

The group chose the name of "Faith Mennonite Church," which replaced the earlier name of Geneva Mennonite Fellowship.

During the sessions of the Northern District Conference in June, 1966, the Faith Mennonite Church became a member of the District Conference, and filed application with the General Conference Mennonite Church to become a member of this larger body of 55,000 souls.

Our heritage stems from the Anabaptists, one of the groups that developed during the Reformation days of the sixteenth century. Our group is named after Menno Simons, who gathered together in Europe the groups that came out of this heritage and underwent severe persecutions for their beliefs. To accept the challenges of living as disciples of the Master is one of the principles that we set for ourselves.

—Albert Gaeddert

The new **Prince of Peace Lutheran Church** at 16th and Oak Sts. began with a meeting of 25 families with Dr. E. G. Fritschel in the Rialto Theater in Geneva on October 29, 1961. This meeting voted to form a congregation, and elected a steering committee, consisting of Harry Carlson, Lawrence Wattles, and Dr. D. C. Anderson. The building committee were M. M. Rosen (chairman), Henry Fangmeier, Edward Reinsch, Dick Deets, and Lawrence Wattles.

Pastor Leon Bauer of Carleton was asked to serve the group. The first service was held on November 11, 1961, in the Geneva City Auditorium, with 63 persons present. Preparations for the formal organization of a congregation were begun at once. By January 14, 1962, the necessary steps of incorporation, adoption of a constitution, election of officers and of a church council were completed.

Some time in mid-February, the Rev. Otto Hesla, regional director of American Missions of the American Lutheran Church, met with the congregation to explain the home mission program. Shortly thereafter, Prince of Peace was certified as a "Package Mission." Arrangements were then made for the purchase of the plot on which the church unit now stands.



Courtesy Nebraska Signal

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, with parsonage at left (1965).

A ground-breaking service for the new building was held on November 4, 1962, and three days later construction began. Good weather enabled rapid progress, and the building was finished by mid-February, 1963. It was dedicated at special services on the morning of Sunday, March 19, 1963, at which time 550 members of the congregation and friends joined in the two services.

In early 1968, the congregation numbered 300 members. The Rev. Woodrow Wilson, who became pastor of the church in June, 1966, is still serving us.

## SCHOOLS

### A History of School District 75, Geneva by Howard W. Hamilton

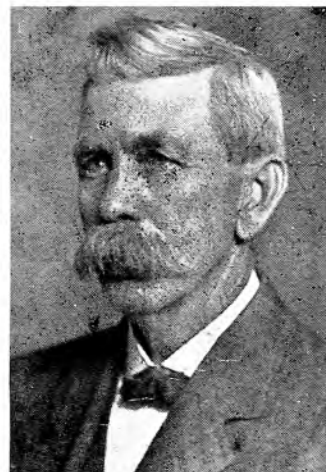
The history of the Geneva public school, District 75, might well be prefaced with a reminder that the school was established within a short time after the county was officially organized and Geneva was named the county seat (as described earlier).

In June, 1871, the county seat was surveyed and recorded. In June, 1872, some of the lots were sold at auction. The new town developed slowly for two years, even after a courthouse was built in 1873. In 1875, however, the town improved rapidly and by January 1, 1876, it had a population of 140.

On February 1, 1876, the citizens, foreseeing a need for a school, organized a school district. The district included land in four townships: Chelsea, Madison, Stanton, and Geneva.

Although no enrollment figures for the first school are available, the annual report on file in the office of the county superintendent, signed by Director J. B. Thompson, shows there were 15 males and 24 females in the district between the ages of 5 and 21. The report for 1877 shows the district received \$88.50 from the county and \$510 from other sources. The teacher received \$88.50 while \$510 was paid for a building, leaving the district owing \$1,154.15. The levy was 25 mills. This report, also signed by J. B. Thompson, showed there were 34 males and 36 females in the district between 5 and 21. There were three men teachers and one woman teacher. Salaries totaled \$145 for the men and \$35 for the woman. The value of the school was fixed at \$930 and the lot \$125.

Emma McKelvey Johnston headed the first school in Geneva in 1876. John Chase also taught three months of the term. In 1877, J. H. Sager taught three months as did J. B. Lewis. Emma McKelvey Johnston taught the school three months in 1878.



Courtesy Nebraska Signal

J. H. Sager, one of first teachers in Geneva Public School.

Others listed as heading the school before a superintendent was elected were as follows: 1879-80, Charles Fort; 1880-81, H. W. Caldwell; 1881-82, D. B. Huston; 1882-83, Jesse Hesseltine.

