

THE EARLY YEARS

This history will give the story of some of the beginnings of this large school system and the background of the communities and former school districts that now make up the San Juan Unified School District, which is one of the largest and best school systems in California and the nation. For a number of years it has been educating in excess of 45,000 students annually, so the story of the growth and development of this school district—which now is one of the largest industries in the northeast portion of Sacramento County, and which, over time, was composed of eight separate and independent districts which themselves started from eight small one-school buildings—is now in need of telling. The word “industry” best describes a large school system such as San Juan. Its products are the students who have been educated from ages five to eighteen from kindergarten through graduation from high school. The San Juan district also offers before- and after-school programs, as well as those for preschoolers and adults in the communities.

The name San Juan is the Spanish name for the land grant known as Rancho San Juan which translates into English as Saint John.

The first settlements in Spanish or Mexican California in this central California area were developed from a number of grants of land by the Mexican governors. In Sacramento County, two grants in the north part of the county were given by Governor Manuel Micheltoarena. One was the El Paso Grant later known as Rancho Del Paso which was first granted to Eliah Grimes in 1844. The tract included 44,374 acres and extended for eight miles east of the Sacramento River and along the north bank of the American River. By 1880 this large tract was still one parcel of land.

The second grant was Rancho San Juan which had been granted to Joel Dedmond and consisted of 19,982 acres. It extended on the north side of the American River from where what is now Walnut Avenue in Carmichael runs north and south; that street was also the district border between the Arden and Arcade school districts and the original Carmichael Colony. Rancho San Juan included all the eastern portion of the north county area to where the American River turns north. The east side of Sacramento County across the American River was the Folsom area and part of the Leidersdorf Grant. So the present area of the San Juan Unified School District includes all of the San Juan Mexican land grant and about half of the original El Paso Grant.

These Mexican land grants had name changes when California became a state in 1848 and the various land areas of the new counties became divided further into townships. The Sacramento County townships were identified in 1851 and after some boundary changes, those north of the American River area were named American, Center, and Mississippi Townships. The townships south of the American River included Sutter, Brighton, Lee, and Granite. (See Appendix A for schools in Sacramento County as of 1898.)

What was this wide open land area like in those early days of new statehood? We have some comments by early-day authors. Edwin Bryant, in his book, *What I Saw in California*, described some of the areas in 1846 as follows: “The ground is trodden by immense herds of cattle and horses which grazed here in the spring, where it was wet and miry.” He says, “We passed through large evergreen oak groves, some of them miles in width. Game is very abundant. We frequently saw deer feeding quietly one or two hundred yards from us.” Other writers describe large numbers of quail and dove and the flocks of ducks and geese in winter and spring.

Another early-day memory of the middle and later 1850s mentions the Fair Oaks area as being a wilderness of sturdy oaks with their crop of acorns and the home of wild game and the periodic resting place for hundreds of thousands of wild pigeons. It was said you could see the trees literally covered

with these migratory birds and at night one could actually knock them down with a stick. Here, too, would occasionally appear the monster grizzly which would come down from the mountains to see what he could find; also, up until about 1854 the beaver and otter were plentiful. Vast herds of antelope were said to roam over the south area but had disappeared with the settlement of man.

The American River was a beautiful, clear stream which flowed upon its gravel bed more than 30 feet below the present level. Along the river was a perfect arbor of wild grape vines which in season were loaded with fruit. The banks were embroidered with wild roses, blackberry vines, wild ferns, and lilies. The water of the river, especially in summer and fall, was as pure and clear as crystal. For some time after the gold-rush period, there were very few settlers on the north side of the American River. The rolling hills and the densely wooded character of the land seemed, at that time, to have no attraction for the farmer or tiller of the soil. However, at first there were several pioneer orchardists on the south side of the river. All those beautiful orchards were about 30 feet below the original level of the river. Due to the early hydraulic mining in the higher mountain areas, the lower river areas were filled with sand and debris along with the dredging which occurred extensively on the south side of the American River. The result was many square miles of rock piles until the recent subdivision developments were built on top of the now leveled gravel pits. This is an early picture of what the north area was like before the farms and settlements occurred.

A very early resident of the San Juan area, Edwin Muldrow, explains that there were many squatters and families who believed that this area was government land and thus free for claiming. They made their living mostly by selling wood and charcoal. Some had cattle. He said little attention was paid to farming because these clearings were small and the land was thought to be unfit for farming except for the river bottoms. Finally, after some years, the private ownership of the land was made possible and the squatters either left the area or purchased a piece of the property.

The Early North Area Settlements

Our early history is about the various settlements that were to become the sizeable communities of Orangevale, Roberts, Sylvan, Fair Oaks, Carmichael, Arcade, and Arden. These community areas were to become eight separate school districts and ultimately the six which unified and became one the San Juan Unified School District.

Which community is the oldest? Which had the first school? We will tell you about each one in the order of their development.

If you live in this northeastern part of Sacramento County, you may be able to spot your home in a known community area. We hope you can identify your community in its early stages even if you don't know the later subdivision name or if your present home is one of a number of recently constructed houses. Your home may still be on a ranch or farm that is how most of these original communities got their start although the number of homes with acreage is being reduced every year.

The communities were called colonies in some areas, like the Orange Vale Colony and Carmichael Colony. The large tracts of open land in the townships were purchased by people who wanted to develop small farms. It was believed for many years that ten or more acres could provide food and income for a farm family. This was probably true up to the 1930 depression years.

Orangevale is a clear example of this, as are Fair Oaks and Carmichael. During the depression years, two major freeze years destroyed the citrus crops and killed the trees. The farmers, however, persevered; they replanted and the farms continued but no longer were the expectations to be realized; in many cases the farmers had to find jobs and other work outside of their home community.

The Original Communities

The four original San Juan area communities which had one-room schools were Sylvan, Roberts, Orange Vale, and Fair Oaks. All of these areas were included in the original San Juan Mexican land grant which had been established by 1850. One more additional area was also in the San Juan Grant. This was the San Juan Elementary School area. It was to have a name change to Carmichael about 1910 when Dan Carmichael, a Sacramento real estate promoter, purchased much of the present Carmichael Colony area, divided it into 10-acre farms and sold them as permanent farm and home places. His advertisements indicated that ten acres would provide a home site and enough land to grow orchards and crops so that a farm family could live comfortably there.

Two other communities were also part of the San Juan Unified School District, but they both were in the El Paso Grant. The oldest was the Arcade community whose early school was built in 1885 and provided a school for the jockeys who rode for the James Ben Ali Haggin race-horse farm. The second community which became the last area to be a part of San Juan was Arden. It was formed in 1913 from a part of the original large Arcade School District. Arcade joined San Juan High School District in 1931 and Arden became part of San Juan High School area by joining with Carmichael in 1949. When the two areas unionized in 1951, they became known as the Arden-Carmichael Union School District. See Appendix B.

The Schools in the Communities

We want our history to show the dedication and efforts of the citizens in each of our communities. All our districts started with a small, one- or two-room school building. Most of the community districts remained small through the early 1940s. They were still one-school-building districts until about 1948 when Carmichael built its second school and named it in memory of Marvin Marshall who had graduated from Carmichael School, grew to young manhood, and was killed in World War II.

By 1950 the soldiers had come home from World War II, had married, had children, and had begun to crowd the existing facilities of the schools then available. We believe Marvin Marshall School was the first new school in our communities which unified in 1960. Later in our story we will list the elementary and high schools built by each of the component districts up to the date of unification.

Arden School had about 200 students by 1940 and had grown to 1,087 students when it unionized. For your historical information, this unionization occurred primarily because the San Juan Union High School District had built its second high school, El Camino, in 1950 on the border of the Arden and Arcade districts. Arden, however, had its eastern border with Carmichael district and made the first effort to unionize with Carmichael. Thus in 1951 there was an Arden-Carmichael School District which existed up to the general unification of all the elementary districts with the San Juan Union High School District in 1960.

Schools built in the former Arden area were Cottage, Eastern Avenue, Mariemont, Sierra Oaks, Starr King, and Starr King Exceptional (subsequently renamed Ralph Richardson Center in 1990, in memory of the director of special education), Herbert Winterstein Elementary School (named in honor of the Arden district's superintendent who served between 1935 and 1951), and Orville Wright.

The Sylvan Community

At the time of unification, the San Juan Unified School District of Sacramento County was the largest school district in California which did not include a major city. Of its major communities only

Sylvan (later to be known as Citrus Heights) was the first area to have a school. (In 1997 the voters approved the incorporation of a portion of the original area which became known as the City of Citrus Heights.) As explained previously, a major portion of the land of the San Juan Unified School District comprised the two Mexican land grants known as the El Paso Grant, later known as the Haggin Grant, and the San Juan Grant. These two grants became part of the new state of California when their areas were included in the newly-named Sacramento County. These large rural areas were sparsely settled with no towns or known communities for about twenty years during and after the gold rush except as noted.

This northeast area of Sacramento County was heavily traveled by the early miners who, from 1849 on, traveled to the gold fields of the Sierra Nevada foothills. The original gold discovery is said to have been made by James Marshall who, when working for John Sutter, the Sacramento founder and pioneer, at a saw mill at Coloma, picked up some pieces of gold in the stream the American River and the gold rush followed, along with tens of thousands of eager gold seekers who came through the San Juan area on their way to find their fortunes. We now know that early Indians and some of the Mexicans from the early missions knew about the gold being in the lower mountains; but this information was not generally known, thus the gold found by Marshall and Sutter became the discovery and that news traveled east and soon to Europe and elsewhere, resulting in our area being traversed by horses and pack animals, and many men on foot on the great gold adventure.

