

*Dedication Program*

MARY A. WHITE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

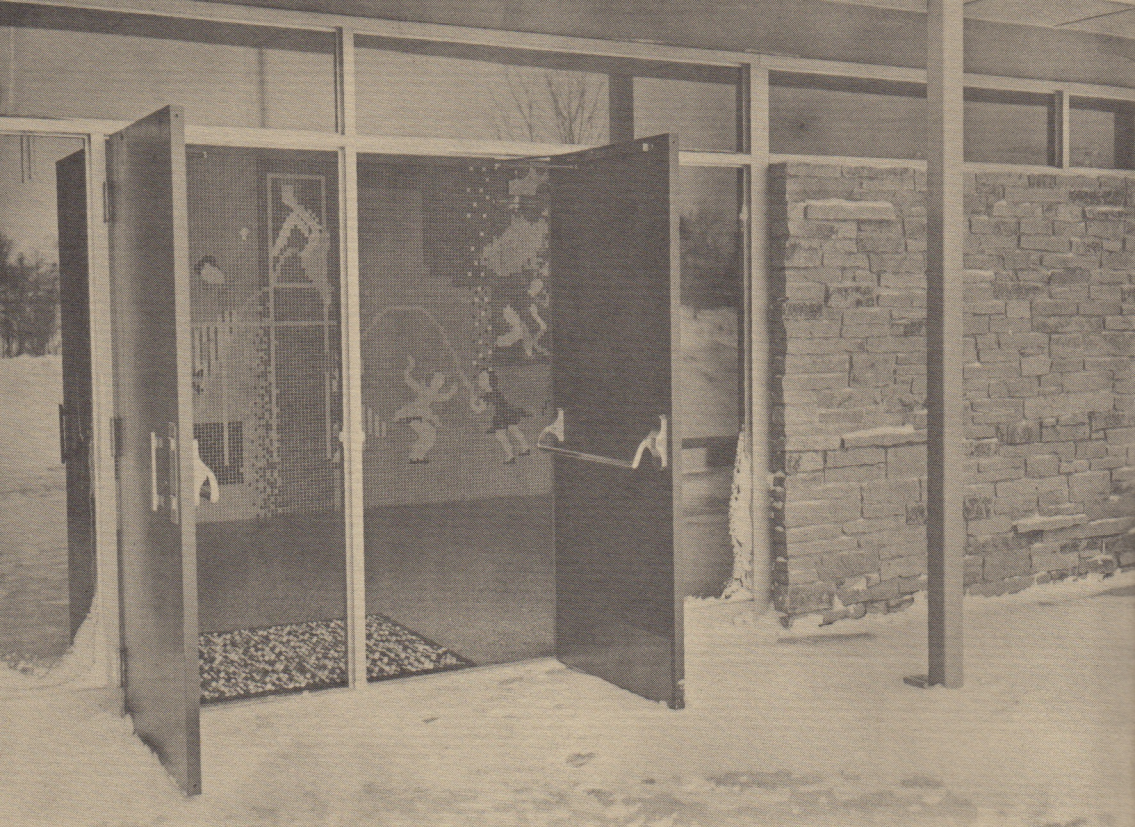
MONDAY, JANUARY 12, 1959

7:00 to 9:00 P.M.

Wisconsin Avenue at Ottawa

Grand Haven, Michigan





## Welcome

Grand Haven proudly presents its new Mary A. White Elementary School, built to serve boys and girls and dedicated to the memory of Ottawa County's first teacher.

Its clean lines, purposeful design and beauty bear vivid testimony to the vision of its planners.

This new school, with its bright colors, well-lighted, self-contained classrooms and modern equipment, is a far cry from the log hut where Mary A. White first taught Grand Haven's boys and girls, but a school is more than brick, stone and steel. It is an edifice imbued with the faith the spirit of unselfish persons who, like Mary A. White, believe in the power of education and see in youth all of the promise and hope which the future holds. It is a symbol of the ideal of education for all and community cooperation for the welfare of boys and girls.