The first superintendent of the Geneva school was C. C. Heltman, who apparently became head of the school in 1882. He served until 1888.

Superintendents following Mr. Heltman until the present time were as follows: 1888-94, H. L. Chaplin, deceased; 1894-95, George Thornbrook, deceased; 1895-97, Robert J. Boyd, deceased; 1897-1901, J. L. McBrien, deceased; 1901-08, Charles W. Taylor, deceased; 1908-12, R. W. Eaton, deceased; 1912-15, Earl M. Cline, Lincoln, Neb.; 1915-18, Earl L. Meyer, Alliance, Neb.; 1918-19, G. W. Hansen; 1919-23, L. W. Weisel, deceased; 1923-24, J. P. Rigg, Grand Junction, Col.; 1924-27, R. W. Kretsinger, Oakland, Cal.; 1927-32, L. S. Devoe, deceased; 1932-45, H. B. Simon, deceased; 1945-61, Glen E. Felix, Jefferson County, Colo.; 1961-64, M. M. Rosen, Alliance, Neb.; 1964—, Bernard Bliefernich.

Although the Geneva school had operated since 1876, the district actually had no title to the land on which it operated a school until 1887. At that time the State of Nebraska executed a deed to District 75 in the names of Daniel Lynn, Charles C. Miles, and Joseph H. Springer to Outlot 17 in Geneva for \$1,000. The deed, dated May 25, 1887, was signed by Governor John W. Thayer and attested

by Joseph Scott, commissioner of public lands and buildings. Fillmore County also gave the school district a quitclaim deed to the property. The deed from the state recited that the sale was made June 17, 1872, when the officials of Fillmore county purchased the land at public auction.

In 1917, E. J. Dempster, president of the board of education of District 75, gave the following account of the Geneva public school in an address before the 1917 graduating class:

"In the year 1876, in February, School District No. 75, now known as the school district of the city of Geneva, was organized. The first term was for six months in a small schoolhouse of one room but it was soon found another room and an additional teacher were necessary; the term also was lengthened to nine months.

"After a time, these facilities becoming too small, the old building of two rooms was abandoned and a new house built with four rooms. In a few years two more rooms were added and still later another building was built on the school block and a ward schoolhouse was erected in the west part of town.

"All of this was found after some years to be inadequate and as a result we have our own present high-school building which at this time we find none too large, every room being occupied."



Photo from Miss Delia Fisher  
The Geneva Public School, erected about 1885 on Block 17, original town. This picture was taken about 1899; the building faced the north.



Courtesy Geneva State Bank  
Geneva High School, built in 1905.

The new building referred to by Mr. Dempster is the present "main" building. It was built in 1905 at a cost of \$36,000. A complete description of the building was carried in a special Union Normal Institute edition of the *Nebraska Signal*, dated Friday, May 4, 1906; here are some excerpts:

"A feature new in the construction of the schoolhouses in Nebraska, principally, is the complete finishing of the basement rooms . . . Seven feet of the 10' basement are above the grade line."

"On the north of the large central hall in the basement are two more rooms which could be used well for school purposes, and an elegant gymnasium, 75' x 25', with a 14' ceiling."

"From the grade line to the water table the building is built of Tiger Eye Omaha hydraulic pressed brick. The balance of the building from the water table up is built of hard Omaha hydraulic pressed gray brick."

The old wooden building which was replaced by the structure described above was sold to Dr. H. L. Smith of Geneva. He divided the building and moved the sections to lots south of the courthouse park, making three houses, which have since been known as the Smith houses.



The old school building, divided to make three identical houses; at the southeast corner of Courthouse Square.



Courtesy Nebraska Signal  
West Ward schoolhouse (about 1960).

The ward school was used for many years but school was discontinued there just prior to World War I. The building was used as a meeting hall and polling place for many years. It was finally sold to the Chaney Brothers in 1949 and is now used only for storage purposes.

In 1921, another building, called the Smith-Hughes building, was added to the school campus. Later it became known as the gymnasium building. The Smith-Hughes vocational and home economics classes were located on the ground floor of the building, as they are today, the gymnasium being on the second floor.

The bids on the new building were opened August 31, 1921. Low bidder was the J. W. Assenmacher Co. of Lincoln with a bid of \$24,000. The building was to be completed within 90 days. The first basketball game was played in the new building Friday, December 2, 1921, when Geneva met Shickley in a special game. Geneva defeated its guests 28 to 10.

