

Pete - Here is Ray's paper on attending Coppell Elementary School in the 30's.  
(Sent by Ray's wife on August 27, 2009 to Pete Wilson)

Pete Wilson wanted some history of going to school in Coppell

By Ray McDowell

August 25, 2009

In 1936 Coppell School was a Dallas County School. Mrs. Watkins and Ms. Moseley were the County Administrators.

My birthday was in October; I was five years old and started in the first grade. Our First Grade Teacher was Mrs. Goad, Second and Third Grades was Mrs. King, Fourth and Fifth was Mrs. Fuller, Sixth & Seventh Grades, Mr. Fuller, (also the Principal).

A County Nurse told us that we had to have a TB Test, Small Pox Vaccinations and Diphtheria Shots. The nurse gave us the shots.

Class members were Harold Wayne Dennis, Charles McDonald, Howard Parish, Floyd Tompkins, Betty Jo Hodges, Helen Harrison, Louise Thomason, Clyde Dickerson, Gerald Tinsley, Lynn Hoffman, Thomas Sisk and Ray McDowell.

Mrs. Goad taught us to speed read. A student would stand up to read and have to sit down in the middle of a sentence and some other student finished the sentence or paragraph. We read sentences front and backwards. Most of us were able to read paragraphs by the third grade.

We had a black board across one side of the room with the ABC's across the top in print and in scroll writing. Mrs. Goad wanted us to write like the scroll writing on the Board. We practiced slants and O's for hours. A note to left hand writers – you didn't write left handed in her class or you would get a slap with a wooden ruler to your hand. We wrote with a pen and ink; the ink well was on the desk. Ball point pens had not been invented.

The Coca Cola Company would come in the fall at the beginning of school to hand out tablets, pencils and a ruler and six book covers for our school books and pencils all with Coca Cola Advertising on the items. The books were used by other classes.

We had a shop class in the third grade and made a paddle with our name with a hole to hang in Mr. Fuller's office. We learned to use hand tools, coping saws, hammers, files, wood burning tools. We made Snow White Puppets from wet newspapers into Paper Mache and painted the characters and did Shows using string to move the puppets.

Mr. Fuller was a Bee Keeper and we had a glass Bee Hive in the window of the shop. We were able to watch the bees making honey.

We had strict rules at recess and Lunch breaks. After the bell rang we had three minutes to get into the building. Mr. Fuller stood at the door with a yard stick. Not to mind your teachers in those days was not an option. You did what your parents told you to do; honor your elders and teachers.

The exception was when the troop trains came by. We were allowed to go to the back of the playground and wave and yell at the solders on the train.

During World War II the school had a scrap drive. We brought scrap metal, plow points, pots and iron fry pans, aluminum pans and also rubber. We didn't have synthetic rubber at that time. We probably had about 2000 lbs. of scrap iron.

When we started the Fourth Grade the school added the eighth grade so we became fifth graders. The fifth and sixth grades were in the same room as were the seventh and eighth grades. Most of us learned both grades and it made the next year easier.

Our Eighth Grade Graduating Class:

Harold Wayne Dennis, Charles McDonald, Floyd Tompkins, Betty Jo Hodges, Helen Harrison, Louise Thomason, Clyde Dickerson, Gerald Tinsley, Lynn Hoffman, Thomas Sisk and Ray McDowell.