Our sincere thanks go to the hundreds of citizens, the teachers, the planners, and the workmen who have made this building possible. You have helped make Grand Haven a better place in which to live.

### BOARD OF EDUCATION—

Dr. John Kitchel, *President*  
Mr. Jacob Ponstein, *Vice-President*  
Mr. Miller Sherwood, *Secretary-Treasurer*  
Mrs. Norman Anderson  
Mr. Claude Knoll  
Mr. Ivan Fosheim  
Mrs. Wendell Morris  
R. VanVolkinburg, *Superintendent of Schools*



## Mary A. White

Mary A. White was born in Ashfield, Massachusetts, on September 18, 1813. She studied at Sanderson Academy and received further education under Miss Mary Lyon — later famous as the founder of Mt. Holyoke College. From Miss Lyon, intimate friend of her older sister Amanda, Mary felt she gained her "inspiration as a teacher".

Only sixteen when she began teaching, Miss White served successively a private school in Ashfield, the district school, and a boarding school at Amherst.

Meanwhile, Amanda and her young husband, The Reverend William M. Ferry, had left their mission post at Mackinac Island to embark upon a new venture at the mouth of the Grand River. Concerned about rearing her children in the wilderness, Amanda entreated Mary to come out to Michigan to educate the young Ferrys.

Squire White gave his daughter permission for a two years' absence; and on June 10, 1835, Mary arrived in Grand Haven. She opened school in an upper room of the Ferry home at the corner of Water and Washington Streets<sup>1</sup> but shortly moved across the street to a log hut "vacated by Mr. Hathaway's mill men."<sup>2</sup>

In 1836 the first public building in Ottawa County was erected on Second Street near Washington; it served as schoolhouse, church, and courthouse. As the town grew, the school's enrollment increased until it reached one hundred twenty; the porch had to be used for an additional recitation room, where advanced scholars assisted in hearing lessons. Although this private school was supported by tuition, Miss White welcomed pupils who could not afford to pay.

The students were "a motley group — delicate children and rough men", according to the teacher. "Among the number were sometimes to be found those older than myself."

In 1850 a township school was built on First Street between Franklin and Clinton Streets. There Miss White was assisted by her niece, Miss Amanda Ferry. The Michigan public school fund was then available to meet expenses, provided the teacher passed an examination as to competence. Miss White modestly declared that the examining board — Henry Pennoyer and Thomas White Ferry, her former pupils — "were too courteous to be very critical in the examination."

The two years' absence from her Massachusetts home thus became indefinitely extended. Miss White gave sixteen years to her profession in this pioneer community; and after a dozen years of teaching elsewhere, Ottawa County's first teacher returned to Grand Haven. Beloved by all and known throughout the community as "Aunt Mary", Miss White presided over the home of her nephew, Senator T. W. Ferry, until her death in 1901.

<sup>1</sup>Site of the Schuler Hotel

<sup>2</sup>Site of the Chamber of Commerce Building



## Facts about our new school

The site for the Mary A. White School consists of ten acres acquired by the Board of Education in 1955 at a cost of \$15,000.

This site, located adjacent to Duncan Woods and away from traffic, represents an almost ideal setting for an elementary school. The site is being developed under the school-park plan agreement between the city and the school district of Grand Haven. To date the area has been graded and two Little League ball diamonds have been completed. Future plans for recreational development includes out-of-door basketball courts, tennis courts and playground equipment for small children.

## BUILDING:

## Rooms Provided

This school includes seven classrooms plus a library, multi-purpose room, special education room, kitchen, lounge, health room, storerooms and offices.