The old gymnasium in the main building was converted to indoor toilets, which replaced the outdoor latrines located southeast and southwest of the main entrances; the space between the new toilets was used for storage. During the





Photo from Guy Brown, Jr.

Smith-Hughes Building—second floor, music rooms and junior high classrooms.

later years of the depression, between 1937 and 1939, the storage space was converted to an auditorium for plays and music programs. Later yet, it was used for a music room and in 1957 the space was made into two grade classrooms. During this time, the gymnasium was remodeled, eliminating the old balconies at each end of the room.

On April 29, 1953, a disastrous fire broke out in the gymnasium building during the night. Dozens of students had been working in the room preparing decorations for the annual spring festival. The fire was discovered about 2 A.M. and was attributed to an overheated flue used by the vocational agriculture department.

After assessing the damage and holding public meetings on what to do about replacing the destroyed facilities, the board of education submitted a bond issue to the voters, who voted \$132,000 toward construction of a new gymnasium, the bonds to supplement insurance money in the amount of \$43,112.05 received as payment for the fire loss.

New public rest rooms, a large lobby, school lunch facilities, and a fine 50' x 90' gymnasium floor were included in the new gymnasium building, which is attached to the Smith-Hughes building.



Courtesy Geneva Photo Co.

New Geneva High School Gymnasium.

The new gymnasium, with a seating capacity of nearly 1,400, was officially opened when the Geneva basketball team met Loup City for the championship of the Trans-Nebraska conference. The game, played March 7, 1955, before a packed gymnasium, saw Geneva roll over the highly touted visitors by a 67 to 51 score.

Playing on the Geneva team which opened the new gymnasium were Larry Fiedler, Bob Johnson, Dick McCashland, Keith Everts, Bob Hamilton, Charles Grothe, Donald Hiatt, Bob Schneider and Larry Nichols. The coach was John Haberman.

#### Geneva Graduates

The first graduate of the Geneva high school was Edward J. Dempster, who received a diploma for graduation from the tenth grade in 1885. There were four graduates in 1886 and the school continued to grow. Another year was added to the high school and in 1908 the full four years of

Photo from Miss Delia Fisher  
Frank ("Daddy") Cross, early-day janitor of Geneva schools.



high school were offered.

The class of 1933, with 69 graduates, was the largest graduation class in the history of the school. Altogether, Geneva High School has graduated 2,718 students. Of this number, 390 are listed as deceased. (Both these figures are as of April, 1967.)

Many Geneva graduates have served in the armed forces and nine have given their lives while serving their country. Lost while serving in World War II were Lyle Robertson '36, Donald Edward Kelly '38, Gene Walter Watmore '38, Clair Miller '38, Robert Fisher '42, Gordon Herman Burham '45. Lost in Korea were Francis Gene Gergen '44 and William Soukup, Jr. '49. Bert Bishop, Jr., was killed while serving with the Navy Air Corps in 1958.

#### Basketball

The Geneva high school has compiled a fine record in many fields but basketball has been the activity with the longest and probably the most outstanding record in the school's history.

Early-day basketball teams played a few games each year on a court on the school grounds. After the construction of a gymnasium in the main building in 1905, basketball became a regular part of the school program and games were scheduled throughout the winter season.

Geneva boasts many fine teams during its history, including four state champions. The first state championship was claimed in 1909, when the team challenged the state for the title. Crete accepted the challenge but the Geneva team defeated the challengers.

The 1909 Geneva team included Tryon Shepherd, Hugh Garrett, Roscoe Hill, John Curtiss, Verne Baroch, Hallie Fellows, and Earle Hill. The coach was L. I. Frisbie.

