mine was a small school; my class was only five," he said.

Mr. Dally was happily married for fifty years to Mildred Broxberry of Trout Creek, Michigan. Together they had three wonderful children.

I really enjoyed talking to Mr. Dally for he was very interesting to listen to. He had a lot of interesting stories to share with me. It was a wonderful experience.

— Danielle Heavyside



Bill Dally

A SUCCESS STORY

David L. Nelson is a successful person. Much of his success stems from the excellent teaching he received from George Annala, his English teacher. Today Dave is a practicing trial attorney who lives in Dearborn Heights, and practices in the Detroit area. He claimed that the "English grounding" that Mr. Annala taught him enabled him to succeed. That, he said, along with competition from some pretty good students.

"I was born out on the old farm on October 23, 1931," Dave said in reference to the question, "When and where were you born?"

Dave, growing up, was one of eight children of Elsie and Bernard "Benny" Nelson. From oldest to youngest, his brothers and sisters are: Marian Sutton, Ruth Merrill, Kenneth Nelson, Dorothy Sarasin, David Nelson, William Nelson, Joanne Montague, and Frederick Nelson.

Dave started school in the first grade at National Mine School. He did not go to kindergarten because he lived out in the Green Creek Location and no bus transportation was provided for kindergarten students in 1936. His first grade teacher's name was Miss Viola Mason, who Dave described as "... an extremely competent and able first grade teacher."

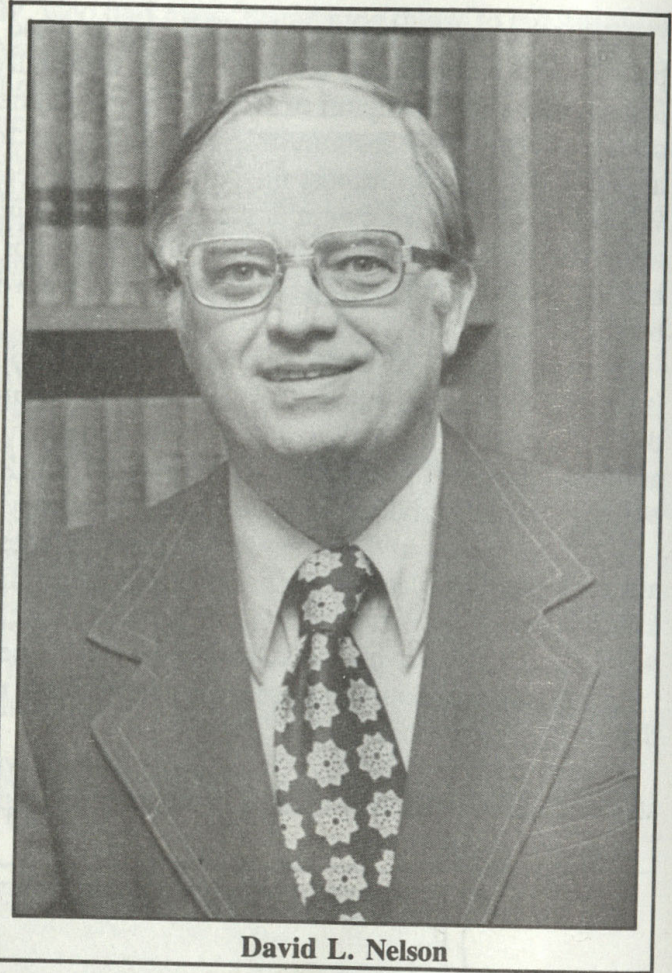
Miss Mason was not the only teacher that Dave remembered from his grade school years. He also reflected on the great job that his music teacher, Mrs. Dorothy Gleason, did. Mrs. Gleason was an excellent playwright and every year she produced, directed, and wrote a play that would "knock your socks off."

Following his grade school years came his junior and high school years. Mr. Bath was the superintendent of school at that time and Dave took an algebra class from him. Dave also recalled Pat Gleason who taught industrial arts, as well as coaching the basketball team. But the teacher that affected Dave the most was George Annala. Mr. Annala was the principal of the National Mine School and taught English and world history. He also was very strict. For instance, when he handed a corrected paper back to a student he just put a checkmark in the margin and the student kept getting the paper back until all the mistakes were corrected and the checkmarks were gone.

A few times in the spring Dave and his classmates went to plant trees at the corner of County Road 581 and Stoneville Road. The students brought their lunches there and ate them after they planted the trees. Some kids even went swimming and fishing in the Carp River.

On December 7, 1941, the United States entered World War II. Dave remembered that he was standing with a group on an embankment throwing snowballs at the wall of the school the day after the attack on Pearl Harbor. From Dave's point of view, that was the biggest tragedy that occurred while he was in school.

