

## Learning About The Time Period

The experience of visiting Howard School is a chance to experience living history in a unique form. Your students will actually become school children from the past. The period is 1881. Knowing more about this period of history will make your visit more exciting and insightful.

In a one-room school, children of all ages learned in the same room with the same teacher. Children as young as five were in the same class as teenagers as old as nineteen. Some of the students might even be older than the teacher! Even when their ages were different, children read together from the same reader. The teacher often worked with one or two students while the rest of the children were expected to work alone at their desks or help each other.

Before coming to school in the morning, children had to do chores at home. Frequently, the children were needed at home to help out with work and so missed school. When that happened, the students fell behind with their studies and many times it might take more than a year to complete a grade level. Often the oldest child in the family did not get to attend school at all, or only attended for a few days each year. These older boys and girls were needed more at home to help with farm work or taking care of younger children.

Your students need to know that people in the 1880's had different ideas about what was important to learn in schools. Penmanship was one the most important subjects. Children were also urged to read aloud. They were encouraged to commit poems or large passages of literature to memory, and to be able to recite with gestures and expression. The most exciting part of the week was the weekly spelling bee. The entire community held the best speller in the school in high regard. Often spelling bees were held for members of the community as well as the school students. These spelling bees were great social events. The best speller from one school district might compete with champion spellers in surrounding communities --much like athletic contests.

Being able to "cipher", or do mathematical problems, was also of great importance. Help you students understand why these 3 practical skills were so valued. Explain the the "3R's of "reading, riting, and rithmetic" were the basis of education.





## **History of Howard School**

**The history-or perhaps prehistory-of Howard School begins with White Lick Settlement. White Lick got its name from a salt lick at the stream which became known as White Lick Creek. Ancient Americans, then the Miami Indians and later European hunters sought animals attracted to the salt lick.**

**As the area developed, with settlers, roads and a changing commerce, the settlement moved away from the creek to the nearby roadway, currently State Road 267. Beginning in the 1830s the settled community became known as Fayette. However, it was recognized as the "White Lick Post Town" until 1903 by the U.S. Post Office Department.**

**John B. Howard was an original settler to White Lick/Fayette. Howard cleared land for a farm in March 1837. He purchased 80 acres, from the federal government, including the land where Howard School was later to be located.**

**John Howard became a prominent member of the community. He is the first person found listed as trustee for Perry Township, Boone County.**

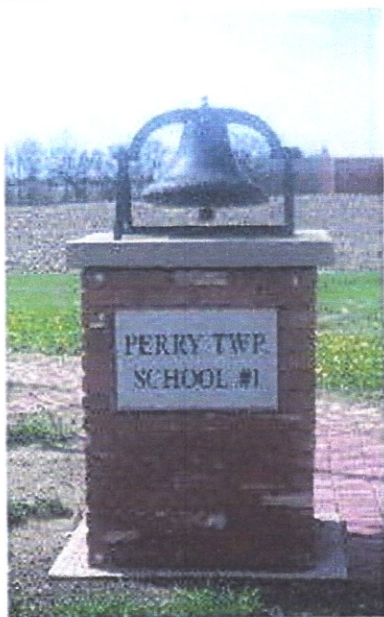
**Although the White Lick/Fayette community had numerous churches and businesses, including blacksmiths, doctors and merchants, Perry Township was and still remains a rural farming township. The first Perry Township subscription school, which required students to pay for services, was established in 1836. There were also some other early private schools. The public school system began to function after the Indiana General Assembly passed the 1852 school law. The current brick building replaced an earlier wooden school building built after passage of the 1852 law.**



The original wood framed Howard School building was likely one of the three erected in 1855, since it was designated No. 1. The building served the township's most populated area and was located on the land of John B. Howard, who was likely Trustee. Because the Boone County Courthouse burned in 1856, original documentation for the first school was lost. State School Examiner reports show in 1854 there were no schools and no teachers in Perry Township. An 1855 examiner's report shows three frame schools were erected. The report for 1857 shows four public schools in "good" condition.

The current brick Howard School building was most likely constructed in 1881. An early Boone County School Superintendent directed old school records covering 40 years following the year 1873 be taken from his office and a storage room to be destroyed. No records which specifically relate to construction of the existing building were found. State Examiner Reports show all township school buildings were frame through 1878. However, brick buildings were being constructed. Newspaper articles describe construction of the brick school at Fayette in 1881.

Howard School served the White Lick/Fayette community for educational and gathering purposes until 1916. Gathering purposes included "singings" and "moot courts" along with family dinners and activities associated with the school. The year 1916 marked the end of the district school system in Perry Township. Alumna Hazel Tharp says she and other children left Howard School for Christmas vacation in 1916 and returned to the consolidated Perry Central School.



Former Howard School Student  
Hazel Tharp 107 years old  
taken at the dedication on  
May 1, 2011.





## Learning about The Schools of Perry Township

The Howard School is located in Perry Township in the southern part of Boone County. It was a farming community and is one of the oldest townships in the county being settled in the 1830's.