The first official championship was won by Geneva in 1913 when the third annual state tournament was held in Lincoln. There was only one class in the tournament. Geneva won the championship in a grueling series of games with the following results: Geneva 46, Herman 6; Geneva 19, Temple 8; Geneva 25, Omaha 24; Geneva 35,

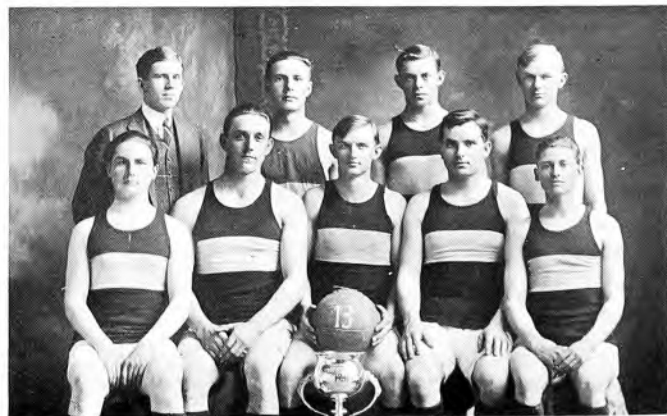


Photo from Mrs. C. C. Camp

First official Geneva Champion basketball team (1913). Back row, left to right: Earl Kline, Jay Davis, Herb Ashton, John Davis. Front row: Art Weis, Harry Yates, Al Davis, Vincent Janda, Willie Huston.

Albion 19; Geneva 43, Gothenburg 17; Geneva 41, University Place 26.

Members of the team were Jay Davis, Herb Ashton, John Davis, Art Weis, Harry Yates, Al Davis, Vincent Janda, and Willie Huston. The coach was Earl Cline.

Forty-three years later, in 1956, Geneva won its third championship when the team won top honors in Class C at the annual state tournament in Lincoln. The team defeated Clarkson 53 to 51, in a game described as the best in the entire tournament, to take the championship.

Members of the 1956 team were Donn McCashland, Bob Hamilton, Harry Crawford, Larry Nichols, Larry Fiedler, Lynn Koehler, Richard Koehler, Gary Schumacher, Gary Elznic, and John Dudley. The coach was John Haberman. Larry Nichols was named to the Class C all-tourney team while Larry Fiedler was selected on the all-tourney, all-class team as well as the all-state Class C team.

Geneva won another state championship in 1957, this time in Class B, the classification being based upon the number of boys in high school. The victory came after another final game in which Geneva nipped University High of Lincoln 51 to 50 with a last-minute basket.

Members of the 1957 team were Richard Koehler, Steve Newman, Dick Anderson, Larry Fiedler, Larry Nichols, Sid Stastny, Dick Nelson, Raymond Nichols, Arlan Sherman, Gary Schumacher, Gary Elznic and John Dudley. The coach was Archie Chapman. Larry Fiedler was named to the all-class, all-state team as well as the all-tourney, all-class team. Dick Anderson was selected for the Class B all-tourney team with Larry Nichols receiving honorable mention on the same team.

One of Geneva's finest teams was the 1947-48 team which was rated at the top all season but lost out in the finals of the district tournament to Seward, which later became state champion, although Geneva defeated Seward during the regular season.

Members of the 1948 team were Gerald Walton, Charles Curtiss, Lester Reemts, Ronnie Hughes and Jim Smith. Also playing on the squad were Norman Sothan, Jack McCluskey, William Soukup, Bob Jezek, George Bender, Dale Becker, and Jerry Nittler. One member of the team, Gerard Walton, was named to the all-state team by the *Omaha World-Herald*.

Another Geneva basketball star, Condra ("Beano") Clark, achieved all-state, all-class honors in 1952, although the Geneva team was edged in the district finals in Class B by a strong York team.

Keith Everts, a member of the 1955 team, also won all-state honors in Class B, although the team was put out of the district tournament after compiling a fine record, including the defeat of Loup City for the conference championship, mentioned earlier in this history.

Geneva also won the Class B championship in 1965. The coach was Archie D. Chapman. The players were Bob Grattopp, Brian Cellar, Paul R. Farmer, James Nichols, Daniel Petersen, Gary Suhr, James Strickland, Jr., and Gaylord Craddock. Grattopp was named all-state in other classes for the second straight year.

## Football

In football, Geneva also has had many fine teams, including three undefeated aggregations. The history of football, however, shows a series of struggles to install the sport in the school, to keep it in the school program, and to keep up interest in the sport, which traditionally seemed to take second place to basketball at Geneva.

Football was introduced in the school in 1901 by the new superintendent, Charles W. Taylor. Games were usually played on Saturday and sometimes players out of school were recruited to fill vacancies on the team.

Apparently, there was opposition to having a team in 1902, because an article in the *Signal* for October 17, 1902, stated: "President George Mozee and Secretary Sager state to the *Signal* that members of the school board do not object to the city superintendent of schools having any connection with any football team that may be mutually agreeable to the team and to the superintendent provided this connection is maintained outside of school hours and that no team be called a high-school football team."

