

Freda/Beacon Hill School 1902 to July 21, 1947

T55n R35W NW Corner of Section 30.. another source says Section 25 near Beacon Hill.

Freda was founded in the early years of the 20th century as the site of a major stamp mill for the ores of the Champion Mine; it was on the tracks of the Copper Range Railroad (as was Redridge). By WWI, it had a population of over 500, but the mill, like that in Redridge, became superfluous after WWII. The tracks were removed in 1971, and Freda became a ghost town.¹

Bill Brinkman shared that in 1916 a fire destroyed the Trimountain Stamp Mill at Beacon Hill and caused many families to depart. Student enrollment had been as high as 1,130 children.

The first school for students in Freda Beacon Hill was the home of Harry Jolie. It was a school for 5 years prior to building of the one in this historic photo.

²The Stanton Township board started work the summer of 1902 (they became a township in 1902!) on two school buildings, one in Freda and one in Edgemere.

Freda's grade school building was built during the summer of 1902 consisting of a two story wood frame building with a basement and attic. There were two rooms per floor and when school started in September 1902, two rooms were ready.

Grades K-4 were on the first floor while grades five through eight were on the second floor.

The building was located between Freda and Beacon Hill across from the Catholic Church and Congregational church.

High School Students were sent to Painesdale High School on the only official school train in the country at the time.

¹ Kurt Wenner on pasty.com web site

² Clarence J. Monette's booklet [Freda, Michigan](#)



Photo above is from Alvin Brinkman collection in hands of nephew Earl Brinkman, Schmidt Corner area. Photo by Bill Brinkman 6-20-1959.. (of Freda Beacon Hill School and churches).

Back of Picture is written: Freda Beacon Hill School on left. Middle is Catholic Church. Far right is Finnish Church.

Data: Built in 1906-07, opened in Sept. 1907. (Another document says built in 1902). Closed in June of 1947 by Supt. of Schools William H. Brinkman. Sold to Harry Nye and Jack Champion of Dollar Bay on bids in 1959. That summer it was taken down for salvage. Foundation remains in the tall shrubbery.

Two story, four classrooms, and 8 grades. High School students took Copper Range school train to Painesdale High School. See another section on the School train.

Last teachers were: Mrs. Margaret Waters, Mabel Walker, Gertrude M. Wealton and Jean Eliasson.

Last class students in upper grades:

10th grade:

Melvin Raisanen, Helen Makela, Kenneth Keturi, Albert Honkanen, Douglas Hendrickson.

9th grade: Anita Nissen; Dorothy Asiala,

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8th grade: David Aho, Donald Honkanen, Douglas Morin, Donald Raisanen, Winifred Sten

7th grade: Arnold Asiala, Melvina Guilbault, Alan Hauswirth, Jerry Honkanen, Sharon Keturi, Edwina Nissen, Carolyn Peters, Melvin W. Virtanen.

Paulette Morin adds (MTU Archives vertical file): The school building at Freda was a 2 story wood frame structure with a basement and attic, which cost about \$4000, built in July and August 1902.

There were two rooms per floor, and when school started in September of 1902, 2

rooms were ready. It was a commodious structure, had hardwood floors, heated with hot water radiators, and provided all of the modern school conveniences. Grades Kindergarten through 4th were on the first floor, while grades five thru eight were on the second floor.

This square wooden structure was located between Freda and Beacon Hill, across from the Catholic Church and the Congregational Church. This school had a large entrance in the front and an outside entrance to the basement where the large coal furnace and storage rooms were located.

Teachers in Freda in 1910. First census after becoming a Township.

All boarding with John Mathison age 50 a wife and 5 kids.

Ernest Jude age 23.

Isabell Shauley age 21.

Maude Bell age 21.

Mabel Burt age 20.

School Board Minutes:

July 1941. – Met at Freda Beacon Hill School Chas. Alaniva, Pres.

- Engels Sect'y read letter received from Copper Range Railroad Co. through a personal interview w/ their Mr. Wm. Barth advising us to try to establish bus transportation and convey our high school students to Houghton instead of on train to Painesdale. School board named committee of 3 to investigate and formulate plans on this transportation situation. Then advise board and Mr. Schacht, Pres. of Copper Range and Mr. Wescott of CR railroad Co.

August 12, 1941

- Discussion on transportation of pupils to Houghton High School instead of Painesdale due to school train and railroad being in financial loss. Wm. Ruohonen will transport all High Schoolers to Houghton High School. Negotiate with Wm. Ruohonen for a 3 year contract so he can purchase a new 45 passenger bus. J. Martilla driver now \$44 /month.

June 8 1942. - ok Freda BH repairs

June 8, 1942 - Inspect Oskar, Liminga Redridge and Freda heating and plumbing and install 2- 30 section radiators @Redridge and Freda BH.

- obtain bookcases for Library and cupboards for Freda BH supplies.

Jan 4 1943. - Matt Puuri protested allowing Foresters to build any basement rooms in Freda BH on advice from county Pros. Attorney.

July 21, 1947. - Close Freda Beacon Hill School - Jack Kempainen will bus Freda Beacon Hill students to Redridge.

Sept. 19, 1947 - Garage for Oskar School bus. - remove florescent lights at Freda Beacon Hill (it closed) and put at Toivola, Liminga, and Oskar.

By **JDO, North Carolina** on **Sunday, February 27, 2005 - 04:19 pm**: (pasty.com)

I was born and raised in Houghton (left in 1957), and lived in Beacon Hill in the early '40s. My father was the agent at the RR Depot. I distinctly remember going to school there. The school was right across the road from the church on the road to Freda. I can remember standing on top of the "Big Hill" watching to see if the teacher could

make it up after an overnight storm. We had a lot of no-school days until Blazer's sawmill started putting a team of horses at the base to pull her car up.

Freda Beacon Hill classroom in 1926. Miss Tribilcock is the teacher.

Please help me identify who is in the picture.

Hilma Kuosa is in first grade

Eino is in Kindergarten.



Researched by Barb Koski Osma Plat Road Houghton MI 49931 in 2009.
Submitted 2011. Contact Webmaster with other information.