This gold rush area soon became nearly statewide, and the early gold seekers came across the country and by ship to San Francisco via Central America or around South America's Cape Horn. We do know they came by the tens of thousands and in a few years all the easy gold was found and many early miners began to look for other work.

Many of these early miners did not want to return to their original homes in the east which, in those early days, was months away because there were no trains across the country. When roads were made, they were rough and the travel was slow, with only stage coaches at first, and those weren't available until after the first pioneers had come by ox teams with the people walking the whole distance.

Several of us who are writing up this history of these early communities and their schools had grandparents who were among these early miners and/or gold seekers. It is probable that many of you readers of this story also have ancestors who can make the same claim.

Sylvan: The First Elementary School

An excellent source of our information on early Sylvan, the first elementary school in our north area, is taken from a booklet called "Sylvan Recollections" written by Mrs. Lillian A. Cross. Her material indicates that farming started on a small scale in the 1850s. Land had to be cleared before anything could be planted and thus it was into the 1860s when serious farming made a start.

The Sylvan area was first for several reasons, among them was that the Sylvan area was on the major route to Auburn. This dirt road crossed the El Paso Grant and along it were a number of public or road houses. In the Sylvan area these were referred to as the Fourteen Mile House and the Eighteen Mile House. These places were like a chain of hotels and were built primarily for the accommodation of teamsters who hauled freight to the foothill towns and the mines. Mrs. Cross, in her story of Sylvan, said the road houses were much alike. They all stood on the south side of the road and were two stories high with long barns behind them.

California's early roads were dirt and little work was done on them. The heavy wheels of the freight wagons cut deep ruts into them. Dust in the summer and mud in winter were normal. The railroad came at the end of the 1860s and the freight wagons and road houses slowly slipped into history.

Mrs. Cross tells us that her mother was Sylvan's first teacher and that the first school opened in

January 1863, which happened to be the same month and year in which the Central Pacific Railroad Company broke ground in Sacramento for the first transcontinental railroad.

Through those early years Sylvan had several teachers and the school had growing enrollments which were not relieved until the San Juan Elementary School was started in 1880 and then the Roberts School District east on Greenback Lane in 1883. So Sylvan has the honor of having the first school in what we now know as the beginning settlements of the north area out of Sacramento.

We are listing the several elementary schools which were constructed through the efforts of the superintendents and trustees of each of the elementary district communities who passed the necessary construction bond issues which needed to be voted in each community.

By the time of unification in 1960, the average attendance of the Sylvan Elementary School District schools was given as 2,661. Basil Nichols was the district superintendent during its final years. The following school buildings had been completed by then: Sylvan (1862-63), Mariposa Avenue (1949), Grand Oaks (1959), Leighton Littlejohn (1957), Oak Avenue (1957 and subsequently renamed Sunrise Elementary in 1972), Arlington Heights (1958), Citrus Heights (1958), and Skycrest (1959).

San Juan Elementary School

Yes, there was a San Juan Elementary School and it was the second elementary school started in what later was known as the Carmichael Colony.

An early settler, the late Edwin Muldrow, writing for the San Juan Record publications in the 1930s, tells us that two wealthy cattlemen named C.W. Clarke and Frederick Cox became the owners of the Rancho San Juan. They started selling acreage from the Rancho at what was considered a good price of \$12 an acre. Muldrow was the first buyer and later came Thomas Kelly from Sacramento, then Jacob Heintz from Lathrop; others bought acreage from the San Juan Grant. It was said the wild game was plentiful in those days and a jack rabbit dinner was quite common. Gradually the timber was removed and the land cleared so that wheat and barley could be raised.

By 1880 a school was needed and according to Muldrow, principally through the efforts of Jacob Heintz, Thomas Kelly, and John Coyle, the San Juan Elementary School was established. This first school was kept for the first term at the Kelly house. The first teacher employed was Miss Etta Beggs of Sacramento. The first trustees were Thomas Kelly, John Coyle, and James Muldrow. Descendants of these early families still live near or on their home places.

Harold J. Dewey, whose grandfather was Jacob Heintz, tells us that his grandfather had purchased 200 acres where some of the Dewey family still resides. Much of the early San Juan area was covered with oak trees. The early farms were cleared of many oaks. A source of early farm income was made by selling wood and making charcoal. Harry Dewey tells us that the early settlers made their own charcoal pits by mounding tree limbs and trunks 20 to 30 feet wide and 150 feet or more into the shape of a cigar. The limbs were laid over trenches in a way that allowed air to circulate under them; then the wood pile was covered with straw and then about a foot of dirt. It was fired but the fire was never allowed to blaze up and burn the wood; the fire smoldered for up to two months. It was necessary to constantly watch to keep it from blazing up. It is said that they sometimes made as much as 3,000 sacks of charcoal from a single mound.

These were horse-and-mule days, and it meant a long trip to haul the grain and hay to the Sacramento market or mills. It was a two-and-a-half-hour trip with only four houses between the Dewey place and downtown Sacramento. Harold Dewey told us that some plowed furrows in Carmichael measured a mile in length. Fourteen furrows were equal to fourteen miles and considered a good day's work.

He said his folks had one of the first big grain harvesters in this area. They drove it along the road all the way from Stockton to get it here; it took 18 mules and horses to pull it. He also said that there was one year their crop produced 5,400 sacks of wheat. It sold for 98 cents per 100 pounds. In later years the area grew into many homes and small farms. The Harry Dewey School, on what is now Falcon Road, was build on part of the original farm area.

The original San Juan Elementary School, established about 1880, was built across from the Dewey Ranch where Dewey Drive intersects with Winding Way today. It was the earliest school in the lower portion of the San Juan Grant, the oldest school being Sylvan. It operated for about 37 years as a one-room school so it was an important part of our San Juan Unified history.

A description of this early one-room school has been given as follows: The San Juan School had one room with a big heating stove in the middle. It had no bell except a hand bell which the teacher rang. There were usually 12 or 15 children enrolled and many of them rode to school in carts pulled by horses. One family had an old brown mule which pulled the cart for many years until all the children in the family had finished school.

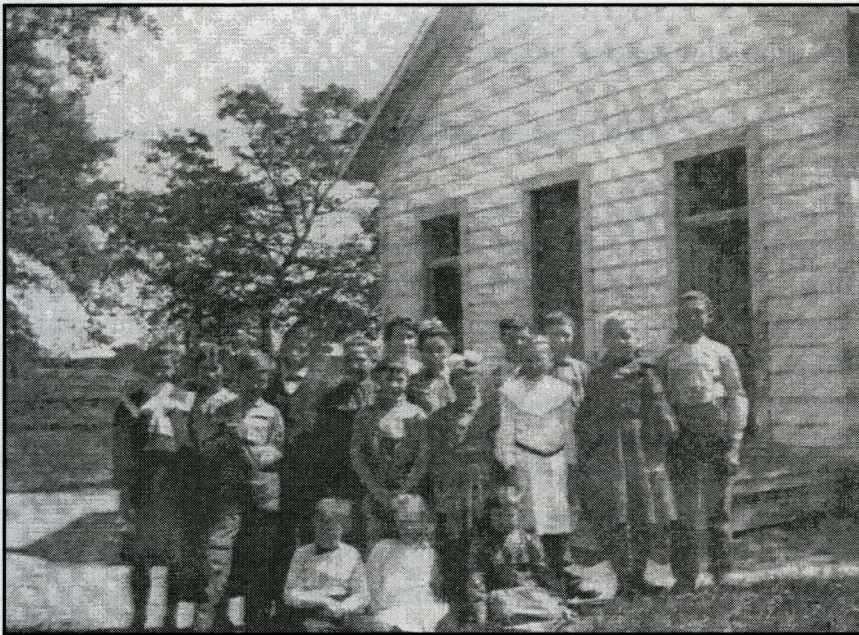


Photo 1 - The San Juan School on Winding Way west of San Juan Avenue. Taken about 1906. The teacher, Miss Lillian Wright (later Mrs. Shannon) is in the center of back row. Students include: Mildred Peck, Alice O'Donnell, Harold Dewey, Oscar _____, Elsie Crockran, Percy McMillan, Edith Butlers, Florence Ricketts, Ada Crockran, Jack Caulfield, George Crockran, Alta Dewey, J. Earl Ricketts. Three seated in front are not known.

There were many oak trees around the school building and the woodpeckers, aptly named Acorn Woodpeckers, liked to store the acorns in the walls of the building.

The school building remained at its first site for these early years, but the new citizens of Carmichael Colony all lived south of Winding Way and the walking distance was now considered too far. Mr. Carmichael, who was developing this new colony, was aware of the need for a school closer to the Colony's growing population of school-age children. He therefore offered a 10-acre site free if the school was moved and provided it was named Carmichael. Records indicate that the last class to graduate from San Juan Elementary School was in 1916, the same year that the school was moved to Sutter Avenue to become the

original Carmichael School. The old school building was again moved to become a grocery store and then a church called the Wayside Chapel. Some time in later years the original school building burned or was torn down, but the site is now occupied by the Carmichael Bible Church on Fair Oaks Boulevard and Grant Avenue.