Several of the boys mentioned as being members of the 1901 team were Glen Carson, Chan Hrubesky, Donald ("Doc") Koehler, Jim Burke, Leo McFarland, and Lester Ryman.

The 1902 team, although unofficial, played several games with varying success. The team was given publicity in the *Signal*, however, when it defeated Fairfield 6 to 0. Listed as members of that team were Roy Hampton, Ben Mozee, Joe Yates, Claude Kimbrough, Leo McFarland, Roscoe Mozee, Lester Ryman, Floyd Tallmadge, Charles Thompson, Earl Gabler, Ralph Bringham, and James Burke.

High-school football at Geneva was not restored on an official, approved basis until 1916. With two weeks of practice, the team played an experienced Hebron team, losing by a 59 to 0 score. The team lost to Exeter 16 to 0, but during the season the team laid the groundwork for a football tradition at Geneva.

Members of the 1916 team listed in the *Signal* for October 17, 1916, were Carl Schneider, Tom Otis, Herb Mowry, Everett Roles,

Francis Sullivan, Warren Edgecombe, Ed Fussell, Golie Swails, Cass Camp, Ben Koehler, Seymour Martin, Frank Martin, and Lester Nicholas. One member of this team, Ben Koehler, continued his football career after graduation and starred on a United States Naval Academy team that twice defeated the Army team.

Geneva's first undefeated football team was the 1931 team, coached by Leslie Lowe. A first game scoreless tie with Seward Academy was the only blot on its record. On the team were the following: Sterling Cope, Charles Domeier, Maurice Rotter, Kenneth Kimbrough, Ralph Hitch, David Tudor, Pete Burns, Alvin Christianity, Gerald Braden, Charles Grothe, Lawrence Doud, Paul Ford, Clyde Moss, Paul Peterson, LaVelle Svatos, Dale Murrell, Don Fixemer, Norbert Gergen, and Fred Waltemade.

The next undefeated, untied team to represent Geneva was the 1940 team, coached by Harry Pitcaithley. On that team were the following: Jesse Domeier, Kenneth Leonard, Lawrence Domeier, Eugene Betka, Everett Moon, Waldo Hafer, Howard Wilkins, Truman Clark, John Edgecombe, John Brower, Jr., Dick Ingwersen, Bob Lovegrove, Bob Myers, Earl Schroder, Vaughn Fulton, Gaylord Hurley, Bill Brower, Bob Halsey, Dean Garrett, David Bertram, Lyle Hall, and John Bixby.

Several of the above named boys returned in 1941 to make another perfect record. The team in 1941 was coached by Duane Sams. On the team were the following: Raymond Dockter, Elmer Reinsch, Vaughn Fulton, Earl Schroder, Bob Lovegrove, Gene Watmore, Bill Brower, John Bixby, Bob Myers, Dean Garrett, Jesse Domeier, John Adams, Dick Ingwersen, Henry Brower, Jr., Eugene Betka, Charles Elznic, James McCarthy, Roger Christianity, and Virgil Ostdiek.

The 1953 and 1954 teams, coached by Kenneth Ackerman, were rated number 1 in Class C, with the 1953 team having a perfect record. The 1954 team lost only to Crete, a Class B team.

On the 1953 team were the following: Galen Kennel, Lynn Koozer, Fred Biba, Jr., Jack Blanke, Rodger Felix, Gary Elznic, Dick McCashland, Larry Fiedler, Albert Simacek, Bob Hamilton, Lynn Koehler, Ronnie Reinsch, Roger Schmidt, Bill Stiers, Maurice Crawford, Richard Koehler, David Linde, Ed Scheil, Bob Schmidt, Gary Schumacher, Jerry Higel, Donn McCashland, Dan Schrock, Keith Everts, Bob Schneider, Verlyn Naimon, Dick Nichols, Harold Moravec, Richard Nun, Bob Johnson, Fritz Murrell, Hank Peden, Don Hiatt, Charles Grothe, and Dick Hofferber.

On the 1954 team were the following: Keith Everts, Albert Simacek, Bob Schneider, Bob Hamilton, Hank Peden, Lynn Koozer, Don Hiatt, Dick McCashland, Bob Johnson, Charles Grothe, Donn McCashland, Harold Eppler, Dick Hofferber, Larry Fiedler, Gary Elznic, Roger Schmidt, Bob Schmidt, Ronnie Reinsch, Jim Shaw, Charles Krupick, Gary Schumacher, Bill Stiers, Richard Koehler, and David Linde.