Since Dave was a student at National Mine many changes have taken place. The change that is most prominent is that in his time teachers taught mostly by the book, but today teachers are relying more and more on computers, printers, copying machines, etc. Another tremendous change is in the discipline that was given.



David L. Nelson

"KIDS ARE KIDS"



The Nelson brothers (from left): David, Ken, Fred and Bill.

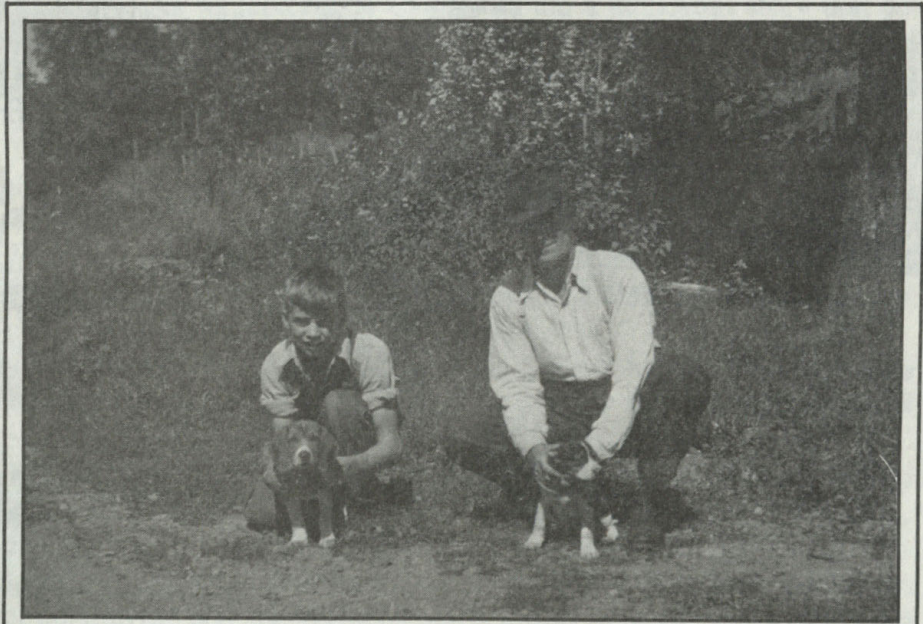
“To some extent I think that you do get away from psychological or social problems that come from being too strict, but by the same token you lose that edge of wording that helps to discipline the mind. And I think that we had that,” Dave stated.

Dave was very fortunate to have the experience of playing on a basketball team. He explained that he made the team because National Mine was a class E school and almost every boy who went out for basketball made the team.

Dave’s varsity team of 1949 finished second in the state. An interesting thing happened while he was in basketball. When the 1949 team went to Houghton, they won the district championship. On the way back home in cars driven by Mr. Bath and Mr. Gleason they were caught in a tremendous snow storm. After driving many hours in blinding snow, they finally stopped at the Mather Inn, unable to get back to National Mine. There, they had a huge celebration that lasted all night and had breakfast at Auntie’s Cafe the next morning, which blew Pat Gleason’s budget.

When asked about any teachers that had a great impact on his life the first person that came to his mind was George Annala. Dave was able to see Mr. Annala before his death because he shared a room with Dave’s uncle “Nels” Nelson in the Mather Nursing Home. Dave also stated that he was able to do as well as he did because of the teaching and discipline he received from George Annala. “I was on the Michigan Law Review staff for two years and part of it was because I was able to write, punctuate, and use the King’s English. That’s what he (George Annala) taught — and he did it pretty well.”

1949 was the year that Dave



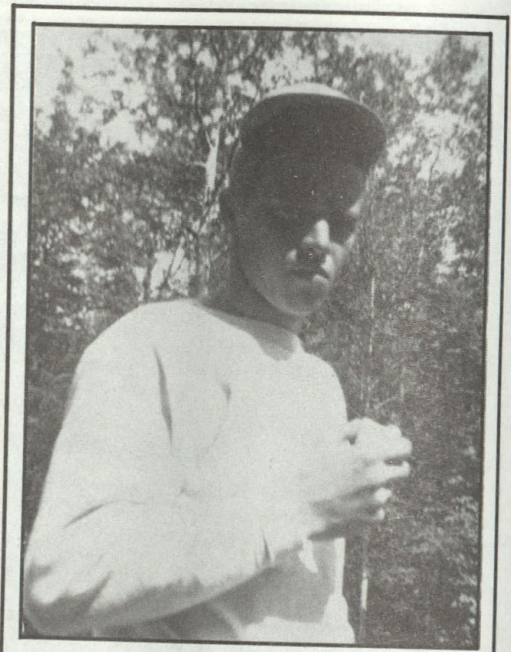
David’s brother Fred and their dad, Bernard, about to go hunting with their dog.