Teachers Who Taught for the San Juan Elementary School District

We were fortunate to locate among the historical records in the office of the Sacramento County Superintendent of Schools some names of the teachers who served the early San Juan Elementary School. Some names are missing. All these teachers taught in the one-room school:

<u>Year Taught</u>	<u>Teacher</u>	<u>Months Taught</u>	<u>Year Taught</u>	<u>Teacher</u>	<u>Months Taught</u>
1886-87	Nettie Murray	6	1901-02	Elizabeth H. Farrell	9
1887-88	Annie Brogan	7	1902-03	Elizabeth H. Farrell	9
1888-89	Hennie L. Hughes	8	1903-04	Elizabeth H. Farrell	9
1899-90	Lucy Turner	7	1904-05	Lillie M. Wright	8
1890-91	Lucy Turner	5	1905-06	Lillie M. Wright	9
1890-91	Lou B. McCormick	11/2	1906-07	Aileen Pierson	9
1891-92	M. Sue Hickman	6 1/2	1907-08	Lela M. Gilmore	9
1892-93	Ella A. Heintz	7	1908-09	Alice Truitt	9
1893-94	Ella A. Heintz	9 1/4	1909-10	Lela M. Gilmore	9
1894-95	Anna McDonald	7 1/2	1910-11	Geneive Tohu	8
1895-96	Anna McDonald	7	1911-12	District was suspended	—
1896-97	Anna McDonald	7 1/4	1912-13	Alice Truitt	8 1/2
1897-98	Anna McDonald	9	1913-14	Alice Truitt	8 1/2
1898-99	Clara R. Tracy	7	1914-15	Ada Cochrane	9
1899-1900	Mrs. J. M. Markley	8	1915-16	Della O'Donnell	9
1900-01	Clara Tracy	7	1916-17		
1900-01	Mrs. Mamie F. Kelly	3/4			

Teachers' salaries for almost all these years ranged from \$55 to \$65 per month. There was no tenure or benefits.

San Juan Elementary School Trustees

Although the San Juan Elementary School was established around 1880, the names of the early trustees were not found. We did find a list of the early trustees dating from 1902 until 1916 when San Juan Elementary School District changed its name to Carmichael. You will note that many of these names were of farmers who were among the earliest pre-Carmichael settlers.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Years Served</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Years Served</u>
Harry Dewey	1902-05, 1911-13	W. H. Barrett	1907-08
J. F. Ricketts	1904-06, 1908-14	John Barrett	1909-12
E. J. O'Donnell	1904-07	Harry Dewey	1911-13
Finley McMillan	1905-13	John F. Barrett	1912-15
C. W. Cozzins	1906-09	John P. Jones	1913-16
		Alfred R. Champlin	1914-17

The last trustees serving on the San Juan Elementary District board became the first trustees of the renamed Carmichael School District.

John F. Barrett	1914-17	Alfred R. Champlin	1915-18
John P. Jones	1916-19		

This is the last class at San Juan Elementary School located near Winding Way and Dewey Drive on the Dickson property, probably in 1915 or 1916 before the building was moved. The students were identified by Beverly Jones Bell who is the third girl from the left in the middle row. She has been able to identify 15 of the 23 students, but says she is not sure of them. We also sent this picture to Oliver Boyer who now lives in San Francisco. He is the boy on the far right of the middle row. He said he could not add to Beverly's list of students.



Photo 2 - Last class at San Juan Elementary School, circa 1915-16. Top row (left to right): Harold Warren, Mary Turner, (unknown), Martha Ruff, (unknown), (unknown). Middle row: Fern Graves, (unknown), Beverly Jones, Della Barrett, Hazel Jones, Marian Fetters, (unknown), Oliver Boyer. Bottom row: Robert Jones, Wendell Jones, (unknown), Weir Fetters, Catherine Barrett, Hilda Ferguson, ? Barrett, (unknown).

The Roberts School

The first Roberts School was built in 1883 on a one-acre site on Greenback Lane near Kenneth Avenue. The Roberts District was an area lying between the future colonies of Fair Oaks and Orange Vale. It was the second or third one-room school, complete with an outhouse, built in what is now the San Juan Unified School District.

Julia Quinn Bowen, who started first grade at Roberts School in 1919, reports that Ruth Wickstrom taught all eight grades which consisted of 17 students who adored her. See Appendix C for more of Ms. Bowen's recollections.

Ms. Bowen recalls that the school now had two teachers plus a violin teacher, Fred Kirsten, who was furnished by either the county or the state and came to the school once a week to teach music. He later married Ms. Wickstrom.

The photograph on the next page,

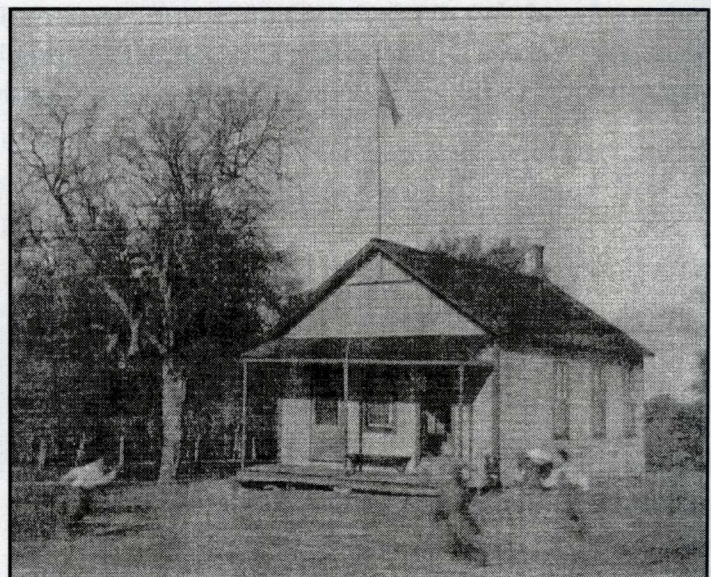


Photo 3 - Original Roberts School, circa 1883.

circa 1922 or 1923, was provided by Fred Kirsten, son of Ruth Wickstrom Kirsten, the teacher-principal, and shows the "new" Roberts School with separate entrances for each of the two classrooms.

The three identical windows in the center were for a room called the library or teachers' room which was entered from either classroom. This room was used for music lessons which were free to any student who cared to learn to play an instrument. The teachers had a restroom in the new building (note the small square window just to the left) but, according to Mr. Kirsten's recollections, the students' restrooms were in a separate building. He also advises that the school was heated by a wood stove in each classroom and

that most, if not all, of the maintenance was done by the school trustees. His mother earned all of \$1,500 for a year of teaching in the 1930s. More recollections and photos from Mr. Kirsten are in Appendix D.

The original school houses at Greenback Lane and Kenneth Avenue are long gone and the

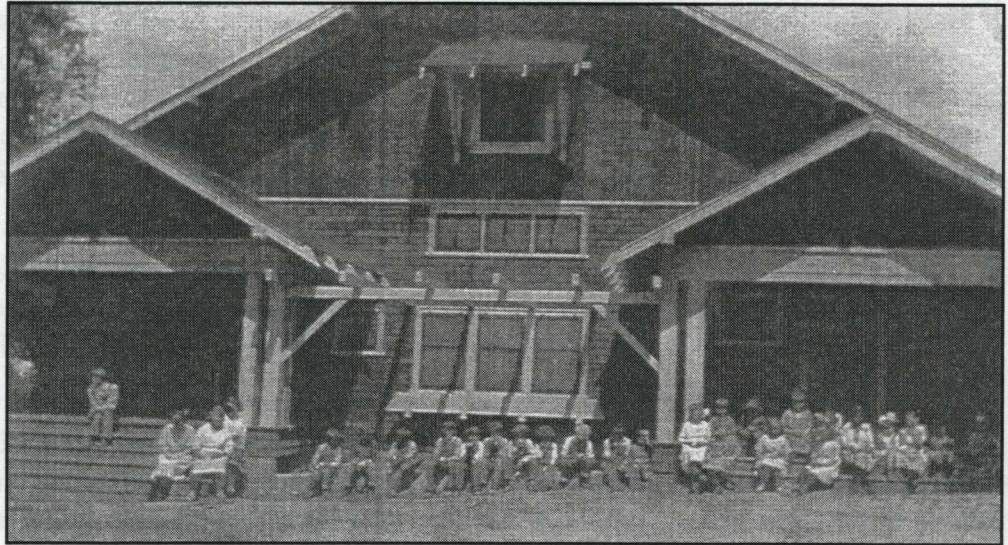


Photo 4 - "New" Roberts School, circa 1923.

vacant site was sold by the unified district in 1999, but the name continues on a new, larger school which was built by Orangevale Union School District in 1952 on Illinois Avenue just north of Madison Avenue.

The Roberts School District continued as a separate area until it unionized with Orangevale Union School District in 1947. The Roberts School District area was small. In fact, it is difficult to find clear boundaries, but the citizens of the Roberts School area did keep their school area separate and voted bonds as needed to build their own original school until about 1948 when it became part of the Orangevale School District, which later became known as the Orangevale Union School District.



Photo 5 - Sadie Cable (R), Orangevale District's superintendent

In 1890 the Roberts School is said to have had an enrollment of 21 students with a property valuation of \$990. By 1939 the average attendance was 41. The school employed two teachers for first through eighth grades for most of its early years: Mrs. Ruth Kirsten as principal-teacher and Mrs. June MacKay; Mrs. Lily Greenhalgh taught music.

