

# Stoker School Fun Facts – History

Information herein was provided by the Bountiful Historical Preservation Foundation

While this information is not all inclusive – as we could never name everything and everyone to contribute to the spirit of Stoker, we hope it stirs found remembrances for you.

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Contact the Bountiful Historical Preservation Foundation at (801) 296-2060

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- Among many other benevolent actions, the Stoker family donated the land for this school
- In 1905 Stoker School officially opened as the 1<sup>st</sup> consolidated elementary school in Davis County
- The fledgling school and its success were influenced by many other families – names you are certain to recognize: The Tolemans, Barlows, Loders, Muirs, Collinwoods, and many, many, more.

**Building Construction:** Stoker School replaced the small, outdated Central School, and was built upon its original foundation

- Stoker opened its doors to 400 students who were lined up and “systematically marched” in at the beginning of the day. Raise your hand if you ever marched in
- Stoker had NO indoor plumbing – offering two ‘relief stations’ outside – one for “George and the other for Georgette.” Each station had three seats in a row
- The girls would run to their building to avoid the boys; in the winter the boys would snowball the girls building to keep them from getting back into the school. But if the boys were bad - an occasional rooster guarding the outhouses was worse!
- Did you know that at least once the principal had to rescue a teacher when she was cornered in the outhouse by an angry rooster
- Indoor plumbing came in 1937
- Over the years many renovations, additions and updates were made to meet the growing needs: including indoor plumbing, a gymnasium, a kitchen-cafeteria, heating the addition of an incinerator and eventually the modern convenience of cement sidewalks and water fountains

**Crime and Punishment** is not just the name of a famous novel – alumni tell us both happened at Stoker School:

- It was not unusual for a teacher to punish students who chewed gum in class by making them stand in the corner with the offending piece of gum stuck on the end of their noses

- One teacher became so upset about the gum chewing that she gave her gum-chewing students bits of Fels-Naptha soap to chew along with the gum. It was very nasty and some spit it out, others were afraid- they chewed and swallowed it resulting in a few tummy aches and lye induced blisters on their tongues
- Another common crime was the result of girls with braids. Sometimes those braids proved just too tempting to mischievous boys who couldn't help but dip the end of a braid in an ink wells. Such dipping often set off a chain reaction...or at least a yard stick or a razor strap reaction. As the offending boys met with 'Mr. Discipline and quickly realigned their behavior
- Perhaps you were one of forward-thinking students who decided to go on strike in Delbert Lamb's art class. All that "forward-thinking" got those particular students was a yardstick in the end (or at least across the rear end!)

### **Inside the Classroom:**

- Students were clean and well behaved, manners essential, and patriotism a part of everyday life
- The girls wore dresses, panty waste stockings and button shoes
- The boys wore overalls or knickers and heavy high tops (which in no way resembled what the Jazz players are wearing.)

### **Do you remember?**

- Principal Tolman's old brass school bell calling students to line up and march in?
- Timed math tests?
- Hours of penmanship practice?
- Spelling Bees?
- The smell of long woolen socks drying by the heaters after the children had trudged to school through tall snow drifts?
- Class games including: Bean Bag Toss? Thumbs-Up 7-Up?
- Singing, singing and singing? Songs and rhymes such as:
  - Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary
  - Billy Boy
  - She'll be Coming Round the Mountain
  - Ruben, Ruben
  - If You're Happy and You Know it
  - Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes
  - My Country 'Tis of Thee

### **School Lunch:**

- It is thought that Stoker initiated the first hot lunch programs in the entire country
- Principal Tolman thought a "good hot lunch" would increase the "health and vitality" of students
- Initially there were no cooking or water facilities and Rosabell Holbrook was hired to make hot soup and bring it to the school
- Students would line up with a tin cup to receive the stew; hungry students remember that despite the "tinny" taste from their spoons and cups, that stew was the best!
- Do you remember eating hot soup in the classroom? How about the Cowboy's delight? (Yee-haw! That was a delight!)

- Over the years the menu varied, but one thing that could be counted on as a staple: “Soup of the Day” which was always varied and was made from donations the children and local farmers brought in. Other favorites over the years included chili, hotdogs and peas, spaghetti, hot rolls, peanut butter fingers, cold fresh milk.
- Earliest lunches cost around 23¢ a day, but as part of Roosevelt’s WPA – students paid 3¢

### **Outside on Playground:**

- Jump Rope
- Hop Scotch
- Teeter Totters
- Climb the Flagpole
- Slides and Swings
- Monkey Bars
- Tag (rumor has it there was even kissing tag 😊)
- Red Rover
- Kickball
- Touch Football
- Basketball
- Softball
- Fox and Geese
- I Have a Little Doggie
- Pomp! Pomp! Pomp! (Which was fun but outlawed!)

### **Wintertime Fun – *Oh how it snowed!***

- Building Snowmen
- Ice sliding on the walks never grew old – though it was highly discouraged!
- Snow ball fights (Usually followed by a quick trip to the principal’s office!)