

Thalberg School and Thalberg North School History (1907-1971) ²¹⁰²¹³

Thalberg School District # 1411 was officially formed on April 2, 1907 by By-Law No. 5 of St. Clements. The first Thalberg school was on 10 acres of land located on the south-east corner of the north-east quarter of section 19-16-8E.

Thalberg School served students from the North Thalberg area, the South Thalberg area, the Gull Lake area and areas a bit further.

The original school was a log building with boards for siding.



Original Thalberg School #1411 serving North Thalberg, South Thalberg & Gull Lake areas. Built 1907. Closed 1914. Located on 19-16-8E (½ mile south of Luthern Church).

In that first year there were 37 pupils with an average daily attendance of 22. In 1908 there were about 45 pupils. The numbers of pupils rose gradually until by mid-1917 there were 81 pupils registered with an average daily attendance of 52. In the fall of 1917, there were two teachers instead of only one the previous year.

There were no roads in a lot of the area. The children, as young as 6 years old, walked to school through winding bush trails. Some children walked from as far away as 3 miles. Wolves, coyotes and bears were always a threat to their safety.

The language barrier was also a big issue at the time. Many of the young children that attended school were not able to speak English. Times were tough for the new families that had just come to Canada and attendance at school was not regular. The children were pulled out of school by the parents whenever they

were needed for planting crops, harvesting and other critical chores. Immediate survival of the family for these early settlers was more important than education at the time.

The school was used from 1907 until a new one room school was built in 1914. After the school was built in 1914, one of the teachers lived in the old log school.

A second classroom was added in 1918. With the building of the second classroom in 1918, the school could now accommodate two classes and two teachers. One classroom had grades 1 and 2, while the other had grades 3 to 6.



Thalberg School #1411 showing the second room that was added in 1918 to the 1914 single room school. Located on 19-16-8E (½ mile south of the Luthern Church).

There was a wood heater in the middle of each classroom to provide heat. The floors were made of wood that were regularly oiled once a month. Although there was a strong oil smell, this helped with cleaning and maintenance.

Coal oil lamps were used in the school for lighting. The school had large windows on the east side to allow plenty of daylight into the classroom during the day.

The teachers in the early years did not use a strap for discipline. They would use a ruler or a willow switch obtained from outside the school.

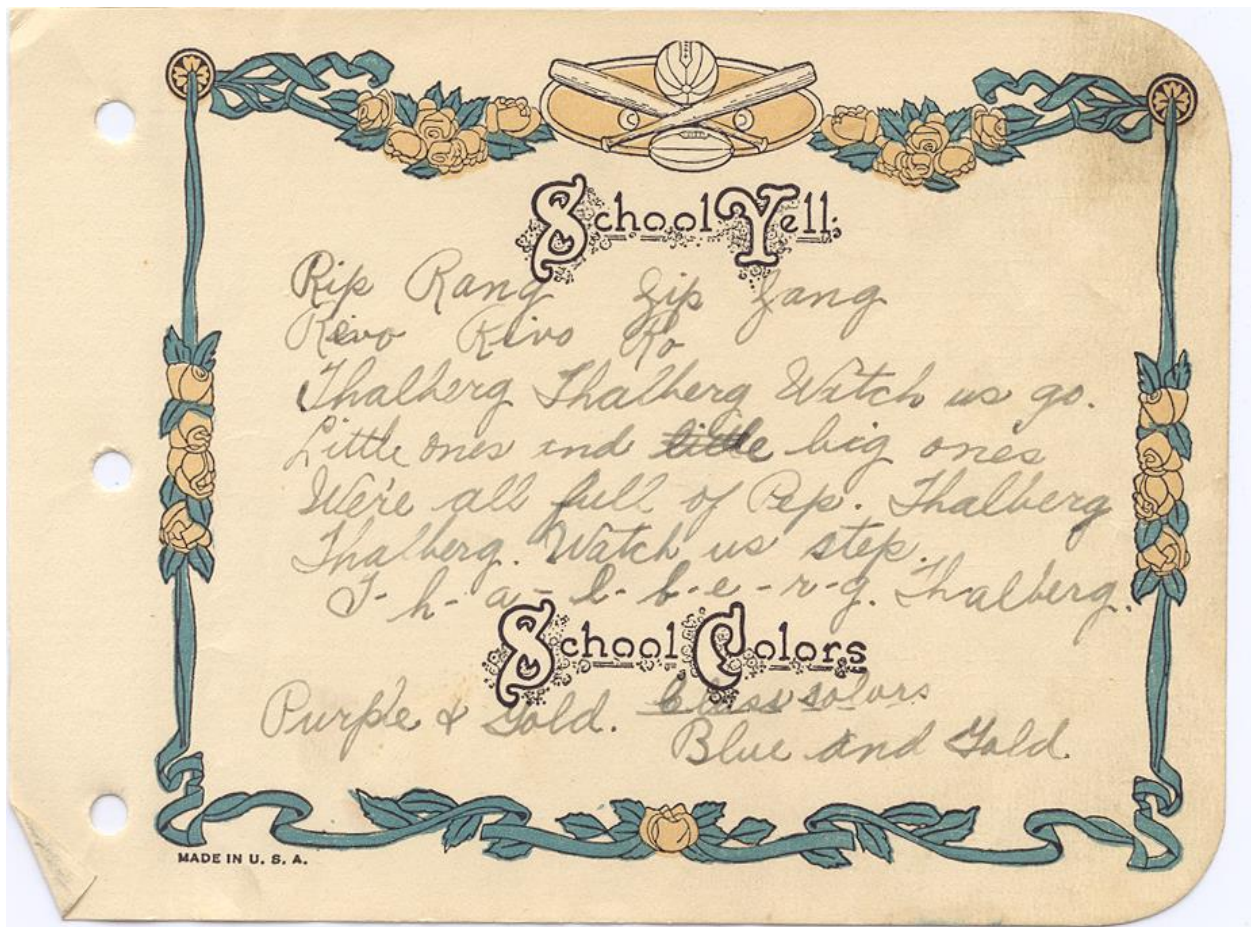
Chores at school would include splitting wood, carrying wood or water into the school, and cleaning the floors.