This May 1965 photo of Ruth Wickstrom Kirsten (left) and Sadie Greenhalgh Cable (right), superintendent of the Orangevale District from 1924 to 1947, was loaned to us by Nick Tomich (center), nephew of Mrs. Kirsten, local architect, and contribu-

tor to this history. Mr. Tomich reports that the Wickstrom and Greenhalgh families were neighbors in Crookston, Minnesota, and moved to Orange Vale together in 1902.

The average attendance rose during World War II so that by 1945 it had about doubled to 97, and the district now employed three full-time teachers and one music teacher. Mrs. Kirsten was still the principal and taught seventh and eighth grades. Mrs. Dorothy Burnham taught fourth, fifth, and sixth grades, and Mrs. Madge Jackson taught first, second, and third grades. Mrs. Lily Greenhalgh Trevey was the music teacher.

After earthquakes of 1931 severely damaged schools in Bakersfield, the state legislature established new building standards and all early schools in California which could not meet the new earthquake standards had to be closed or rebuilt. According to the minutes of board of trustees meetings for the last 15 years of the Roberts District's life, it seems that the original Roberts School located on Greenback Lane was in very poor shape and could not meet the earthquake standards established by the state. Roberts School District would have been required to authorize a new bond issue to build a new school. The trustees realized that the Roberts area's assessed valuation could not afford a new bond issue. There were other reasons too, so the board minutes for the last meeting of the Roberts School District read as follows:

May 5, 1947. Met at Orangevale School. Teachers accounts ordered closed. Roberts School joining Orangevale School under the name of Orangevale Union Elementary School. All bills ordered paid and warrants signed for all debts paid for Roberts District, which ends on May 30, 1947. /s/ Samuel Berry

The Sacramento County School Directory for 1949 shows Roberts School had an average daily attendance (ADA) of 151 and that it was now part of Orangevale Union district. This small district has lived on in the name of a school located within its original boundaries. The name is over 120 years old.

Arcade School District and Community

The second school area which later became one of the original school communities was Arcade whose roots were in the Rancho Del Paso Grant and the area near Sacramento City. It had been originally organized for the jockeys who worked for James Ben Ali Haggin on his famous horse ranch. Present-day Hagginwood is part of the area of the original large ranch. Arcade School District was organized officially about 1885. It served the large area of Center Township and American Township.

Nellie Mackay Cassidy, who taught from 1895 to 1907, except for the 1901-02 school year, described the one-room school as follows: It was located "about one mile from Ben Ali Station, a little room with a porch all around it; about fifteen seats for some thirty pupils.

There was a blackboard six feet long made of two wide boards painted black. Every time the wind blew hard the walls swayed....One cold, windy, rainy day just after having sent the children home because of the dangerous condition of the old school, it blew down. The wind had blown out the four walls and the ceiling, and the roof fell down on the tops of the desks." A new school was erected about half a mile from the old one near the corner of

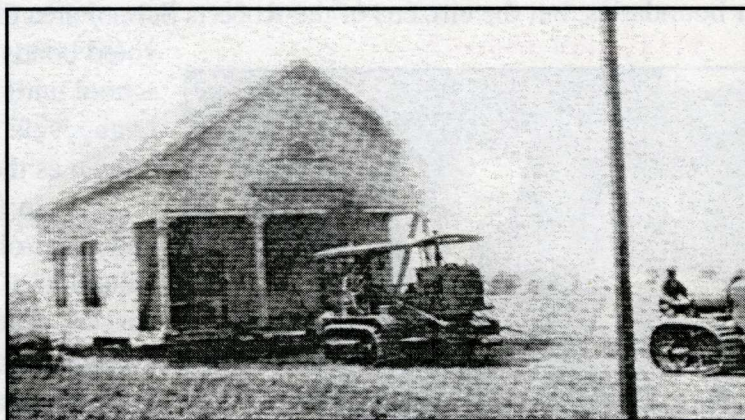


Photo 6 - Moving Arcade School from Fulton and Edison Avenues in 1922

Fulton and Edison Avenues and was opened in February 1900 and served the Arcade area until 1922 when the location changed to Edison and Watt Avenues. The school was moved to the new location by tractor and used while a new school was being built. Since then a number of new rooms were slowly added to accommodate the slowly expanding rural population. It remains at this site to this day.

By 1949 the Arcade District built its second new school, the Dyer-Kelly School, and by 1960 when unification occurred, the Arcade District had added fourteen more elementary schools, while the high school district added one high school in the area, Mira Loma.



Photo 7- *Arcade School in 1923 at its present location.*

A major change in the boundaries of the Arcade District occurred in 1913 when the Arden District was formed out of Arcade area, along with parts of Del Paso Heights District, North Sacramento School District and parts of Robla, Rio Linda and Fruit Vale Districts. Arcade School thus became one of the oldest continuously operating schools in Sacramento's North Area from about 1885 to 2000 and still going.

Early Teachers at Arcade, 1885-1960

From *A History of the Arcade School District* we show a partial list of the early teachers from 1885 to 1960. After 1940 and especially after 1950 when the district grew rapidly in new schools, teachers, and principals, there were many more teachers and principals.

<u>Teachers and School</u>	<u>Years Taught</u>	<u>Months or Years Taught</u>
Blanche Huber	1885-1887	2 years
Flora M. Greenlaw	1887-1890	3 years
Gladys MacCarty	1890-1893	3 years
Ida M. Wolfe	1893-1895	2 years
Nellie Mackay Cassidy	1895-1900	5 years
Mamie Feeney Kelly	1900-1901 (part)	2 months
Hazel Hammack Strauch	1900-1907	6 years
Mae Donahue Henderson	1908-1910 (part)	1 year
Edith L. Blinn	1909-1910 (part)	1 year
Clara Jackson Bailey	1910-1911	1 year
Sarah Whitney Ward	1911-1913	2 years
Francis Inge	1912-1914, 1914-1916	4 years
Lillian Brown	1914 (?)	1 year
Clara Johns Cross	1916-1920	3 years
Vivian McShane Buchanan	1920-1922	2 years
Una Mathews Law	1922-1923	1 year
Alice Wimperis Toulouse	1922-1923	1 year
Gladys Dyer	1923-1954	28 years
Kathleen Whiteing Cox	1923-1924	1 year

Mary L. Kelly	1924-1945	21 years
D. E. Hughes (instruments)	1928-1939	11 years
Nelda Holt Brandenburger	1933-1935	2 years
Josephine Filcher	1935-1960	25 years
Ruth Jorstad	1937-1960	23 years
P. M. Hogan (instruments)	1939-1945	6 years
James R. Cowan	1939-1960	21 years

Some of the last listed teachers continued to work for San Juan Unified School District.

The Dyer-Kelly School was the second school built by the Arcade District as it expanded. It was named for two teachers who, between them, had taught for nearly 50 years at Arcade School, when for a number of years it was a two-teacher school. Mrs. Gladys Dyer came in 1923 and taught until 1954; Mrs. Mary Kelly started in 1924 and taught until 1945.

All of the major San Juan area communities grew at an accelerated rate, especially after World War II in 1946 when the soldiers started to come home, got married, and started to have children and then many of them moved to what used to be referred to as "the country." We have some annual growth figures from the Arcade District for the years 1950-51 through 1959-60 when this district was merged into the unified district. Note these growth figures:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Enrollment</u>	<u>New Annual Increase</u>	<u>New Rooms Needed at 35 Students per Room</u>
1950-51	2,067	527	15
1951-52	2,659	592	17
1952-53	3,331	672	19
1953-54	2,925	594	17
1954-55	4,650	725	20.7
1955-56	5,131	455	13
1956-57	4,486	365	10.4
1957-58	6,035	449	13
1958-59	6,400	365	10.4
1959-60	6,719	319	10

Early Arcade School

Teaching students in a one-room school imposes total responsibility on the teacher. Although one may have visitors, the daily classroom work, the recess and lunch activities, and the discipline, when required, were up to the teacher. The job also could include making the fire in winter and daily cleaning of the room.

An interesting item concerning Arcade was a report required for all schools and this one from Arcade concerns its first year, about 1885:

Whole number of boys enrolled in register	24, of girls 4	Total	28
Average number belonging			23
Average daily attendance			21
Percent of attendance on average number belonging			90%

Number of school visits by county superintendent	1
Number of school visits by school trustees	2
Number of school visits by other persons	12
Number of students in grammar grades	7
Number of students in primary grades	21 or 28
Number of months school maintained	4
Length of time in months same teachers have taught in the school	4
Sex of teacher - female	1
Grade of teacher certificate	1
Attendance at institute	Yes
Has the district used only the authorized textbooks?	Yes
Has the district voted a school tax?	No
Monthly salary paid teacher	\$75
Average amount per month needed to support the school	\$80
Valuation in lots, school houses and furniture	?
Valuation of school library	\$50
Valuation of school apparatus	\$75
 TOTAL VALUATION OF SCHOOL PROPERTY	 \$75

Comparisons with other districts:	Roberts	\$900
	Sylvan	\$1,350
	San Juan	\$940

That's a pretty slim start for a new school. At that time (1885) there were primary and grammar schools; at the start, Arcade was a primary school. You will note that the preceding report contains miscellaneous statistics concerning county schools that are no longer considered relevant.