Among the earliest settlers were Edmond Shirley, Jesse Turner, Alexander Fortner, Aaron Smith, John K. Edwards, the Doyles, the Glendenings, Eli Smith, D. W. and B. H. Smith, Peter Keney, the Chambers, G. W. Lumkins, David Leap, Thomas Leap, E. Wollen and E. Thornly. Also prominent names of Schenck and Sullivan are names that were there 130 years ago.

One of the Schencks had the distinction of having been the first schoolteacher in Perry Township in 1836 at a conscription school.

Perry Township had the following one-room schools according to the Boone County Historical Society: Crab Apple, Cynthiana, Faulkner, Howard, Long, and Lumpkin. The names of some of the teachers were William Bodine, Fern Branson, Mary Casserly, Thomas Casserly, Lester Everett, Jim Farrell, Lawrence Farrell, Raleigh Gates, Roscoe Gregg, Ralph Harvey, Nora Lowder, Ernest Owens, Hazel Owens, Charles Pennington, Hassel Schenck, Hulda Shepard, Brian Smith, Buren Sullivan and Susan Sullivan.

The one-room schools in Perry Township were closed for Christmas vacation in December of 1916 and never re-opened. In January, 1917, all the students except those at Crab Apple School were transported to the new building by five horse-drawn "school hacks", drivers of the "hacks" were: John Barrickman, Basel Rightset, Charles Shirley, Elmer Slagle and Chester Smith.

By 1920 the horse drawn "hacks" were replaced by two motorized school buses.

Virgil Gunn was the first principal, the other teachers were Grades 1 and 2, Hazel Owens; Grades 3 and 4: Susan Sullivan; Grades 5 and 6: Leo Farrell and Grades 7 and 8: Brian W. Smith. These teachers were all residents of Perry township. The high school was approved as a commissioned high school in 1921. Between 1921 and 1963 there were 480 graduates of the consolidated Perry-Central high school.



Howard School is a vernacular one room, brick, rectangular school-house. On its eastern boundary is the historic Howard Cemetery with burials from 1830's. The current building replaced a wooden structure and is built in the classic Italianate style most popular in Indiana in the late 1880's. No substantial alterations have been made to the setting of the building.

The existing brick Howard School building measures 26 feet across its front and back and 36 feet in its depth. The foundation consist of bricks, laid four thick with a width of about 17 and 1/2 inches to about four feet deep. Its thirteen inch, three brick thick, walls rise 13 feet above its foundation to its cedar shake roof. There are three tall windows on the east and west walls to take advantage of natural light. The original large wood-framed windows have been replicated to again provide natural light to the interior classroom.

The interior of Howard School consists of a single classroom accessed through the single entry door. The basic plan for the classroom is for students to sit facing the south wall which is lined with blackboards and where the teacher's desk will be located. Slate blackboards extend across the front of the classroom.

Based on a 1916 transfer of the school and lot to the owner of the surrounding property, the original school lot consisted of one acre of land. The school building is on a grass lot. It is not known to have had a specific playground area with equipment. Indeed, Hazel Tharp, an centurion former Howard School student, says: "We didn't need playground equipment. We made our own games."

## **The Significance**

Howard School is most significant because of its role in the history of education. The brick building and the wooden building it replaced in 1891 embodied nineteenth century education in general and in Indiana specifically. The building was state funded, constructed, maintained and monitored by local and state officials. Howard School is the example of the district school system under the Indiana General Assembly's 1882 school law and later provisions. It is a reminder of how, where and why Hoosiers educated their young.

The history of education in Indiana is a significant cultural and social trend. The closing of the current brick school building in December, 1916 was due to another trend in education reflecting the transformation of Indiana from an agrarian to an urban society.

The Howard School is a rarity. In 1910, when school consolidation started, there were approximately 9300 schoolhouses in Indiana, about 123 of which were in Boone County. In December 1982, an inventory of historic sites listed 29 Boone County "School" buildings. By July, 2008, twelve no longer existed, five were large buildings rather than one room schoolhouses, eight had been converted to private homes, one to a barn and one to a garage facility for farm machinery. Of the remaining two, one was a ruin far beyond practical restoration. The only building remaining for preservation and restoration was the Howard School building.

## **Honors/Awards**

2007-Listed on the Indiana Register of Historic Sites and Structures.

2009-Listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

2010-Received the Indiana Historic Preservation Award for Outstanding Effort to Save and Preserve Howard School from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Historic Preservation and Archeology.

# Howard School

## Teacher/Adult Evaluation

(circle one)

School or Group Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Students: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Visited One-Room School: \_\_\_\_\_

Did you have any problems? Please describe:

What did you like best about your visit?

Would you recommend a visit to the One Room School to others? Why?

Do you have any further suggestions or comments?

# Howard School

## Student Evaluation

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

One-Room School Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Visited One-Room School: \_\_\_\_\_

Please tell what you liked about your day at the One-Room School

Suggestions and comments: