



# Our School History

## Project Background & Acknowledgements

The good outcomes of the "Our School History" project came about as a result of controversy.

In June, 2011, the Board of Education of the West Bloomfield School District voted to rename Green Elementary School in honor of retiring principal, Mrs. Katherine Sheiko. While Mrs. Sheiko's dedication and service to the school district was never the issue, controversy erupted over the name change. Members of the local community, in particular those affiliated with the Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society (GWBHS) and the Green family implored the School Board to reconsider their decision. The protesters felt the School Board had dismissed the legacy of the Green family, one of West Bloomfield's early settlers and donors of the land where the one-room Green School stood, c. 1856. Though the Board held fast to its decision, members asked GWBHS to document and share the history of all schools in the district, in order to ensure the community learned the stories behind the names and the buildings. Thus began this project.

GWBHS provided funding for professional research, and hours upon hours of volunteer research, writing, and editing. Funding for the exhibit panels was provided by generous donations from each of the nine Parent-Teacher Organizations in the West Bloomfield School District. The school district administrators opened their school archives to researchers. Community members near and far contributed artifacts, memoirs, photographs, and oral histories to help build the body of knowledge. Over the course of two years, a team of designers and editors produced the ten exhibit panels. Each West Bloomfield School District building received a permanent installation of their panel. In addition, historic school bells were brought out of storage as a result of this project. Scotch Elementary School raised what is presumed to be the bell from the one-room Scotch School (c. 1872) and Roosevelt raised what is presumed to be the bell from Keego Harbor School (c. 1914).

GWBHS members are in the process of archiving hundreds of digital photographs related to Our School History for easy access by the general public. Additional detailed text is available at [www.gwbhs.org](http://www.gwbhs.org). Future contributions from the community including photographs, artifacts, and memoirs are always welcome. Contact the Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society for more information.

This project was a team effort. Thank you to everyone who participated. Special recognition goes to the following people whose contributions were especially significant:

Bill Bertakis  
Brian Bohnett  
Buzz Brown  
Amy Clarke  
Hannah Dagg  
Christy Forhan  
Gina Gregory  
Robert Laskey  
Helen McAllister  
Nancy Perkins  
Helen Jane Peters  
Ellen Rotblatt  
Molly Rozycki  
Frank and Nancy Salo  
Ellen Simmons  
DuAnne Sonnevile  
Alex Turczynski  
Wayne Walworth  
Jonathan Watson  
Sue Williams  
Pamela Zajac  
Dennis Zembala



School district consolidation, 1949



Green School students, 1925



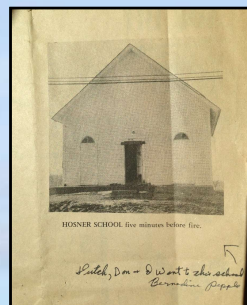
WBHS Homecoming Queen 1959, Mary Rose Donigan



Keego Harbor School, 1920



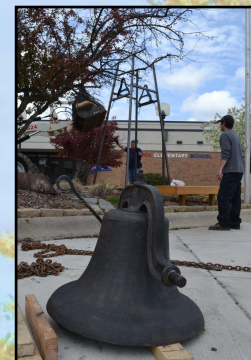
Community members shared photographs and memories, here Scotch School, 1950



The dilapidated Hosner School was used as a fire department training exercise, 1970



Ealy gym class, 1992



Scotch School bell tower installation, 2014

