

## LAKE VIEW No. 12



The Lake View School was built in 1890 on land conveyed to the district by Catherine Walden Meyer, daughter of prominent Buffalo attorney and former mayor of Buffalo, Ebenezer Walden. The Walden's owned most of the land that would ultimately become Lake View. And, as a matter of fact, the present Lake View Road was originally known as "Walden" Road and the community took its name, "Lake View" from the Walden home overlooking Lake Erie. Mr. Walden also built the former Lake View Hotel in 1880.

Since there is no documentation, it's not really clear whether Mrs. Meyer donated the land or sold it to what would become Hamburg's School District No. 12. It is know, however, that Lake View pioneer, Frank Trinder who later became a school trustee, convinced Mrs. Walden to make the land available for the construction of the four room all wooden school house. (Originally it had three classrooms and a library).

Lake View's first School Trustee was Nelson Broad and its first teacher was Julius Gressman. Apparently, early teachers moved around quite often because Gressman also had



been employed by both the Big Tree and Amsdell schools before coming to the new school in Lake View in 1891.

The school building was constructed almost in the middle of the early community, on the south side of Lake View Road, and just west of where Versailles Road intersects with Lake View Road. The building originally housed grades 1-8; but in the years after centralization, it was used for second and third grade overflows from both Pinehurst and Big Tree.

In its early history, the Lake View district shared a boundary on the north with the Shaleton School district, and as a result it was not uncommon for children from one district to cross over and attend school in the neighboring district. However, children attending the Lake View School generally lived as far west as the railroad tracks (actually about 25 yards west of the tracks), as far east as Heltz Road, as far south as North Creek Road, and as far north as the Center Street - Versailles Road intersection.

The school building's unique key-hole shaped window was a distinctive feature incorporated into the building by the architect to symbolize the "Key To Knowledge" which could be obtained by all those who came to study here. Of course, Mr. Gressman was there to provide the key.

In 1951-52, when the school became a part of the Frontier school system, there were five faculty members on the staff at the school. Donald Dix was principal and also was the seventh and eighth grade teacher. He later would become principal of the new Blasdel Elementary School when it was opened in 1959. William Crocoll then became principal at Lake View.

In 1976, due to declining enrollments and the cost of maintaining the aged building, the Frontier school district closed the school. It was sold in 1979 and later became the home of the Southtown's Christian Center until it was destroyed by fire in November 1996. It's interesting that when it was destroyed, the exterior of the building was essentially unchanged from the view in this photo. It's probably most appropriate that the site today is occupied by the Lake View "Children's World Day Care" facility. Incidentally, for those who may wonder, Lake View historian Duke Spittler tells me that the name "Lake View" is two words!