The school inspector would come out once a year by horse and buggy from Beausejour to review the progress of the students and to interview the teacher.

A teacherage was built around 1918. Often two teachers would live in the small teacherage.

School classes were held at night during 1919 and 1920 because there were too many students to have them all attend during the day. Another reason may have been that some kids were needed to work during the day at home. The people asked that night school be discontinued after 1920.

The following is the School Yell from the 1920's or 1930's that was used during baseball and other sports when playing against competing schools. Especially during field day sports.



Picture of the school yell that was written in an autograph book in the 1930's

School yell

Rip ram, zip zam, reever, ryever, row
Thalberg, Thalberg, watch us go.
Little ones and big ones,
We're all full of pep.
Thalberg, Thalberg, watch us step.
T-H-A-L-B-E-R-G.
Thalberg.

Second yell

Hicka hacka, micka macka, hola gala zoo.
Rip saw, buck saw, hacka tacka too.
Nothing to it, we can do it, bravest in a fray
Thalberg Ever Readies, hip hip horray!

The two-room school at Thalberg continued to be used until it burned down in the early summer of 1935. At the time preparations were being made to put a new floor in the school during the summer. It is not known how the fire started, but many rumors persisted.

In the fall of 1935, school was temporarily held at two separate locations. Each temporary location handled approximately half of the Thalberg School Division catchment area. Grades 1 to 8 were taught by one teacher in a building on the Fred Otto yard. The inside walls were removed to accommodate a class of students. The other class (also grades 1 to 8) was taught by the other teacher in a building (formerly the house of William Patzer) that was moved onto the Lutheran Church grounds.

In 1936, three separate one-room schools were built to replace the old Thalberg two-room school. Thalberg South kept the number 1411 of the original Thalberg School and was built on NW 8-16-8. Gull Lake was given the number 2269 and was built on the north part of 25-16-7. Thalberg North was given the number 2270 and was built on SE 29-16-8. The Thalberg North School District was formed on June 19, 1936 by order-in-council No. 711/36 (District No. 2270).

In the autumn of 1936, school started in these three locations.



Thalberg North School #2270 single room school built 1936 to replace the school that burned down. Located on a different property from the original school. One mile east of the Luthern Church (29-16-8E). At this time, South Thalberg and Gull Lake Schools were also built. This picture was taken in the school year 1946-47.



Picture of two boys with wood for the school wood furnace

The first teacher that taught in the new school in 1936 made the following comments for the Thalberg North school reunion 65 years later:

“My first impressions of Thalberg, the first night while I tried sleeping on Hlady’s chesterfield? I was kept awake by the howling of coyotes - a sound I’d never heard before. I grew up and had my schooling in Brandon - attended Brandon Normal School - a Second Class Normal, which one could attend after completing Grade XI - which I did. This made me a very young teacher. I turned 18 in early April and found myself facing 63 students ranging in age from 6 to 14 years. I had not even been in a rural school. It would be difficult for anyone today to even imagine the situation. In the 3 years I spent in North Thalberg School I averaged 59 students. I must admit to chaotic conditions for a few months but come New Year - things settled down. I became more organized and so did the teaching of the multiple grades. I used the older students to help the younger ones while I worked through other various grades. This enabled me to set up a timetable which worked most of the time. One very important aspect of those 3 years was the learning process that I went through. The three years gave me an education I could not have received at the University of Manitoba - even though I attended summer school regularly working towards an Arts degree. Handling the various age levels gave me the experience needed to deal with each and any grade separately.”

