



ALL ABOARD -- The Grand Trunk railroad depot in Cass City, destination of this Michigan Railroad Club steam train outing in September, 1953, will soon be torn down.

End of the line nears for old railroad depot

A link with Cass City's past will soon be gone. The railroad depot at Garfield and Vulcan Streets, which has stood at least since early in this century, is scheduled for demolition. It was last used as a freight depot in 1975. The last passenger got on board 20 years earlier. The owner, the Grand Trunk Western Railroad, is presently soliciting bids for its demolition, according to Richard Dykman of the engineering public services division. He expects that it will be

torn down within a couple of months. According to railroad records, the depot was built in 1907. Meredith Auten, born in 1891, believes it replaced one which had burned down. The Pontiac, Oxford & Northern Railroad, which extended from Pontiac to Caseville, came to Cass City in November, 1882. Presumably the first depot was built about that time. Installation of the rail from Caseville to Pontiac wasn't completed until July, 1883, and the first official passenger train from south to north ran Oct. 3 of that year. (For the record, it departed from Pontiac at about 9 a.m., arrived in Cass City at 12:30 p.m. and in Caseville at 1:44 p.m.) A spur was later built to Bad Axe. The first passenger train from Cass City to Bad Axe ran in 1913. The last train ran April 30, 1951. Traffic on the PO&N apparently never was heavy. Ads in the Cass City Chronicle in 1907 listed departure time for trains coming from Pontiac as 11:25 a.m. and 7:58 p.m. Departure time for trains coming from Caseville were 7:43 a.m. and 3:38 p.m. The Grand Trunk took over the PO&N apparently in 1908. PASSENGER TRAIN service on the line apparently reached a peak during World War I, the decline afterwards due to increasing use of cars and bus service. Eventually, there was only one train, consisting of

freight cars and one passenger car. Marian Keating remembers it well. Her father, Walt H. Miller, came to Cass City as Grand Trunk station agent in May, 1940. It was during World War II, in 1943-44, that the then Marian Miller attended business school in Pontiac. She cut classes on Fridays in order to take the train home. By then, there was only one train on the old PO&N line, which departed from Pontiac about 8:15 a.m. each Monday, Wednesday and Friday. It made the return trip from Caseville each Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. It was a freight train, with single passenger car attached. It was also a slow train and didn't get to Cass City until 4:43 p.m. Besides its many stops, there was another reason why it was slow. The reason, Mrs. Keating explained, was the rails were narrower than regular rails, which required the use of lighter and less powerful locomotives, which went slower. Top speed was only about 40-45 miles per hour. AS FOR THOSE MOVIE scenes about GIs returning home from the war to be greeted by loved ones at the local train station, well, it apparently never happened in Cass City during World War II. Mrs. Keating doesn't recall ever seeing GIs riding the train. "All I remember is they would ship some of the deceased" (war dead in

caskets). GIs going home on leave took the bus, which was faster. Mrs. Keating also took the bus, when she returned to Pontiac on Sundays. The main reason she took the train to Cass City was she got to ride free. Although few passengers rode the train then, she pointed out that a lot of freight was still being hauled, especially grain at harvest time. Nestles creamery in Cass City shipped its products out by rail. Gravel was picked up at Oxford. More freight went south than came north. She recalled with fond memory the time trainmen stopped the train, hopped over a fence into an orchard and grabbed some apples. They let her share in their "feast." MILLER LEFT CASS CITY in May, 1955, for Owosso. He retired as station agent there in September, 1961, after 51 years working for the railroads, 48 of them with Grand Trunk. He died in 1976. He was replaced in Cass City by Angus McEachin, who was to sell the last passenger ticket here. According to an article in the Dec. 28, 1955, Pontiac Press, (from the scrapbook of Walt Miller, now owned by Mrs. Keating), the last day of passenger service was Dec. 31 of that year. McEachin, employed by the Grand Trunk since the early 1940s, and now working for it in Detroit, recalled (Please turn to page 17).

