

One room schoolhouses hold memories

Many people have fond memories of the old one room schoolhouse and Jean Seidschlag, Fox Lake, is one of them.

"In this day of high taxes, school aids, busing, discipline problems and huge school boards, I'm starting to wonder if the one room school wasn't a better form of education," she said. Jean relishes the memories of her school days and she liked one room schoolhouses ever since. She attended the little Adams School, just east of Ripon and today a consolidated school building stands on that spot. Recess is always a favorite time. "We built one room ice houses out of snow blocks," she recalls. "The big guys in the eighth grade put on the top blocks. And do you remember the old fashioned school programs put on once or twice a year by the teacher and students? Some of the programs took

weeks of planning and, like the snow houses, were a consolidated effort of all students."

To be sure, the one room schools had the energy situation under control. The pot belly stove threw a lot of heat with a fueling of wood or coal. The central heating system also dried many mittens, caps, wet socks and scorched a few boots. Running water only ran when the bucket carrier ran from the pump and the two outhouses served their purpose.

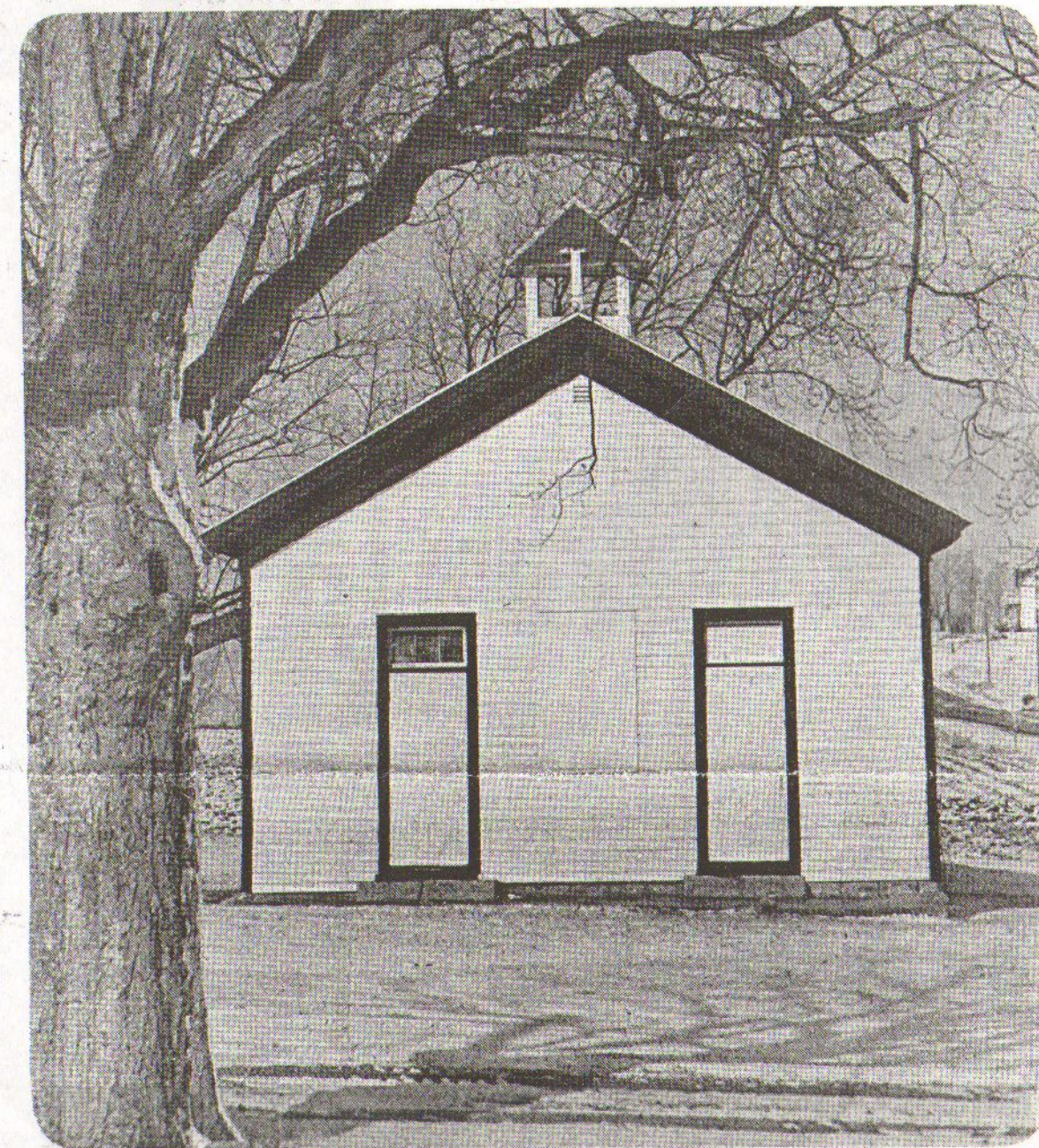
"Discipline consisted of a swinging ruler or extra duties helping the teacher. Sometimes mom or dad got a bad report or note," she said. "I know for a fact that discussion on the matter took place out in the woodshed with dad."

"All of us who attended the one room schools

remember how the school lunch program consisted of mom's assorted sandwiches, sweets, an orange or apple and a glass of milk," she recalls. "All of this came out of the lunch bucket. How's that for a well-balanced diet?"

There are only a few one room schools still open in the U.S. Many school buildings have been torn down or are standing all boarded up with memories of the past. A few have been converted to housing or other purposes.

"To many of us, the one room school is just a memory out of the past," Jean said. "Many famous leaders, doctors and businessmen got their education in those schools. What will our children reflect back on when they reach adulthood? Doesn't it make you wonder just a little?"



Still there

One of the better kept up old schoolhouses is owned by the Meagher family, Rt. 1 Randolph. Its simple lines, framed in by oaks and other trees give a quiet remembrance to yesterday. Its long handled pump and playground equipment cast long shadows of past memories.

