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Center School Historical Collection 1905-2008 MSS 190

Title: Center School Historical collection

Creator: Center School (Prairie Township, Ind.)

Inclusive Dates: 1905-2008

Extent: 3.3 cu. ft.

Containers: 5 boxes

Language of Materials: Materials entirely in English.

Preferred Citation:

Center School Historical Collection, Archives and Special Collections, Ball State University Libraries

Administrative History:

Center School was established in 1905 and located in Perry Township, Delaware County, Indiana. The school was typical of Indiana's small rural schools in that period. As the 1900s began and on through the 1960s, Indiana's rural educational landscape became filled with the State's first "consolidated" schools. These schools were the bridge between the pre-twentieth century one-room schoolhouses and the modern schools of today. Center School's enrollment, like most rural schools, was low. Its curriculum was limited to the basics of education.

The history of education in Delaware County is intricately tied to Center School. In 1827 the county's first school, a one-room school structure, was built in Perry Township in the southeastern corner of the county. The school was located about three miles northwest of where Center School would be located. By 1905 there were ninety-eight school buildings in Delaware County serving some 5,500 students, and Perry Township had four such schools serving approximately 200 students. One of those schools was located at the crossroads near the geographical center of Perry Township. Shortly after the turn of the century, property directly across from this school was purchased with the intent to construct a new, more modern school building for Perry Township. Although the construction of the school is not believed to have started until 1906, the founding of Center School dates back to 1905.

After its construction, Center School took in and consolidated the outlying one-room schoolhouses. In 1908 the first set of students matriculated from the new school. By 1912, the school saw the first class of students to complete a full twelve years of education at its facility. In 1926, the school was enlarged adding a gymnasium with a stage, an assembly hall, a cafeteria and additional classrooms for high school students. The school, which at that time served all grades from 1st through 12th soon, came to be known as Center High School.

When school consolidations began again in the 1950s, Delaware County, not including Muncie City schools, had eleven high schools. When the consolidations ended in the late 1960s Center School was one of its many victims. At the end of the 1967 school year Center School was permanently closed and its remaining students were bussed to the newer consolidated school sites in the area. Shortly thereafter the school building itself was torn down and the property sold.

Historical Note:

In the spring of 1999 several graduates from Center School sought to put together a display of school memorabilia. The alumni discovered that little had been done to preserve the school's history. With the guidance of the Ball State University Center for Middletown Studies, Joseph and Dorothy Duncan (Class of 1946 and 1949) convinced the Center School Alumni Association to make an effort to collect and preserve materials documenting the school's history. The Duncan's contacted Ball State University Archives and Special Collection's about preserving the items they were collecting. To help in the establishment of the Center School Historical Collection, the Center School Alumni Association partnered with the Center for Middletown Studies and Archives and Special Collections to apply for an Indiana Heritage Research grant. They received the 2-year grant in May 1999 and proceeded to collect photographs and other documentation to be preserved in the Archives.

Scope and Contents:

This collection includes Center School records, copies of school's newspaper, *The Chatter* (1930-1963), copies of the school's yearbook, *Memoria* (1963-1966), personal memorabilia from graduates, and copies of the Indiana Heritage Research grant application (1999). The photographs series (P 67) includes photographs, postcards, and collages of Center School's graduating classes (1926-1966).

Conditions Governing Access: This collection is open for research.

Copyright Notice:

Legal title, copyright, and literary rights reside with Ball State University, Muncie, IN. All requests to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted to Archives and Special Collections.

Custodial History:

The Center school historical collection was received by Archives and Special Collections as a donation from Joseph Duncan and Center School Alumni Association on 1999/9/13.

Accruals: Additions are expected.

Processing Information:

Collection processing completed in 1999.

Finding aid created in 1999.

Finding aid revised in 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2008.

Finding aid revised 2009/05/06 by Bridget K. Hahn

EAD finding aid completed 2009/05/06 by Maren L. Read.

Related Materials:

Materials relating to this collection may be found in the following collections in Archives and Special Collections, Ball State University Libraries, Muncie IN:

MSS 58: Allen and Rita Winters family papers and photographs

Arrangement:

This collection is organized in the following series:

- Series I: Center School Records
- Series II: Addition, August 2004
- Series III: Addition, March 2005
- Series IV: Addition, May 2005
- Series V: Addition, September 2006
- Series VI: Addition, 2008
- Series VII: Addition, March 2009
- Series VIII: Photographs (P 67)

Controlled Access Headings:

- Stoeckel Archives of Local History
- Prairie Township (Ind.)
- Center School (Prairie Township, Ind.)
- Schools
- Schools--Centralization
- Public Schools
- High Schools
- Basketball
- Education
- Alumni and alumnae
- Newspaper--*The Chatter*
- Yearbook--*Memoria*
- Correspondence
- Documents
- Photographs
- Yearbooks
- Artifacts
- Scrapbooks
- Student newspapers and periodicals