Dick McCashland of the 1953 and 1954 teams made all-state fullback in all classes, later being a star at the University of Nebraska. He was captain of the 1958 Cornhusker team. Lynn Koozer and Dick were members of the 1953 all-state team in Class C and several members of the team won Trans-Nebraska honors, as Geneva topped the conference both years. A highlight of the 1953 season was to 9 to 0 victory over Loup City at Geneva on Armistice Day for the conference championship.

Other teams and players made fine records in football but special mention should be made of Leonard ("Butch") Gould who made "all-state" in 1922 as a member of one of the finest teams ever produced at Geneva, considering the tough schedule played in that year. The season was climaxed with a victory over Hastings.

Gould made his reputation on an unusual play. The quarterback placed the ball in the bend of the center's right leg. Two large guards, Gale Walton and James Fisher, supported the center while the quarterback ran back and faked a pass. The right tackle paused and on count took the ball from the center's leg, shot through the line and usually into the clear for a touchdown. This was usually good for one good run, or for one touchdown, per game. The play was declared illegal the next year; there is some reason to believe that it was illegal in the first place.

## Other Sports

Track, baseball, and golf also have been included in Geneva's sports program during the years and several individuals have won top honors in those activities. The track teams in the late 1920's and early 1930's under Coach Leslie Lowe dominated the Southern Nebraska conference; otherwise, achievements in track have been made by individuals or small squads.

## Debate and Speech

In debate, Geneva boasts three state championships. In 1912, Jesse Ertel won the individual state championship. In 1913, Robert Waring was selected as state champion from a team that also included Roscoe Mohrman and Leslie Wilson. A Geneva team, coached by Miss Ellen Mauder, won the state debate tournament in 1924, the team being made up of John C. Gewacke, Roland Propst, and Howard Hamilton. Another team, coached by Donald Warner, won the Hastings



college tournament in 1928. On the team were Lucille Eaton, Anne Taborsky, and Charles McEachran.

Geneva also won several district championships in the twenties and thirties, qualifying for the state debate tournaments at Lincoln. Several district championships and high ratings also have been received in other speech work, including one-act play contests.

### Music

Geneva has for many years emphasized the teaching of music in the public school. Apparently the first organized music program in the school was started by the Geneva Woman's club, which hired Miss Claire Owens, later Dr. Claire Owens of Exeter, to organize a class in harmony in 1916. Professor H. R. Grant was secured to organize a school orchestra and band the same year.



Photo from Ben Fussell

Geneva High School Band (taken in old gymnasium), 1946-47. *Front row, left to right:* Ramona Laun, Elveda Montgomery, Virginia Koehler, Janice Schupbach, Barbara Biba, Beth Wilkins, JoAnn Fussell, Wincel Nelson, Jr., William Minich, Jr., Richard Ralston, Bert William Bishop. *Second row:* Nancy Hall, Virginia Laun, Nancy Koehler, Mary Ann Hrubesky, Marlys Everts, Florence Humphrey, Jeanne Lindstrom, Ethel Kiester, Thomas Wallace, Joann Miller, Glen Fussell, Dorothy Ralston, Virginia McPeck, Doris Peterson, Beth Rosenau, Harold Rosenau, Charles Curtiss, James Shaner, Marvin Saum. *Back row:* Dale Saum, Carol Calder, Richard Shaw, Shirley McPeck, Mary Maude Bedford, Delbert Fussell, Gerard Walton, Paul W. Curtiss (director).

Paul W. Curtiss directed the first school band at Geneva in 1925. He continued to direct the school bands until a few weeks before his death in 1951. In May, 1951, Herman L. Larsen was hired on a full-time basis to teach instrumental music in the Geneva schools. He is the present director of instrumental music and boys vocal music in the school. Vocal music has for several years been under the direction of Norma (Mrs. Richard) Wagner (formerly Miss Norma Kohler, of Sutton).

Geneva was the location of the District 1 music contest 27 times since the contest was started in 1928. Geneva's entries have usually received top ratings, with Geneva leading all schools in all classes in superior ratings practically every year.