## Costs

[illegible][illegible]

(Grades Kindergarten through 6)

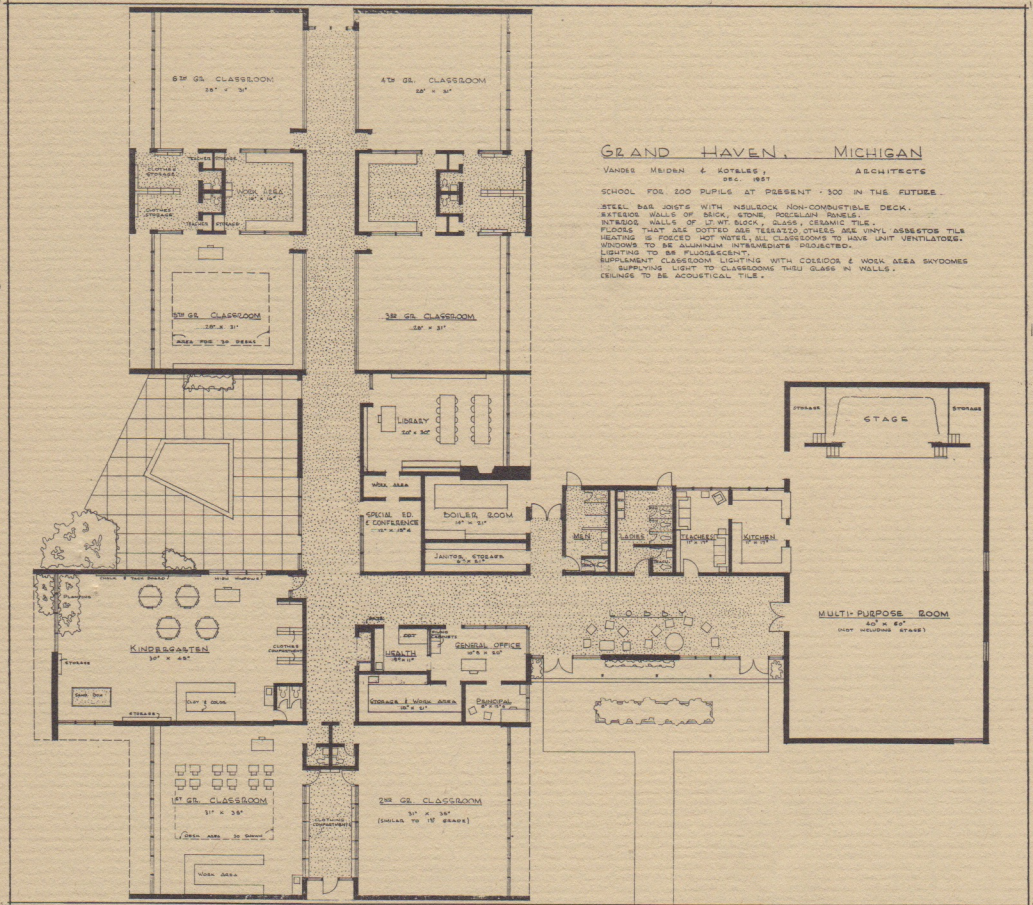
\*This cost does not include development of recreation area.

*Calendar:*

September 30, 1957	-	-	-	Voters approve \$300,000 bond issue
January 10, 1958	-	-	-	Bonds sold
February 17, 1958	-	-	-	Architects plans approved
March 10, 1958	-	-	-	Construction work begins
March 12, 1958	-	-	-	Construction work begins
October 13, 1958	-	-	-	Classroom wing occupied
December 1, 1958	-	-	-	Building completed