Birthday bargains next week

The Cass City Retail Committee has announced that the annual Washington's Birthday Sale will be sponsored by the committee Feb. 21-23. A highlight of the event will be the awarding of \$425 in "lucky bucks" that spend like cash at participating Cass City stores. Winners will be determined by a drawing at 3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 23, at Richard's TV & Appliance Store. Prizes offered this year include first, \$100, and second and third, \$50 each. Other prizes include five for \$25 and 10 for \$10.

Paydays resume Friday

Flu outbreak causes closing of Owen-Gage schools until Monday

Owendale-Gagetown students got an unexpected vacation Tuesday, but it is one many of them won't be able to enjoy. With slightly more than 25 percent of students being absent Tuesday morning because of the flu, administrators decided to dismiss classes at 1 p.m. that day. They won't resume until Monday. Cancelled or postponed were Tuesday night's basketball game at North Huron, a Wednesday junior high basketball game at Ruth and Thursday's volleyball game at home against Ubly. A decision will be made Friday, Supt. Ronald Erickson said, whether that evening's game at home against Kingston will be played

then. A decision will be made later on whether the events will be made up at a later date. As for whether students will have to make up the days they miss this week, Erickson didn't think they would have to, but hadn't had time yet to check state law on the subject. His major concern was avoiding an even bigger outbreak of the disease that is "just decimating our kids." A couple of students were in the hospital, he said. At Monday night's school board meeting, Gagetown Elementary Principal Bill Britt reported the flu-type symptoms being shown by students included high fever, temperatures as high as 104-105 degrees, headaches and vomiting. Absenteeism, usually 6-7 percent, started climbing about Wednesday of last week. Monday, the board was

told, there were 50 elementary students absent in the morning. Sixteen students left during the day, for a total absentee rate of 30.7 percent. By Tuesday morning, there were 73 students out. In the high school grades (7-12), there were 30 students absent Monday morning; 37 by afternoon. That number jumped to 45 Tuesday morning, "not including the walking dead," according to Erickson, who should have stayed home. The total of 118 students absent Tuesday morning was 25.6 percent of the enrollment. The possibility of closing school Tuesday had been forecast at the school board meeting. PAYDAYS School employees will have to make a special trip Friday, since there won't be school that day, but it will be worth it.

Erickson told the board there are sufficient funds available to pay employees Friday's regular paycheck plus the missed payroll of Feb. 1. It will be the first time they will have been paid since Dec. 7. If enough property tax revenue comes in during the week, he said, it might be possible to make up even more missed paychecks. If not, employees will be reimbursed later. A total of four paydays were missed. In addition to property tax revenue coming in, the superintendent reported that \$9,000 in state aid had been received, the first time in about a year. The state Department of Education had withheld the aid because of its contention Owen-Gage had failed to submit a balanced budget. "I don't know why," he

responded after the meeting when asked why state aid had been resumed, as he had been told not too long before it wouldn't be. LEGISLATION Erickson reported that House Bill 5411, introduced by State Rep. Quincy Hoffman, R-Applegate, is ready for a vote in the House Education Committee, where it has been co-sponsored by most members of the committee. The bill, if ultimately approved by the legislature and signed by the governor, would require a public vote once more than 10 percent of a school district has been transferred to other districts on any subsequent property transfer requests. Present state law, unless Owen-Gage wins a reversal in its appeal of the Goslin case to the Michigan Supreme Court, only requires a public vote if each individual

transfer request is more than 10 percent. OTHER ITEMS Permission was granted for organization of a Girl's Athletic Association. Members of the association, girl athletes, will be conducting various fund raising activities to help finance their attendance at summer athletic training camps. Tenure was granted to 4th-5th grade teacher Linda Brookins. Hiring of Dick Glidden (Sr.), John Gage, Craig Yanke, Jeff Hallock, Tom Orton, Sonya and Veronica Nozcross and June Carr as maintenance workers was approved. They will be paid with federal Comprehensive Employment and Training Act funds, some through the Youth Employment Training Program for students. January student of the month was senior Carol Parker.