Schools Constructed by the Arcade District

The following data show the housing situation and needs at the year of unification:

<u>School</u>	<u>Capacity</u>	<u>Rooms Needed at 35 Students Each</u>
Arcade	670	19
Dyer-Kelly	488	14
Del Paso Manor	560	16
Howe Avenue	778	22
Pope Avenue	410	12
Creekside	440	13
Mission Avenue	470	14
Marconi Avenue	470	14
Whitney Avenue	440	13
Arcade Admin.	180	5
Orange Grove	290	8

<u>School</u>	<u>Capacity</u>	<u>Rooms Needed at 35 Students Each</u>
Wyda Way	230	7
Cowan	304	9
Kenneth Avenue	304	9
Pasadena Avenue	<u>304</u>	<u>9</u>
	6,778	197

What do these growth figures tell you? Here are some of the needs. By 1959-60 the Arcade District showed a total enrollment of 6,719. At 35 students per classroom teacher, there was a need for 192 classrooms. When Arcade unified with the other San Juan communities, it was taking care of this number of students in 15 school buildings. Unfortunately some of the schools did not have this capacity as they were not finished.

Although the figures above are for Arcade, all districts being unified could show a similar pattern of needs and schools under construction. Every one of the six unifying districts was overcrowded. Some were still on double sessions with classes in the morning and then the same room being used for classes in the afternoon. Next to Arden-Carmichael district, Arcade was the largest of the original north area school districts which became part of the new San Juan Unified School District.

The Orange Vale Community

Another one of the earliest communities was called Orange Vale. It was in the far eastern part of the San Juan Grant with boundaries which included the American River on the east and the Placer County line on the north. Its western boundary areas were the colonies of Fair Oaks and Sylvan and a portion of the Roberts District.

Early History of the Orange Vale Area

In 1881 a man by the name of J. T. Cardwell had purchased several hundred acres for \$6 per acre. He had started a colony called Cardwell, but his hopes were not realized. In 1887 Thomas Bertram Hall bought 3,200 acres of the Orange Vale Colony and appurtenant water rights, formed the Orange Vale Colonization Company, and began to develop the land, converting grain fields into diversified farms of 10 acres each and contracting low freight-usage rates with the Southern Pacific Railroad, thereby opening up the Sacramento Valley to development. See Appendix E for the map of Orange Vale Colony.

Over the next few years more than 10,000 orange trees were planted at \$1 per tree. These and other plantings gave rise to the community's name of Orange Vale. This area became one of the first colonies in the northeast area of Sacramento County.

Mrs. Sadie Cable, a long-time teacher and superintendent of the Orangevale School District from 1924 to 1947, wrote up some of the events and told about the growth of the Orangevale community. Because this was a farm area which needed water for irrigation, the first method of irrigation, according to Mrs. Cable, was open ditches. As water was made available, more orchards were planted with cherries, peaches, pears and prunes. In 1889 pipes from the North Fork Ditch Company were laid and later expanded, bringing water from the American River south of the town of Auburn to the area, so that growth for farms and homes continued.

In 1857 a railroad was built from Roseville to Folsom. It went through a part of Orangevale but did not last. They say some of the old roadbed cuts can still be found.

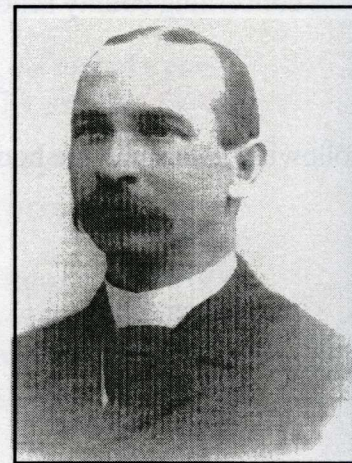


Photo 8 - Thos. Bertram Hall

We have mentioned Greenback Lane which runs from Auburn Boulevard on the west to near the City of Folsom on the east. Greenback Lane's name comes from the type of poker money used to pay for its construction. For many years it was a dirt wagon road. Later it was paved and palm trees were planted along either side, making it what was considered to be a beautiful road in its day. Greenback Lane was, at one time, a portion of the major transcontinental highway that extended from San Francisco to New York.

The history of the Orangevale area is rich in the lore of the American Indian, as are the other of our communities. Mrs. Cable gives us the following information. There were two tribes known as the Mountain Indians and the Valley Indians. The mountain tribe would come down in the winter to be below the snow line, and then return to the mountains during the summer. They hunted and fished and trapped wild animals for food and clothing and also traded furs with trappers. Acorns were gathered and ground into meal.

One of the delicacies was a mixture of acorn meal and ground grasshoppers. One method of catching grasshoppers would be for the Indians to form a circle, then beat on the ground and close in, forcing the grasshoppers into a hole in the ground. The grasshoppers then could be sacked up. The Indians would dip them in hot water, place them in the sun to dry, and store them away for the winter.

Many bread boards and mortars were found among the granite boulders at Rock Corral north of Orangevale. It is said that the Indian maidens and braves used mortars which were about 1 1/2 inches in diameter and about as deep to grind war paints.

The Schools of Orange Vale

An earlier school had operated in part of the area which was to become Orange Vale. It was the Ashland School which lapsed or closed in 1879. (Ashland Station at the foot of Folsom-Auburn Road and Greenback Lane stands as a reminder.)

Mrs. Cable tells us that the first school in Orange Vale proper was built in 1890 on the northeast corner of Central and Filbert Avenues. There were with 24 students enrolled, and the school was used until about 1904 when the original building was turned into a residence for the Straut family. That year a two-story structure was built across the street at the site of the present-day Orangevale School. There were two classrooms on the ground floor and a large hall upstairs where dances and other entertainment were held. Materials for the building were hauled in from Roseville. This structure was razed in 1938 when the first unit of the new Orangevale School was constructed on Filbert Avenue and was comprised of three classrooms, a small library, kitchen, and storage room.

The area grew and by 1960 eight schools had been built by the Orangevale Union School District. (The school district wrote its name as one word rather than two as the original colony did. The unincorporated area has been known as Orangevale [one word] since the 1940s compliments, we believe, of the United States Postal Service.)

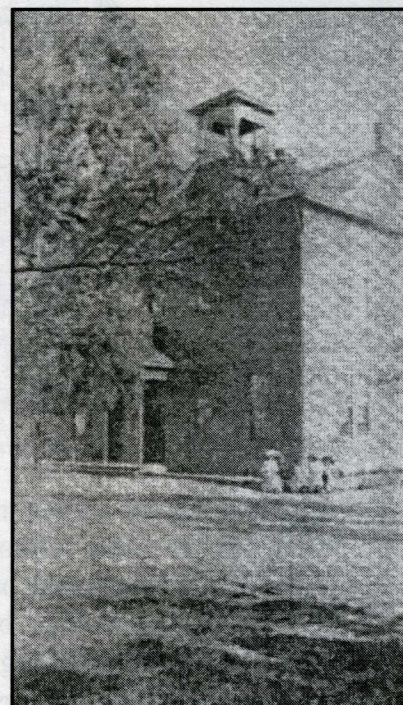


Photo 9 - Orangevale School
in 1904.

Roberts School (1883; relocated/rebuilt 1952)
Orangevale School (1890)

Twin Lake School (1956; rebuilt in 1989 on another portion of the site which faces Main Avenue)

Central School (1957; renamed in 1974 in memory of Thomas Coleman, superintendent of the Orangevale District at the time of unification, after which he was director of education and then assistant superintendent of the elementary schools division)

Northridge School (1958)

Oakview School (1959)

Palisades School (1959)

Green Oaks School (1960)

The Fair Oaks Community

The Fair Oaks area was in the San Juan Grant and in Center Township which bordered the American River on its south side.

The Schools of Fair Oaks

The Fair Oaks School District was formed in 1896 to serve the newly-arrived families of the Fair Oaks Colony. The original Fair Oaks School District was carved from the Orangevale and the San Juan Elementary School Districts. Some of the original families had sent their children to the San Juan Elementary School or to Sylvan, or to Roberts or even to Orangevale School, all of which were opened before Fair Oaks.

John Holst, who was one of the earliest colonists, says that the residents wanted their own school. At that time, the law provided that where there were 20 children of school age living farther than two miles from the nearest school, they may demand that a school district be formed. He says there were 30 children available at that time, so Fair Oaks more than qualified. A small, one-room school was built first in 1898, but it was too small almost immediately so that residents acquired 2.5 acres, and a new school was constructed in 1901. It's interesting to note that a bond issue of \$5,000 was passed by a unanimous vote for this school. It was a two-story building with four rooms, hallway and library.



Photo 10 - *Early photo of Fair Oaks School.*

Fair Oaks grew slowly between 1910 and 1925. School records show a fairly constant population but by 1926 it was realized that larger school grounds and facilities were needed and a new five-acre tract was purchased. A bond election was held in 1927 for \$45,000 and a school was constructed for \$46,000. When built, it was said to be the nicest looking school in the county.

After having one school in the Fair Oaks District, there was an ADA growth of 1,351 students by 1958-59, and the Fair Oaks community had built two more school buildings. They were the John Holst School on Bannister Road north of Winding Way, built in 1953, and the Earl LeGette School on Kenneth Avenue south of Sunset Avenue, built in 1958. Both men were active in the Fair Oaks community and its school board, Mr. Holst having served on the school board for 45 years and Mr. LeGette, who secured the property for the school, for eight years.