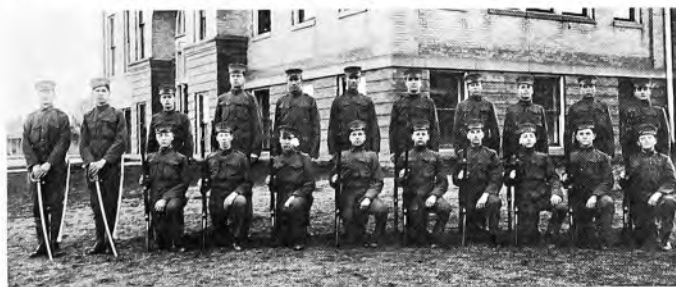


Photo from Mrs. C. C. Camp

Geneva High School Cadets, organized in 1911. *Back row, left to right:* Albert Held, Wilbur Sherrard, Virgil Bentley, Roy Bell, Hugh Garrett, Ross Miller, Vincent Janda, Ross Lincoln, John Knox, Wallace Chesnut, Harold Pinkerton. *Front row:* Blaine Sloan, Walter L. Huston, Jay Davis, Wayne Moore, Porter Sloan, Roscoe Mohrman, Donald Moore, Percy Bedford, Frank Sloan.

Geneva High school has been notable for the number of its graduates who continue their education in colleges or other institutions of advanced learning. From 1949 onward, their numbers have been as listed: 1949—60; 1950—65; 1951—58; 1952—70; 1953—60; 1954—58; 1955—61; 1956—59; 1957—60; 1958—62; 1959—62; 1960—69; 1961—79; 1962—89; 1963—98; 1964—101; 1965—109; 1966—112.

### Geneva High School Today

As of June 1, 1959, by virtue of an order by the Fillmore county superintendent, the Geneva school district assessed valuation was \$6,088,489. This resulted from the legal consolidation of 12 rural school districts which had contracted with other districts for education of their pupils for five years or longer.

The 12 districts were 61, 48, 7, 47, 13, 46, 45, 35, 65, 76, 30, 18. Their total valuation was \$3,063,488 while the valuation of District 75, Geneva, before consolidation was \$3,025,001. Practically all of the pupils concerned were already



Photo from Geneva Photo Co.  
Geneva High School Boys' Glee (1967).  
Inset: Herman Larsen, instructor.



Photo from Geneva Photo Co.  
Geneva High School Girls' Glee (1967). Inset: Mrs. Richard Wagner, instructor.



Photo from Geneva Photo Co.  
New Geneva Elementary School, built in 1964.

attending the Geneva school, being transported by buses operated by District 75.

By 1966, the assessed valuation of the Geneva school district had risen to \$11,531,790.

Enrollment in the school year 1966-67 totaled 742 students. Of these, 260 were in the senior high school, 127 in junior high, and 355 in the elementary grades.

The professional staff in the same year—teachers, administrators, nurses, etc.—numbered 39; the nonprofessional staff—bus drivers, cooks, janitors, etc.—numbered 20.

In 1966-67, the superintendent of schools was Bernard Blierflich; the principal of the junior and senior high schools, William McNaught; and the elementary school principal, Robert Myers.

### Teachers' Institutes

As school districts were established in Fillmore County, other educational activities began to take shape.

The first teachers' institute for Fillmore County was held at the Hall in Fairmont, commencing December 1, 1872, and continuing for one week. The second and fourth institutes were also held at Fairmont, but the third institute was held at Geneva, commencing on November 16, 1874.

In 1880, additional instruction was given at the institute. The session was called the first annual County Teachers' Normal Institute and was held at the schoolhouse in Geneva for two weeks. The notes of County Superintendent J. B. Lewis state: "This Institute begins a new era in facilities afforded for improvement of teachers. Not only is instruction given in branches taught in the schools but also methods of giving instruction. A tuition fee of \$2 was charged to pay expenses of instruction and incidentals."

The third Teachers' Normal Institute session was held at Fairmont for three weeks commencing on July 17, 1882. Sixty-two teachers were enrolled. The curriculum was broadened to include school managements and methods, grammar, analysis of sentences and study of the verb, arithmetic, percentage, methods of teaching, compound numbers, physiology, nervous system, history, causes leading to the adoption of the Constitution, bookkeeping, and orthography.

Before 1891, the expenses were born by the teachers' paying a \$2 fee and by admittance fees for evening lectures. The records show that in 1891 the county superintendent received \$100 from the county treasurer. This amount was increased to \$350 in later years.