'Swing-out' rein Administ get 9% salary increase

The administrative staff at Cass City High School was granted a 9 percent raise at the regular meeting of the board Monday night but not before sharp criticism was aired by Trustee Thresa Burnette. Burnette ticked off three major complaints: She claimed that the 9 percent raise was too much. We have to stop someplace, she said, property taxes are too high in the village now. The second question concerned the blanket raises of the staff. She wants written evaluations of the work of the personnel with raises presumably based on the evaluation. Finally, Burnette was critical of the way the committee presented its suggestions. We should have time to look this material over and not receive it 10 minutes before the meeting, she said. Those arguments touched off a round of discussion by the board. Many members appear to feel that Supt. Donald Crouse is not setting goals for the school the way he should. Crouse's answer to this is that it is the board's duty to define specific objectives it wants and his duty to carry

them out. Writing a list of very general educational objectives is easy to do, Crouse says, but of no practical purpose. President Geraldine Prieskorn said that the committee followed guidelines that placed the school in about the middle of the salary ranges for the area. She said that the board probably would have to pay about as much to replace current personnel and that the only reason not to remain competitive is to have the present staff leave as soon as possible. A complete breakdown of what was paid in 1979-80 appears in the chart at the bottom of this page.

a contract to be responsible for damage and to have parents sign it. No signed contract, no participation was the plan. They proposed to have parents help supervise the march and to hold it after baccalaureate. Those plans have flaws, administrators present pointed out. They feel that the plan doesn't do anything to stop rowdy behavior if it occurs. Despite that, the board voted to let the swing-out be held. It's probable, but not definitely decided, that the swing-out will be held at the same time and in the same way as it traditionally has been.

Dean Hoag and Burnette. Trustees voting against the proposal did so because they felt it was illegal. Trustees in favor felt that since all other schools in Tuscola county except Kingston were allowing the distribution it should be alright in Cass City. Crouse reported that the Bibles are distributed in Bad Axe schools and off school property at Elkton-Pigeon-Bay Port. SUNDAY PRACTICE Coach Ron Nurnberger's request for three Sunday practices was partially approved. The coach had asked for practices Feb. 17 because a wrestling tournament Feb. 16 prohibited practice on Saturday. It was denied. In addition he has requested practices March 2 and March 9. These practices were approved. They come on the Sundays before tournament games. The March 9 date will only be used if the Hawks win the district tournament the previous week. (Another school board story, page 20.)

SENIORS WIN The two-month campaign by the senior class to have the swing-out reinstated was successful as the board backed away from a previous decision to ban it. About 25 members of the class attended the meeting to voice opinions and help Angel Harmon make a presentation to the board. The seniors offered to sign

BIBLE DISTRIBUTION There will be no Bibles distributed by the Gideons at Cass City Schools. The request was made by Lewis Tibbitts a month ago in behalf of the Gideons and he was back Monday to learn the decision of the board. In a 4-3 vote permission to give away the Bibles in the fifth grade was denied. Voting against was Prieskorn, Art Severance, J.D. Tuckey and Ed Scollon. In favor were E. Paul Lockwood,

Fires destroy mobile home and clothing store

An oil furnace which exploded was the cause of a fire that gutted a mobile home on Reagh Road, just north of Gagetown, Sunday, according to Elmwood-Gagetown Fire Chief Chuck Wright. The structure was owned by Norman Emmons Jr., who was renting it to Betty Carpenter. No one was home at the time of the fire, which was discovered by a neighbor. It was reported at 5:48 p.m. Wright said the 1965 model, 10-by-40-foot trailer was worth \$1,000. Contents lost in the blaze were valued at \$2,000. Miss Carpenter lost all her clothes and other valuables. Her boyfriend, Robert Zimmer, lost some clothes he had there, plus a stereo set and television. According to Zimmer's

father, Thomas Zimmer, both are in need of clothing and Miss Carpenter may also need some furniture, depending on what items are in whatever place she can find to rent. She temporarily was staying with her mother part of the time and with the Zimmer. Persons who have clothing or other items that might be of use to the couple can call Thomas Zimmer at 665-2665. Fire was coming out the windows of the mobile home when firemen arrived. They were there a little more than two hours. STORE FIRE Fire destroyed the Clothes Caboodle store, 5991 State Street, in Kingston Tuesday night. Kingston firemen were called to the scene about