The Early Years of Fair Oaks

The portion of the San Juan Grant occupied by Fair Oaks was said to be about 5,000 acres of nearly 20,000 acres in the entire grant. Fair Oaks land was sold for farms and orchards. There were water rights, and the original settlers and land buyers could arrange for clearing, planting, and the care of the trees for some years or until their homes could be built. The water needs for homes and orchards were met by water which came down from the North Fork Ditch Company reservoir from a dam and canal built up near Auburn. These water sources were high enough in the foothills to guarantee a good and sufficient water flow and pressure.

The real estate promotions for the community of Fair Oaks included hopes for an electric railroad on the north side of the river. You readers will remember that the Sacramento-to-Folsom railroad (known as the Sacramento Valley Railroad) was completed many years before in 1856. The Fair Oaks plan was for an electric train, with the power coming from the electric power plant at Folsom. There was no bridge across the American River at Fair Oaks at this time, but about 1902 one was built across the river and also a railroad track spur was built near the south end of the old bridge. Before the bridge was built, the river could be forded during low water, but during most of the year a boat was needed or one had to go to Folsom and then come down to Fair Oaks by going through Orangevale.

The first Fair Oaks bridge was started in January 1901 and was finished for early travel in March. It was said to be a very handsome steel structure with two spans of 120 feet each flanked by a long trestle. Unfortunately, this bridge went out in 1907, so a new bridge was constructed (now the pedestrian/equestrian bridge east of what is now Sunrise Boulevard Bridge).

We can't leave our story on Fair Oaks without mentioning what was called the "worst freeze in history." Some people say it was the most disastrous occurrence that ever happened to Fair Oaks. One writer about early Fair Oaks says it had always been such a beautiful sight to see our orange groves stretching far away over the hills, every tree covered with luscious fruit. We awakened one awful morning to find the lovely green foliage of our trees had turned to dark brown. The branches drooped dismally and the trees appeared stark and dead. There was gloom and misery all over the area. A week or two later all the leaves were on the ground and the bare branches looked like gaunt skeletons. That icy frost and its consequences were a major catastrophe to Fair Oaks. The north wind blew the icy air from the polar regions, and for days the unusual cold hung over the area. White frost covered every bush, every tree, every blade of grass. Puddles and ponds were frozen solid and roads were slippery with ice. After being pruned and the dead wood cut back, many trees survived, but some growers pulled out every tree they owned. Some replanted, but another disastrous freeze again killed all the new young trees and further damaged those that survived the first freeze. Many olive trees were also killed but they fared better than the orange trees.

Your author has mentioned these periods of the freezes because they also affected the other orchard communities of Orange Vale, Sylvan, and Carmichael, whose colonists also lost trees and the needed fruit crops for taxes and the family livelihoods. These events occurred during the depression years of the early 1930s, a period of hard luck, distress, and hopelessness which gripped the whole country. Many growers in our communities had depended on their orange and other orchard crops and now had to find jobs in Sacramento or in the rail yards at Roseville.

But the Fair Oaks community survived, as did most of the residents of the early San Juan area communities. Fair Oaks' growth picked up speed after the depression years, especially during World War II and the early 1940s when Mather Field revived and expanded and the late 1950s when Aerojet-General also became a major employer in the area.

The Carmichael Community

One of the last of the farmland communities was developed by Dan W. Carmichael. It had been a portion of the San Juan Grant which was mostly in the Mississippi Township and the first purchase of 2,000 acres by Carmichael became known as Carmichael Colony No. 1. That was in about 1909 or 1910. Then a final purchase about two years later of 1,000 acres had been a portion of the Rancho del Paso Grant. This piece became known as Carmichael Colony No. 2. If you are a resident of Carmichael, you may be living on part of the original Rancho del Paso Grant or in the San Juan Grant. Most present Carmichael residents only need to know that if they live west of Walnut Avenue, they are in the Rancho del Paso Grant; whereas, if they live east of Walnut Avenue in Carmichael, they are living in the area of the original San Juan Grant.

The first settlers were probably the Maidu Indians. Later there were Spanish explorers, then American trappers, and finally a number of squatters who, we suppose, thought the land of the early grants was open for settlement because there had been a question about the validity of the Mexican land grants. The Mexican land grants were later declared valid, so the squatters had to leave. In a history of early Carmichael, one of the early pioneers, Arch Macdonald, said there was a handful of settlers growing some kind of grain by dry-land farming, a method that depended solely on the winter rains for the needed moisture. This was around 1900. He also remembered that there may have been a been about eight buildings in the Carmichael area by 1908 and that there were about 25 people here. There had been several purchases north of the original Carmichael Colonies No. 1 and No. 2.

From our story of Fair Oaks, you may remember that there had been serious development east of San Juan Avenue as Fair Oaks and Orangevale started prior to 1900.

This colonization method of selling new land was fairly common after about 1880. People interested in farming had a choice of buying some of the original wide-open spaces of those days. House lots were usually sold only in established towns, but the lots sold by colonizers were usually 10 or more acres. The techniques used were usually the printed advertisements in various newspapers in the east and mid-west, telling people about the opportunities for a great living in the sunshine state of California. Many came to see for themselves. This was the technique used by Dan Carmichael. He had divided the Carmichael area into 10-acre parcels. It is said they sold rapidly but by 1917 the sales slowed. By 1927 there were about 300 families living in Carmichael. By 1930 the population rose to about 700 and a later estimate gave a population figure of nearly 2,000 for the year 1940.

Carmichael Colony became a community of small farms with the usual assortment of fruit and nut orchards, chicken houses, gardens, and where open land was still available, there were pastures and hay and alfalfa fields. Up to the later depression years of the 1930s people could subsist on these small home areas. Irrigation was necessary for orchards and gardens, so the early Carmichael residents formed the Carmichael Irrigation District. Pipe lines of various diameters were laid throughout the irrigation district. A pump house on the American River supplied the water and the pressure so faucets were a common need. As in the other communities, there was a community club, a farm bureau organization, and later a fire district and a park district. The road systems became graded, then macadam paving was used on the main thoroughfares. But early road grading with horse-drawn implements had first been used on many intended roads which, in many cases, remained rough and full of potholes and were seldom used, especially after the depression years when neither the community nor the county had money for roads. Although the one main road now known as Fair Oaks Boulevard had been paved in about 1918; the rest of the roads, including Marconi Avenue, remained dirt-and-gravel thoroughfares.

But Carmichael survived and started to prosper, especially after the 1940s when the depression years subsided with the war industries. The growth of Mather Field, McClellan Field, and the resulting general growth of the neighboring communities of Arden and Arcade to the west caused more jobs to be available throughout the area.



Photo 11 - Carmichael School in 1923

Carmichael, along with all the adjacent communities of the San Juan Union High School District, started a period of steady growth and development to become the semi-city metropolitan area of today.

We have previously mentioned that the Carmichael School was originally the San Juan Elementary School. That one-room building had been moved from near the present Winding Way and Dewey Drive to a one-acre site at Sutter and California Avenues in Carmichael proper. Dan Carmichael had made this site available to the community in return for renaming the school in his honor. So that established the first school in the Carmichael Colony. It was immediately found to be too small, so a bond

election was held and passed for the new two-room school which was built and occupied by 1917. As stated earlier, the old San Juan School building was later moved to a location on Fair Oaks Boulevard at Grant Avenue to become a grocery store and still later a church.

The Schools of Carmichael and Arden

The Carmichael School District shared borders with the Arcade District, with Walnut Avenue on the west and the Arden district on the east and south to Arden Way. The American River was the southern border up to where San Juan Avenue becomes the east side next to Fair Oaks and then the northern border was generally considered to be Coyle Avenue or where it would be if extended to San Juan Avenue. Carmichael did not extend north to Greenback Lane. The boundaries of the several other districts in Carmichael, including the park, fire and irrigation districts, and perhaps a lighting district, do not share a boundary with the original school district. By 1951 Carmichael School District had merged with the Arden School District to become the Arden-Carmichael Union School District until the time of unification in 1960 when all these community districts became the San Juan Unified School District.

After 1951 and the formation of the Arden-Carmichael School District, the following schools were built:

- Marvin Marshall School (1947)
- Greer School (1950)
- Mary A. Deterding School (1953)
- Garfield School (1953)
- Mariemont School (1953)
- Laurel Ruff School (1953)
- Herbert E. Winterstein School (1953)
- Eastern Avenue School (1954) (closed 1974; sold 1983)
- Cottage School (1954)
- Orville Wright School (1955) (closed 1981; sold 1984)
- Harry Dewey School (1956)
- Thomas A. Edison School (1956)
- Starr King School (1956)
- Starr King Exceptional School (renamed Ralph Richardson Center in 1990) (1956)
- John Barrett School (1957)
- Jonas Salk Intermediate (Middle) School (1959)
- Sierra Oaks School (1960)
- Thomas Kelly School (Feb. 1, 1960)
- Billy Mitchell School (1960)

Service Districts Within the Boundaries of the Original Eight Communities

The north area of Sacramento County, which includes the eight original colonies or community areas, has changed so much that many of the newer citizens who have moved into the areas of the San Juan Unified School District do not now know in which of the original communities their home is now located. Do they live in Arden or Arcade, Carmichael, or Fair Oaks? What were the road boundaries for the several communities?

To make matters more confusing, there were a number of other districts besides the school districts which have given long-term pride and service to these communities. These were other service districts, such as the fire districts, the irrigation districts, the recreation and park districts, and other special districts that had been established by the voters. Each of these districts was what one might call "one-shot governments." They had taxing power and boundaries and most of them developed a pride in the services they provided.

