



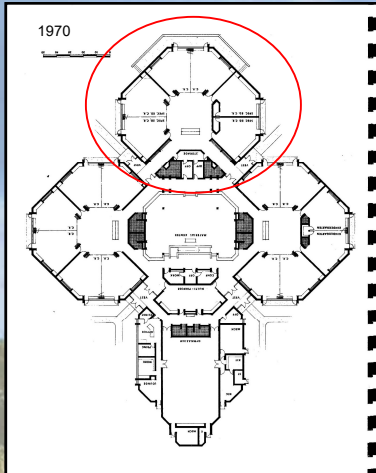
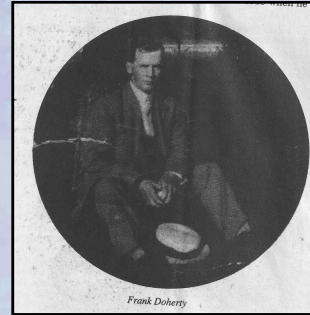
Doherty Elementary School

Our School History



In 1904, John C. Doherty, originally from Ireland, bought 160 acres at the corner of Walnut Lake and Orchard Lake Roads to raise his family of five children. When the boys were old enough, John Doherty divided 100 acres of his property between Nicholas and Frank Edmond. On his 50 acres, Frank E. Doherty (born in 1891) raised fruits, vegetables, and flowers and sold them to neighboring communities. Frank lived on the farm with his brother Albert, and Albert's family. When Frank died in 1964, he left the property to one of the men who helped tend his fields, Mr. Ano Olsen. Mr. Olsen sold the property to the West Bloomfield School District in 1966.

To meet the needs of a growing population, Doherty Elementary School opened in January, 1969. Formal dedication was delayed until November, 1970, after the completion of the building's first expansion.



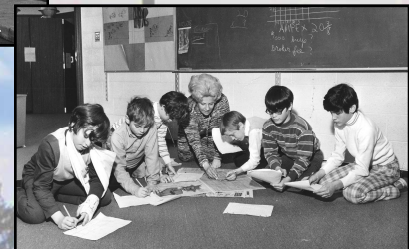
The school originally had two clusters of classrooms, with a third added in 1970 to accommodate special education.



"Much is heard of the 'homey' atmosphere and the general environment is well-liked. Similarly, the natural resources of the site have been conserved for all to enjoy but also tapped to further enrich the teaching program. The extraordinary potential of the particular educators at Doherty has been complemented by a total facility which affords an atmosphere, and environment, and an opportunity for innovation."

Building and Site Evaluation Report, March, 1971

Although Frank Doherty had no children of his own, he employed local youngsters to help tend his farm and crops, including his prized dahlias.



Doherty featured a relaxed learning environment where desks and shoes were optional. 1970.

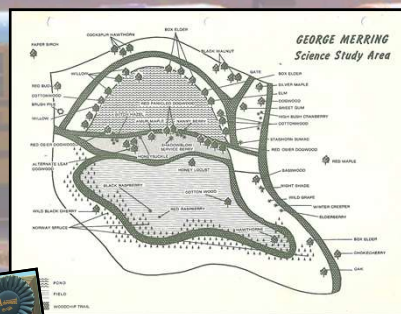
"Immediately upon entering the Doherty School, one is impressed by the atmosphere of activity and interest. Feeling of warmth pervades the building due to its human scale and the use of natural wood finishes, carpeting, and earth-toned brick. The building is not a static show place. Whether it be the gymnasium, the art/music multipurpose room, the IMC, or particularly, one of the classroom pods, things are happening and it is the children who are making them happen."

Building and Site Evaluation Report, March, 1971

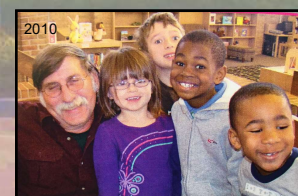


PTA volunteers, c. 1970

In 1970, Boy Scout Troops 115 and 241 and the Orchard Lake Flower & Garden Club joined forces to transform the area around the old Doherty farm pond into an outdoor study area. Over 400 native plants were used, the first being a sycamore tree. The area was dedicated in memory of beloved teacher, George Merring, who had recently passed away.



Principal Carl Childress, Mrs. Sherrie Pardon, and her class, 1973-74



The Doherty PTA, and later PTO, have supported the teachers, students, and community through fundraising, volunteerism, and events like the Fashion Show, Carnival, and Field Day. Over the years, the PTOs have also funded technology tools, playground equipment, and other school improvements.



PRINCIPALS

CARL T. CHILDRESS
KATHLEEN KJOLHEDE
RAYMOND YOUNG
WILLIAM FLOTO
JOHN HOYE
GEORGE HEITSCH
SUSAN CROCKER
MOLLY FUNK
ROBIN KOCHER



Doherty earns National Exemplary School honors, 1985 and 2000



Exhibit funded by the PTOs of West Bloomfield School District (WBSD). Research funded by the Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society (GWBHS). Historical materials, additional research, and design provided by WBSD, GWBHS, and members of the community.

www.wbsd.org www.gwbhs.org 2016