A SUCCESS STORY

graduated from the National Mine School. The graduation ceremony was composed of two parts. The Baccalaureate was usually on a Sunday. The seniors wore their caps and gowns and went through almost a religious ceremony. On a Wednesday or Thursday night the Commencement Exercises were held. This is when students received their diplomas and listened to music sung by a choir.

David L. Nelson is a very interesting and humorous person. I enjoyed hearing the wonderful anecdotes that he told. Listening to his story made me realize how important it is to study hard and do what is required. I learned that doing well in school is an excellent way to become successful in life, just as Dave did.

— Alex Nelson



David Nelson on his 16th birthday.



“KIDS ARE KIDS”

“I don’t think kids have changed any, kids are kids,” were the words of Gordy Chinn while recalling his early teaching career at the National Mine School.

To qualify for his teaching career Mr. Chinn attended Northern Michigan University where he earned a Bachelor’s Degree and later a Master’s Degree which took another four summers. “Ever since then I’ve probably gone to school eight or ten times in the summer for training just to keep up with things,” stated Mr. Chinn.



Mr. Chinn taught physical education and history, but he was also the guidance counselor in 1973-74.

Mr. Chinn taught at National Mine School from 1966 through 1974. “I taught American history, world history, seventh grade history and health, general science, biology, algebra, general math, and physical education,” Mr. Chinn recited. The most difficult part of his job was teaching seven different courses in an eight-hour day!

One might wonder why a person would choose a career that required so much work. Mr. Chinn chose his career because “I liked to work with kids and I wanted to coach,” he emphasized. He coached all the varsity sports at National Mine which included basketball, cross country, baseball, and track.

Mr. Chinn’s basketball team won the first district championship at the National Mine School in over twenty years. Mr. Chinn recalled some of the outstanding players on his teams, “Gene Aho who went to Michigan Tech where he played basketball; he is now one of the best basketball officials. A boy by the name of Steve Swanson who went to Central Michigan to pitch baseball.” The National Mine baseball team won the conference a couple of years according to Mr. Chinn.

As we talked Mr. Chinn told me a humorous story that occurred during his coaching career. One time the team played basketball at a place called Jeffers. They had a really small

gym with the locker room adjacent to the gym floor. Between the varsity and junior varsity games the players noticed that the showers were leaking. When the varsity team went back into the locker room after warming up before the game, the floor was really wet. “We could see it would be a problem if it didn’t get fixed, and it did become a problem,” stated Mr. Chinn. By halftime of the game there was about six inches of water on the floor and the players had to stand on the benches. Mr. Chinn stood on the steps and talked. After the game the water was over the height of the benches. “There was soap and shoes and jock straps floating around and kids were diving and swimming under the benches,” laughed Mr. Chinn.

When I asked Mr. Chinn to describe his co-workers at the National Mine School he said that they were great. When Mr. Chinn first taught at National Mine he was the youngest teacher by far, and the older staff treated him really special.

When Mr. Chinn told me how much the National Mine building has changed, I was really surprised. Where the lunchroom is now located, behind the wall in the gym, there was an auditorium. The gym is the same, but part of it was a stage. Where the cafeteria is now was the auditorium where about 200 people sat. The gym floor was above the auditorium. Spectators sat in the auditorium and watched the basketball game from below the level of the floor. To protect the players and spectators, a big net was stretched across the what would now be the wall where the bleachers are. The net kept the ball and the players from falling out into the auditorium.