Through the years there were name changes and mergers, but most of them still operate today since neither the city of Sacramento nor the county of Sacramento has taken over these services. Some of the districts have merged with each other.

These districts all required finances to operate so all have had taxing authority as set by popular vote or whatever the laws forming the districts allowed. Some had per-acre costs so their taxes varied with the amount of land owned. We mention these non-school districts because they were in competition with the dollars needed for the schools. These districts were not areawide. They were separate governments and had the authority to ask the voters for funds and, when expanding their services, often needed additional voter approval for their work.

Early San Juan High School

Some early-day residents living in the Fair Oaks area remember the efforts to start a high school or to hold high school-level courses. Jim Green of Fair Oaks recalls a community club house building of two rooms, of which one room on the upper floor was used as a high school. It only lasted one term.

Another early Fair Oaks resident, a Mrs. Nicoletti, tells us that in 1902 there was a high-school course at the new school building, but it didn't last, and she says "it was not until 1914 that a high-school program was offered and known as the San Juan Union High School." She said that she was one of the charter members, along with Pro Overholtzer, Miss Muir, Miss Schroder, and Mr. Burnett. She further says that we had the old Fair Oaks school building, as the grade-school students now went to a large, new, temporary building. She says they were there for two years until the new high school was built on Greenback Lane east of Sylvan Road.

Mr. O. H. Close, a teacher and the first principal of San Juan High School, tells us some of the early history of the school. He said that around 1912 it became evident that a high school out in the farming country east of Sacramento was desperately needed. He assisted in the circulation of petitions for the organization of the San Juan High School District.

He remembers that in those days there were no paved roads and the students came on foot, on horseback, and/or in a buggy, along with a few automobiles. Some students came as far away as Shingle Springs; some lived in Folsom. One of the early considerations was that Fair Oaks and Orangevale had insufficient students to warrant a high school. So the county superintendent of schools, Mrs. Minnie O'Neil, drew up petitions and had them circulated in Fair Oaks, Orangevale, Roberts, Sylvan, and San Juan grammar school districts, asking that an election be held for the creation of a union high school district. It was legally formed and Mrs. O'Neil suggested that the school be named San Juan Union

High School, because it included most of the territory of the old original San Juan Spanish land grant. Mrs. O'Neil appointed the first board of directors: J. L. Patterson of Orangevale, Adolf Van Maren of Sylvan, C. D. Levering of Fair Oaks, J. F. Close of Orangevale, and W. Fetters of the San Juan Elementary District, later to become the Carmichael District.

By now, great changes had taken place concerning the original San Juan High School. Mr. Close said San Juan started with about 100 students. He recalls that the high school board moved rapidly and arranged to open the high school in 1913 using the grammar-school building in Fair Oaks. Apparently the grammar-school board built a temporary building for the elementary school in order that the newly organized high school might have all the space of the two-story, grammar-school building.

E. C. Overholzer was elected the next principal and served until April 1915 when he was seriously burned in a gasoline explosion. O. H. Close returned as principal and served until 1920, except for one year when he entered the Army during World War I.

The committee had considerable difficulty in selecting a permanent location for the school. Fair Oaks citizens naturally wanted to keep the high school in the Fair Oaks community, but the citizens of the Sylvan District and a real estate company contributed to the purchase of 10 acres of land on Greenback Lane and gave it to the high-school district. A vote of the district resulted in the school being located at its present site on Greenback Lane, east of Sylvan Road. Since the roads leading to the school at that time were not paved in the winter months, transportation to school for both teachers and students was extremely difficult.

A bond issue was voted and a \$350,000 contract was awarded for the construction of the high school. George Sell of Sacramento and Charles F. Dean were the architects. The building went up rapidly and was ready to be occupied in the latter part of September 1915.

Since there was no high school for Folsom until about 1923, a number of Folsom students came



Photo 13 - San Juan High School in 1924

to San Juan on a tuition basis. Mr. Close recalls that the young people of the area were very enthusiastic about the high school. Many had been out of grammar school for several years, and thus were older than the students in today's high schools.

Beginning in 1916, San Juan inaugurated one of the first agriculture courses in the state.

Because it was difficult for students to remain after school to practice sports due to the lack of transportation, football was slower to become established; basketball, however, was established by its second year, and there were both boys' and girls' basketball teams. Mr. Close also tells us that football was not played at San Juan until after 1920. He reminds us that very few rural high schools played football in the earlier years.

An interesting new feature at San Juan, however, was that the new school building had a motion picture booth. San Juan was one of the first high schools in the state to use motion pictures as part of its

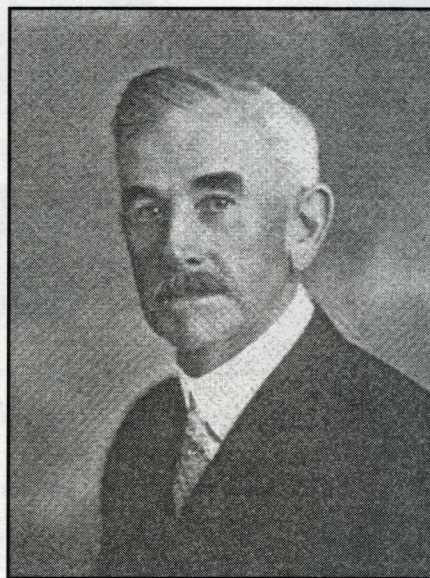


Photo 12 - Adolf Van Maren, appointed to the first board of directors of San Juan High School

educational program. A copy of the high school's course of study in 1920-21 can be seen in Appendix F. It would take a set of school-year encyclopedias, more than the excellent annuals, to inform you about the growth and progress of San Juan High School. The annual publication, *Greenback Notes*, has given

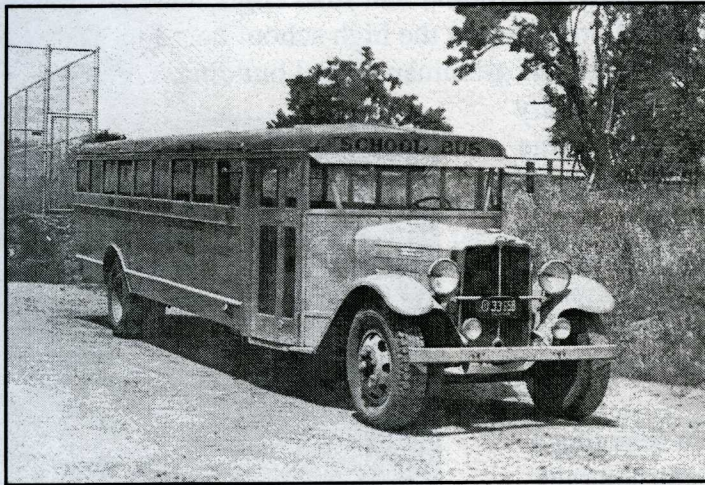


Photo 14 - San Juan Union High School bus, circa 1930s

us pictures of every senior graduating class from about 1918, with stories and items about the school, its athletic programs, its plays and programs, and the names of the students in each class and a class picture, so we have good information about the school and its students and teachers. The high school enrollment increased every year at a slow and steady pace and finally the high school provided transportation for its students.

The Years of Rapid Growth

After nearly 60 years from the beginnings of the eight elementary schools and the one high school, there developed a set of circumstances that led to the rapid growth of the original communities. This growth occurred primarily during and just after World War II. The dates would be approximately 1940 to 1960. Part of this growth period was sometimes called the "baby-boom years." It was statewide, indeed national, in scope.

After nearly 60 years from the beginnings of the eight elementary schools and the one high school, there developed a set of circumstances that led to the rapid growth of

For school districts, the years after 1946 were made up of endless growth problems. As the men came home from the wars, got married, and started families, the population of the elementary and high schools grew by leaps and bounds. Look at these figures of growth in students, then mentally calculate the number of school rooms needed, the number of additional teachers, the desks and supplies and everything else needed by school systems. The following figures show the growth in average daily attendance in numbers of students over these years:

<u>District</u>	<u>1938-39</u>	<u>1944-45</u>	<u>1949-50</u>	<u>1958-59</u>
Arcade	142	376	1,404	6,277
Arden	192	177	748	}A-C }Union—10,310
Carmichael	285	447	1,210	
Fair Oaks	220	236	548	1,351
Orangevale	110	197	240	2,415
Roberts	41	97	181	
Sylvan	304	417	820	2,661
San Juan H.S.	469	543	1,088	6,842
Area totals	1,763	2,490	6,239	29,856

Attendance figures on a page do not mean much until the figures are translated into needed teachers and classrooms and then into needed new school buildings and equipment.

Records show that by 1948-49 several elementary districts were using double sessions for primary students and then later, for a time, double-session classes involving all grades, kindergarten through eight. Double session meant that one room would have a full class in the morning with one teacher, and then after the noon-time dismissal, a new class and teacher arrived to occupy the classroom for the afternoon. Each of these class sessions had to last for at least the minimum time the state re-

quired for earning the ADA for each student day in school. These elementary school districts had a constant struggle with over-loaded classrooms and too many students too soon.

At some time or another, each of the elementary-school districts had to ask for voter approval for building money. It became so urgent that some districts had to ask voters to approve new bonds every year. A school district could, with voter approval, vote a bond issue up to a certain percent of the district's assessed valuation which was based on the total property values of the school district.