Names important in early education in the state appeared often as teachers and speakers in the institutes and normal school programs. State Superintendent S. R. Thompson was on the faculty several summers; also mentioned was State Superintendent W. W. Jones. Chancellor Fairfield was listed on the programs repeatedly. E. J. Hoenshel, noted grammarian and textbook writer, taught in the Junior Normal in 1902.

—Miss Emma Renken

### Junior Normal School

In the summer of 1902, State Superintendent W. K. Fowler organized junior normal institutes of five weeks' length at Holdrege, Culbertson, and Sidney. These were the precursors of the junior normal schools. In 1903, the legislature appropriated \$12,000 for the biennium to support five such summer schools of ten weeks each, located at Alliance, Valentine, McCook, Holdrege, and North Platte. In 1907, with an appropriation of \$15,000 for the biennium, eight schools were maintained—Alma, Broken Bow, O'Neill, and Geneva being added and Holdrege being dropped. The length of term was reduced to seven weeks.

Junior normals were established to encourage the teaching profession among those in the western and northern parts of the state for whom distance to established schools in eastern Nebraska was hundreds of miles and expense prohibitive. The Junior Normals were placed in the centers of the vast areas of country where the problem was that of overcoming isolation and insufficient local school facilities. During the first five years of Junior Normals, from 1903 to 1908, 5,000 teachers and prospective teachers from remote

districts were enrolled, only a small percentage of whom would or could have attended any other institution of summer training.

Junior Normals did the work of university extension, and inspired young men and women to carry on their education in established institutions of higher learning.

Before a student was entitled to a Junior Normal credit in any subject he had to attain an average of at least 70 per cent and attend instruction in each subject for at least 30 days. A student who had attended Junior Normal for four sessions of not less than six weeks each could receive his elementary state certificate upon completion of the entrance requirements as provided by law at the state normal schools and the completion of the junior normal training course.

The instructors were men and women of scholarship, experience, and integrity, men and women of well-known and approved educational opinions. The tuition was free but an enrollment and incidental fee of \$2 was charged each student-teacher.

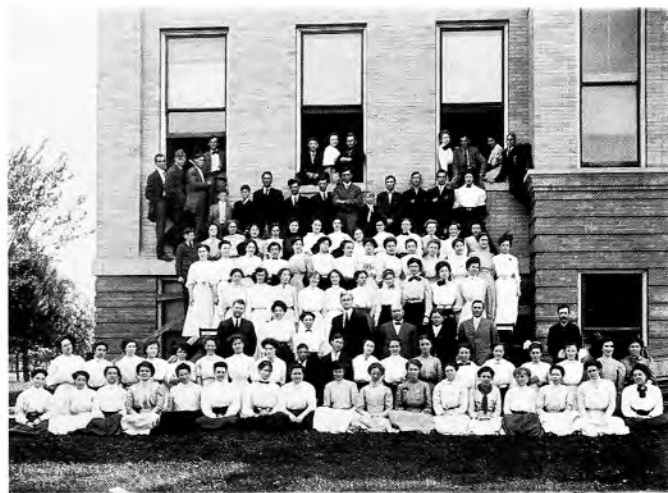


Photo from Mrs. William Fenske  
Junior Normal class photo, taken in 1910.

The Junior Normal was held at the Geneva public schoolhouse. The courthouse supplemented the schoolhouse in accommodating the teachers in class and lecture periods. The basement of the high school building was used for the dining hall, with the Geneva domestic science instructor in charge. It accommodated 150 to 200 students. They could secure board there for from \$2.50 to \$3 per week. Board and lodging was made available in private homes for \$3.50 per week. Those who boarded at the dining hall could secure rooms in homes for 50 cents a week.

The Junior Normal school was held in Geneva from 1907 through 1912. In 1913 Geneva lost the school owing to lack of interest in securing the school. Many educators felt that it was now unnecessary because Normal Training had been added to the high school curriculum. The subjects offered in 1908, when enrollment totaled 153, were listed in the *Signal* as follows:

Agriculture	History	Reading and Literature
Algebra I	Music	Geography
Algebra II	Composition	Geometry I
Arithmetic	Course of Study for	Geometry II
Arithmetic—Written	Rural Schools	Orthography
Bookkeeping	Drawing	Penmanship
Botany	Physiology and	Physics I
Civics	Hygiene	Physics II
Grammar		

Other subjects were taught if the number desiring such study was sufficient to warrant forming a class.

## UTILITIES

### Water

The earliest water supply was provided by wells and windmills, with cisterns for storage. Inadequate fire protection and the steadily increasing water consumption each