Collection Inventory:

Series I: Center School Records

Box	Contents
1	Basketball Memorabilia-Basketball Schedule, 1943-1944 IHSAA Sectional Basketball Tournament Schedule, 1933 Tournament, 1937 <i>The Chatter</i> , 1930 January-1932 November 1933 February 1938, October 1940, November 1942 January-1943 December 1944 January-1944 April 1944 September-1944 December 1945 January-1945 February 1946 March-1946 October 1947 February-1947 December 1948 January-1948 December 1951- 1958 May 1960 December 2 and 22 December 1961 January 27 1962 May 19 Commencement Announcements & Programs, 1902-1965 Diplomas, Kirklin, Edrafaun memorabilia, Freshman Initiation, 1928 Holiday, 1927 Homecoming, 1928 Pamphlet, "Our School" Mt. Pleasant School, 1906-1907, District School No. 5, Delaware County, Indiana Playbills, undated Report Cards: 1944-1945 and 1956-1957 Senior Trip Itinerary, 1956 Temperance Pledge, Erville Keesling, 1914

Series II: Addition, August 2004

Box	Contents
1	Indiana Heritage Research Grant, Final Report, copy 1, 2001 Final Report, copy 2, 2001 Final Report letter and attachments, 2001

Series III: Addition, March 2005

Box	Contents
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- 1 Alumni Banquet Program, 1951
Center School Handbook, undated
E.K. Keesling Honorary Meeting, Program, undated
Master of Ceremony's notes for E.K. Keesling Honorary Meeting, undated
World War II Ration Books, undated
Valedictorian Speech Notes, undated
Memoria, Center High School Yearbooks, 1963-1966

Series IV: Addition, September 2006

- | Box | Contents |
|-----|--|
| 2 | Artifacts, undated
Artifacts, From Greg Smith's Scrapbook, 1960s
Graham, Veda Scouting Scrapbook, copies, 1946-1947
Graham, Veda Scouting Scrapbook, original, 1946-1947
Photo Information Sheets and Thumbnails, volume 1, folder 1, 1900-1960
Photo Information Sheets and Thumbnails, volume 1, folder 2, 1900-1960
Photo Information Sheets and Thumbnails, volume 2, 1930-1990 |
| 3 | Alumni Banquet Minutes and Information, 1970-1979
1980-1989
1990-1999
2000-2005 |
| 3 | <i>The Chatter</i> , September, 1943
1945 March, April, September, October, and December
1946 January, February
1947 January
1948 September
1949 November-December
1950 October-December
1951 January-February, April, September-October
1952 January-February, September, December
1953 January-April, October-November
1954 September-December
1955 January-February, April, October-December
1956 February, April-May
1960 May
1961 May
1963 May
1965 May |

Series V: Addition 2008

- | Box | Contents |
|-----|----------|
|-----|----------|

- 3 *The Chatter*, January-March, September-November, 1930
 1931 January-February, April, October-December
 1932 February
 1938 September, November, February
 1939 December
 1940 January
 1941 April, December
 1942 April
 1949 January
 1949 February-April, September-October
 1950 January-March
 1951 November-December
 1952 October-November
 1953 September
 1955 March-April
 1957 October-December
 1958 February, April, October-December
 1959 February, April-May, October-December
 1960 February, April
 1961 February-March
 1961 October
 1962 February-April, September, November
 1962 December
 1963 February
 Center School Class of 1958, 50 Years Later Memory Book, 2008

Series V: Addition 2009

- Box Contents
3 Center School Handbook, 1967
 Class of 1940 50th Reunion, 1990
 Commencement Program, 1957, 1967
 “The Elizabethan Courier”, undated
 Greg Smith Scrapbook, Basketball and Prom Memorabilia, 1960-1961
 Basketball and Student Memorabilia, 1961-1962
 Key Club, undated
 Memorabilia from Junior Year, 1962-1963
 Memorabilia from Senior Year, 1963-1964
 Pre-High School Basketball Student Manager Memorabilia, 1959-1960
 Music Program, 1949
 Sunshine Society Senior Honors Program, 1954, 1955, 1956

Series VI: Photographs (P 67)

- Box Contents
 Alumni Reunions

Bands
Basketball Teams (Boys)
Basketball Teams (Girls)
Buildings
Bus Stops
Classrooms
Lunchroom
Personnel
Playground
Students and Teachers, 1903-1919
Students and Teachers, 1920-1928
Students and Teachers, 1930-1958
Composite class photographs, 1926-1966
Oversized photograph, Senior Class at U.S. Capitol, Washington, D.C., 1959
Oversized photograph, Senior Class at U.S. Capitol, Washington, D.C., 1941
Negatives, Panoramic View of student body (P067/0001)