These building programs in almost all the districts, especially Arcade and Carmichael, became almost continuous during the decade from 1949-50 to 1959-60 as the counts of new houses under construction gave a firm indication of new students to come each year.

What Contributed to San Juan's Success?

The Early Communities and Their Citizens

The author believes there have been a number of factors which have contributed to the stability and success of San Juan Unified and its schools. Among the leading strong elements of the district through the years have been the citizens themselves. Think of the original farm communities. These acres of open land were bought by people who planned to farm. They knew they had to work. Their 10-or-more-acre farms most often were bare land or with oak trees and other impediments which required clearing. Farm work is hard work, especially with horses, and horses were the prime source of plow power and for clearing the land areas for crops and orchards.

This characteristic of self-sufficiency and farm improvement, when translated to education needs for the children of these farm families, indicated that school was needed if their hopes for themselves and their families could be realized.

Thus from the mutual endeavors, the first school structures were built by the same hands which built the houses and barns of the original pioneers. In those days there were no state or federal funds for school buildings. There was a small amount of money for teachers and books from county funds, but local money and effort were the major sources for the operation of the ongoing school programs. The most important agency in regard to the early schools in California and Sacramento County was the county board of education.

The County Board of Education

In the early days it was known that any group of people could band together and establish their own area school. The teacher might be the best educated among the citizens. Any building that provided shelter could be used. Wages, when paid, were by common consent. If the teacher was from outside the community, then the citizens may have also furnished room and board. The subjects taught were those that the teacher knew. There was no outside aid until the school area formed a district and made application to the county and became an official public school—if the county board of education approved.

Who were the members of this county board of education? They were usually appointed from a list of experienced teachers in the county. They had important and time-consuming duties in relation to all schools in the county. Among their responsibilities were the following:

1. They granted certificates to teach by type: primary, grammar grades, and kindergarten.
2. They held examinations for teacher licensing in many subjects.
3. They selected textbooks for use in all the schools.
4. They developed rules and regulations for all schools.

5. They prepared report cards for all students.
6. They held annual institutes which often were mandatory for all teachers.
7. Applicants for high school certificates in the 1890s had to pass the following required subjects:

Advanced algebra	Geometry, plane and solid
Trigonometry	Latin
Rhetoric and composition	Chemistry
English history	Physics
Ancient and modern history	

Most teachers taught more than one subject. You may know that there was only one high school in the early years, that being Sacramento High School. The county school board also prepared examinations for eighth-grade students who applied for a graduation diploma. Teachers in the various schools would prepare a list of students "who, in their judgment were ready." So these county examinations were known to be required for all grammar-grade students who wanted to officially graduate. In those early days, graduation from grammar school was one of the highest educational goals available in the rural communities where there was no high school available.

As you now know, school could be started by local citizens and could operate often successfully with their own citizens as school-board members. But if they looked forward to having an official, county-known and -sanctioned school, its course of study and its teachers had to meet the standards set by the county board of education.

A bit of early history tells us that there were 71 school districts in Sacramento County by 1890. Five of these early elementary school districts were to become part of San Juan Unified in 1960 seventy years later. They were Arcade, Roberts which unionized with Orangevale; Sylvan, Fair Oaks, and San Juan Elementary which later became Carmichael which unionized with Arden. (See Appendix B.)

The Schools of the Component Districts

By unification in 1960 new schools had been and were being built by the districts as follows: The schools under construction needed additional rooms as soon as the first portion of a new building was completed. Some school buildings took up to ten years to complete, with several contracts let to build the additional classrooms. Fifty-one new schools were built in the area from 1949-50 to 1959-60:

For Arcade District:

James R. Cowan (1959)
 Creekside (1953)
 Del Paso Manor (1950)
 Dyer-Kelly (1949)
 Howe Avenue (1951)
 Kenneth Avenue (1959)
 Marconi Avenue (1953)
 Mission Avenue (1957)
 Orange Grove (1956)
 Pasadena Avenue (1960)
 Pope Avenue (1952)
 Whitney Avenue (1955)
 Wyda Way (1957)

For Arden-Carmichael District:

John Barrett (1957)
 Cottage (1954)
 Mary A. Deterding (1953)
 Harry Dewey (1956)
 Eastern Avenue (1954)
 Edison (1956)
 Garfield (1953)
 Greer (1950)
 Thomas Kelly (1960)
 Mariemont (1953)
 Marvin Marshall (1949)
 Billy Mitchell (1960)
 Laurel Ruff/Hemlock (1953, relocated in 1963)

For Fair Oaks District:

John Holst (1953)
Earl LeGette (1958)

For Orangevale Union District:

Central (1957, now Thomas Coleman)
Green Oaks (1960)
Northridge (1958)
Oakview (1959)
Palisades (1959)
Roberts (1883, rebuilt 1923 & 1953)
Twin Lakes (1956; rebuilt 1989)

For San Juan Union High School District:

El Camino (1950)
Encina (1958)
La Sierra (1955)

For Arden-Carmichael District (Cont.):

Jonas Salk (1959)
Sierra Oaks (1960)
Starr King (1956)
Starr King Exceptional (1956, now Richardson Center)
Herbert Winterstein (1953)
Orville Wright (1955)

For Sylvan District:

Arlington Heights (1958)
Citrus Heights (1958)
Grand Oaks (1959)
Leighton Littlejohn (1957)
Mariposa Avenue (1949)
Oak Avenue (1952, now Sunrise)
Skycrest (1959)

There were 51 new schools built during this 10-year period. It took the effort and energy of the respective districts' school-board members and their administrations to make all this construction happen. This involved school-bond elections and in most instances special applications for special state aid and, in some cases, federal assistance. The school boards of the six districts and their administrative staffs had a lot of experience with growth and school construction. In addition, each district had to employ architectural firms in the planning of these schools. Each school required at least one or more contractors and their staffs. Each new school building required a new school site, generally 10 acres for an elementary school site, 20 acres for a middle school site, and 40 acres for a high school site. (See Appendix G for a historical summary of the facilities, including site size and cost, year built, cost, funding, and architect.) Sometimes the home builders had used up available open land sites and so the hoped-for acreage could not be acquired. Fortunately most district schools have sites of adequate size.

Who paid for all these school sites and schools as the years passed and the growth didn't slow down? It would be easy to say, "You did." But actually several agencies became involved. First, citizens in every one of the districts had to vote for bonds to the maximum allowed. This was usually five percent of the assessed valuation of each educational level—five percent for elementary districts and five percent for the high school district. Since the county of Sacramento, through the office of the assessor, each year computed from the tax rolls the assessed value of the property and lands in each district, the school district could bond the increase plus the amount paid off in existing bond issues. This provided some of the money.

There was fast growth of each community during these years and, after much effort, the communities were able to get the state legislature to provide some funds for emergency growth problems. The growth problems and overcrowding in the San Juan district were not unique to San Juan but were a statewide problem.

It took a lot of explaining by school boards and their school administrators to pass the necessary bond elections, state aid borrowing elections, and other applications for federal aid and wherever else money might be available. The overall building programs in the school districts which became San Juan Unified were among the largest in the state.

How were all these bond issues passed? All these state-aid borrowing programs approved? It

was the dedication of the elected school boards and the voters of the individual school districts and the administrators and staffs of the schools themselves. The school people were the ones who greeted the new students and their parents each year and who had to explain the reasons for the overcrowded schools, the need for new classrooms, and in some cases, the need for a whole new school. In spite of the difficulties, the message got across and the citizens rose to the occasion and voted for the bonds and the state-aid programs for borrowing, and sent the message to the legislature. The schools were built, the double sessions ended, the transportation problems improved, and the food services developed as needed with all these programs and their problems, culminating in the unusually fine school system that developed. The communities deserve the credit.

Growth in Average Daily Attendance

Growth in average daily attendance for the component districts of San Juan Unified, 1940-1960

<u>District</u>	<u>1940-41</u>	<u>1951-52</u>	<u>1958-59</u>	
Arcade	210	2,475	6,277	
Arden }	153 }	3,418	10,310	
Carmichael }	346 }			
Fair Oaks	216	692	1,351	
Orangevale	105	618	2,415	
Roberts	46	—	—	
Sylvan	328	1,050	2,661	
San Juan High	544	1,591	6,842	<u>1960-61</u>
Total Students	1,948	9,844	29,856	37,736

So in the years 1940-41 to 1951-52, the component districts increased by 7,896 students and during the next period of 1951-52 to the year of unification in 1960, the San Juan area schools increased from 9,844 in 1951-52 to 29,856 in 1958-59, a growth of 20,012 students. Two years later and after unification, the district had grown to 37,736 in ADA. This was a growth in three years of 7,880 students by 1960-61. So the growth over the 1940 to 1960 period was 35,788 students in average daily attendance (ADA).

Many people do not know that the average daily attendance figures are not the same as actual enrollment, that is, all the students enrolled in the total school system. ADA includes only those students present on the day that the count was made. Enrollment is always higher than attendance because of student absences due to medical appointments, illnesses and the like. So the ADA figure could be five percent less than the actual enrollment. Thus our total figures given above should be increased by about five percent, and space, including desks and teachers, was needed for about 39,623 students.

UNIFICATION: HOW IT OCCURRED AND THE FIRST YEARS

So far our story might indicate that unification occurred naturally and normally, but that was not the case. There was great pride in the independent school systems developed by each of our communities.

Part of the fear of the general proposal for unification, which was suggested at various times during the great growth period of the 1950s decade, was the loss of control by the local elementary