9:30 and as of 7:30 Wednesday morning, some were still at the scene. Cause was apparently not immediately determined. The fire was contained within the building. Making the fire harder to extinguish was the double ceiling inside the reportedly recently remodeled store and burning insulation and clothing. CHIMNEY FIRE Elkland township firemen were called to the Robert Becker residence, 4125 West Street, shortly before 10 p.m. Tuesday when heat from two wood burning heaters ignited built-up creosote inside the brick chimney. Firemen first used carbon dioxide extinguishers which they shot up the chimney to extinguish most of the

flames. Two firemen then climbed onto the roof of the two-story home (photo, page 16) and dropped a long chain down the chimney to knock off the cinders inside, which were then removed at the bottom. Water wasn't used as the rapid cooling of the very hot chimney might have caused it to explode. One of the two wood stoves connected to the chimney was in the basement. That was removed and taken outside as there was still wood burning inside. The other heater was on the first floor. The chimney was also connected to an oil furnace, which wasn't being used. Fire Chief Jack Hartwick estimated the loss at \$1,000 to the chimney and another \$1,000 in smoke damage. In Please turn to page 16.

NEW SALARIES FOR NON-UNION PERSONNEL AS ADOPTED BY SCHOOL BOARD

	Present	Proposed
Bookkeeper	\$13,160	14,400
Supt.'s Secretary	11,910	13,000
Supt.'s Office	4.40/Hr.	4.80/Hr.
H. S. Prin. Sec.	8,785	9,700
Inter. Prin. Sec.	4.40/Hr.	4.80/Hr.
Campbell Prin. Sec.	4.40/Hr.	4.80/Hr.
Deford Prin. Sec.	4.40/Hr.	4.80/Hr.
Comm. Ed. Sec.	4.00/Hr.	4.60/Hr.
Cafeteria Supervisor	5.15/Hr.	5.60/Hr.
Maintenance Supervisor	6.90/Hr.	7.55/Hr.
Inter. School Supervisor and Transportation	5.62/Hr.	6.15/Hr.
H. S. Supervisor and Transportation	2,250	2,450
School Nurse	5.62/Hr.	6.15/Hr.
Title I School Nurse	10,285	11,210
Campbell Caf. (Money)	5,150	5,615
H. S. Cafeteria (Money)	3.75/Hr.	4.10/Hr.
Inter. Caf. (Money)	3.75/Hr.	4.10/Hr.
Evergreen Caf. (Serving)	3.55/Hr.	3.85/Hr.
Sp. Ed. Driver	4.00/Hr.	4.60/Hr.
Crossing Guard	3.50 Ea. Trip	3.80 Ea. Trip
Crossing Guard	13.60 Ea. Day	14.80 Ea. Day
Crossing Guard	9.85 Ea. Day	10.75 Ea. Day
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Donald Crouse - Superintendent	\$36,380	\$38,067*
Superintendent's car allowance was increased from \$1,500 to \$1,800 yearly.		
Russell Richards - H.S. Principal	29,100	30,135*
Robert Stickle - Inter. Principal	26,480	27,275*
Jacqueline Freiburger - Campbell Principal	25,900	26,638*
Betty Murphy - Deford Principal	20,865	22,750
Dorland Kuntz - Evergreen Principal	20,000	22,750
Wayne Dillon - Voc. Ed. Dir. and Co-op	20,865	22,750
Curtis Cleland - Guidance Director	20,865	22,750
Roland Pakonen - Asst. H. S. Principal	22,470	24,500
Kathleen O'Donnell - Comm. School Director	18,190	19,800

*Social Security paid by the school district. The benefit is new this year.

I WILL BE at the Pinney State Bank Friday, Feb. 15, to collect taxes. Elkland township treasurer.