## Floor Plan



*Architects:*

VanderMeiden & Koteles, Grand Haven, Michigan

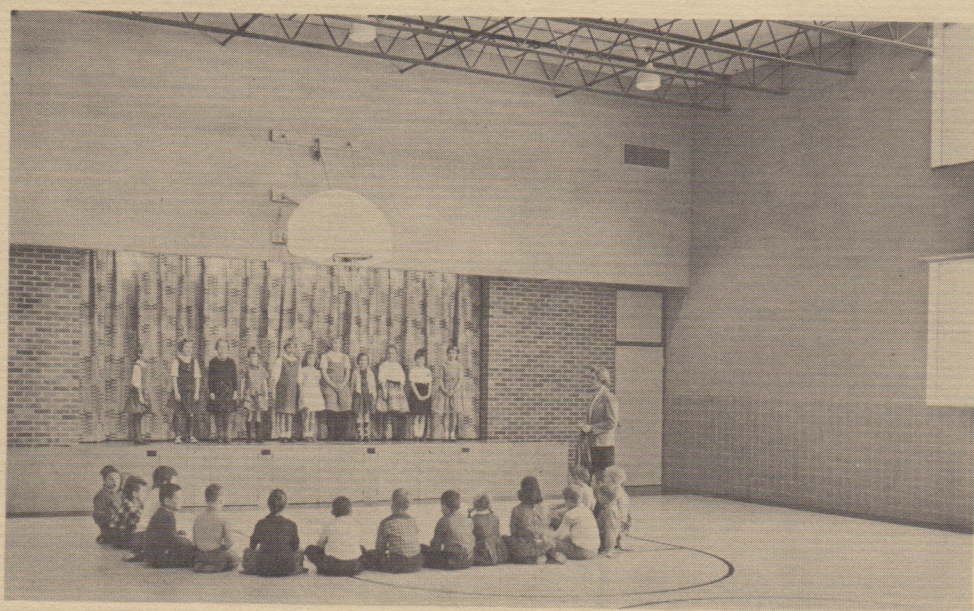
*General Contractors:*

Stephenson Construction Company, Zeeland, Michigan





The library is a cozy room designed for children. A fireplace surrounded by built-in wall seats all help to make this an appealing place for young readers.



The multi-purpose room, as the name indicates, designed to serve many purposes. It is an auditorium, a playroom, a theater or a lunch room as the occasion demands. It can also serve as a center for community activities. Direct access to the playground makes this room a functional part of the summer recreation program.



# Dedication Program

Presiding — Mr. V. H. Quebbeman

President, Mary A. White, P.T.A.

Vocal Music - - - - - Mary A. White Chorus  
Mrs. Alvin Jonker, *Director*

Invocation - - - - - Rev. Arthur Vandenberg  
*Calvary Baptist Church*

Remarks - - - - - Ralph M. Van Volkinburg  
*Superintendent of Schools*

Presentation of Building - - - - - John VanderMeiden, Jr.  
*VanderMeiden & Koteles, Architects*

Acceptance of Building - - - - - Dr. John H. Kitchel  
*President, Board of Education*

Dedication Address - - - - - Marvin Patterson  
*Past-President, Board of Education*

Tableau and Song - - - - - Mary A. White Students  
Mrs. E. D. Compton, *Director*

Closing Remarks - - - - - Frank Such  
*Principal, Mary A. White School*

Sincere appreciation is extended to all those who have helped make this Dedication and Open-House Program possible.

Upon completion of the Program, the building will be open for inspection until 9:00 P.M. Refreshments will be served in the multi-purpose room.



## The name of our new school

The Grand Haven Junior Historical Society of the Air presented a radio program on March 22, 1957, entitled, "EDUCATION IN A PIONEER VILLAGE". This program included considerable material about Ottawa County's first teacher. It was the feeling of the Junior High School group that naming the new elementary school in honor of this first teacher would be a fitting tribute to a life dedicated to youth.

The following year the 9th grade Mary A. White Historical Society circulated petitions recommending that the Board of Education name the new school in honor of Mary A. White. The Board took favorable action on these petitions February 3, 1958.

## Who's who in our new school

Principal - - - - - Frank Such

### Teachers:

Kindergarten - - - - - Elaine Bolthouse  
First Grade - - - - - Jean Daugherty  
Second Grade - - - - - Donna Hill  
Third and Fourth Grades - - - - - Kathryn Boot  
Fourth Grade - - - - - Helen VanDyke  
Fifth Grade - - - - - Sara June Porenta  
Sixth Grade - - - - - Rowena Compton

Secretary - - - - - Helen Long

P. T. A. President - - - - - Virgil Quebbeman

Custodian - - - - - Ben Mellema