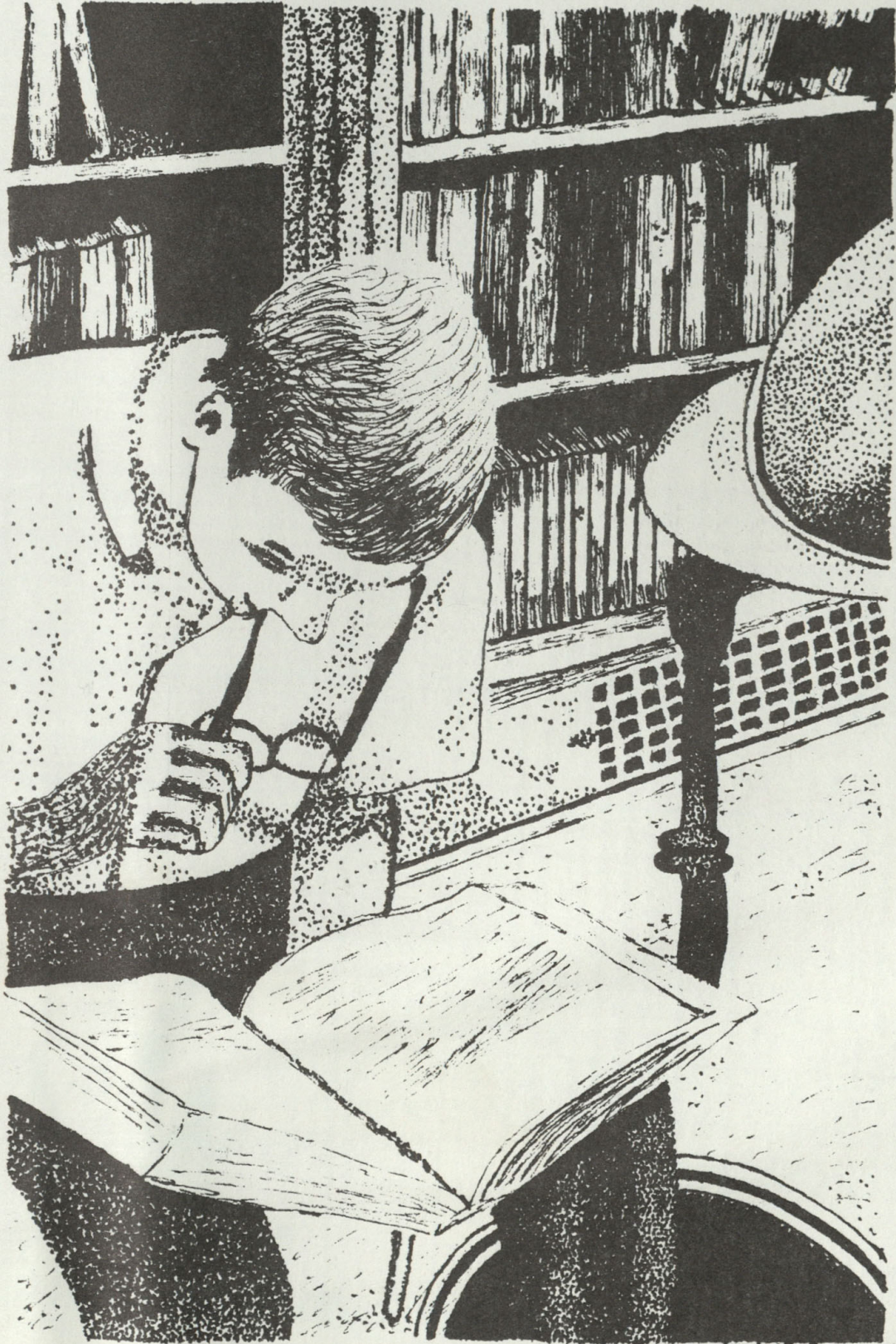


The 1973-74 National Mine basketball team (from left): Coach Gordon Chinn, Jamie Dobson, Michael Holmes, Larry Nault, Jeff Johnson, Rick Woodward, Norman Holmes, George Cor-kin, Alan Champion, Kurtis Junttila, and Kevin Swanson. Kneeling are the student managers Leslie Kowalski (left) and Mike Johnson.

One of Mr. Chinn's most difficult challenges was teaching the variety of courses he was assigned plus coaching all the varsity sports. He had a particularly difficult challenge in his coaching career because when Mr. Chinn first started coaching, National Mine hadn't had a winning team in any sport for a long time. "The biggest challenge was getting them to believe in themselves," stated Mr. Chinn. Confidence was restored, and in his second year National Mine won the district championship in basketball. Next the track and baseball programs started to be successful. "They started to believe in themselves and developed a winning attitude," recalled Mr. Chinn. He had more responsibilities than just coaching. For instance, Mr. Chinn also drove the bus on trips. Mr. Chinn was nominated to be coach of the year. "I did get one award called the Livingston Seagle award," stated Mr. Chinn which is for an outstanding educator.

Mr. Chinn, who is currently on the faculty of Westwood High School, said that he is not teaching as many different classes as he once did. Today, teachers must constantly study and read to keep up with the world. Mr. Chinn added, "I don't think kids have changed — kids are kids." Mr. Chinn reflected upon his teaching career saying, "I wouldn't trade my job for any other job; it's what I wanted to do and what I still want to do. I'm looking forward for another seven or eight years at Westwood. It's been great."

— Cory Korpi



Roberto Vahldes "91"