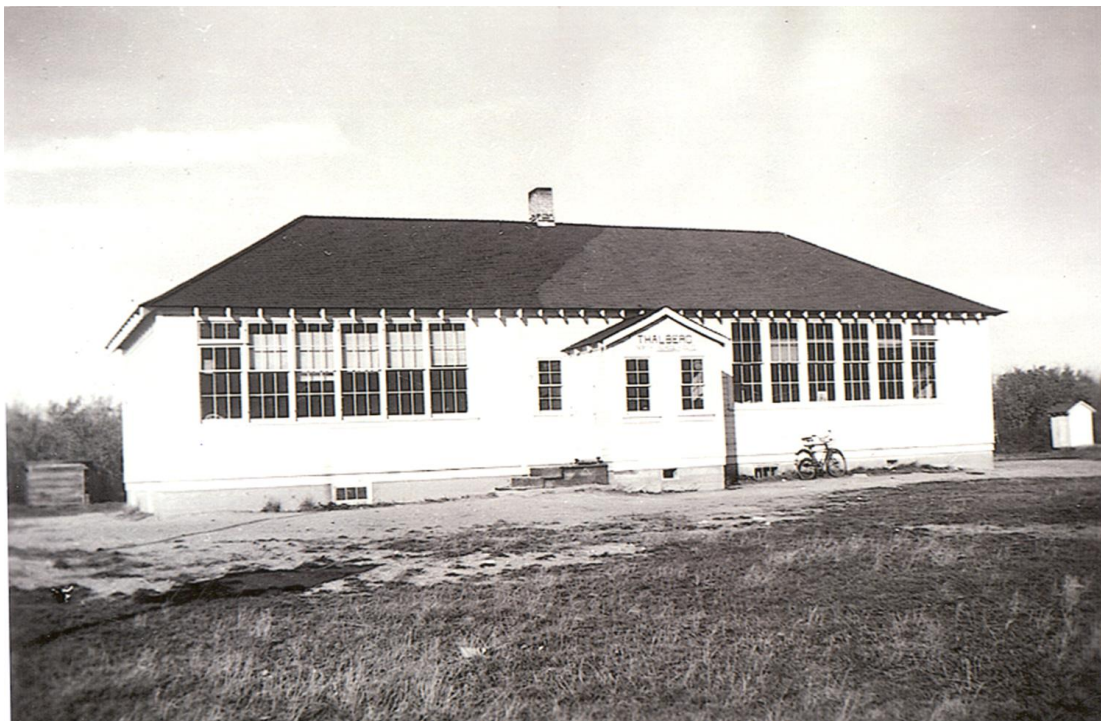
That first teacher of the new school walked a mile and a half to school from the original teacherage.

A new teacherage was eventually built on the Thalberg North property around 1940.



Teacherage built in 1940 at Thalberg North School #2270. This picture was taken during the 1946-47 school year. Notice the pile of firewood behind the teacher that was used for heating the school as well as the teacherage.

In 1947, a second classroom was added to the Thalberg North School. This new classroom was used as a high school. The high school initially included grades 7 to 11. Grades 1 to 6 were in the original elementary classroom.



Thalberg North School #2270 shown with the 1947 high school addition on the left. Notice the new shingles on the roof on the left half of the building.

The heating system consisted of a wood furnace in the basement with a large grate in the floor to let the heat up to the classroom. Wood for the furnace was cut and hauled from the school section. The school section was the 160 acre parcel of land that the school was situated on. Most of the school section had large trees on it except for the school yard. Long lengths of wood were hauled to the school yard and cut into shorter pieces that would be thrown through the basement window at the rear of the school. The furnace was in the basement of the school near the basement window. The furnace was filled with wood early in the morning so that the school would be warm when the students arrived at school.

The east side of the school had large windows to provide plenty of daylight into the classroom. Blinds installed over each window could be pulled down to keep out the sun on hot summer days. There was a large wooden pole with a brass hook on the end used to reach to the top of the high windows to pull the blinds down and to open the upper windows. The upper part of the windows as well as the lower part of the windows could be opened to provide a breeze on hot summer days.

The school had electricity. Six chain suspended white glass globe fixtures provided lighting in the classrooms. There were no indoor bathrooms or running water. Instead, there were two outhouses, one for the boys and one for the girls (two seaters) located in opposite corners of the school yard.

The school library consisted of some books in a cupboard and shelves. Teachers prepared lessons and worksheets on shelves at the back of the room using the purple jelly pads that made one copy at a time. Notes and tests were written on the board by the teacher. In the high school, students often took turns writing pages and pages of notes on the blackboard for others to copy. Families had to buy workbooks in many subject areas.

The central part of the school contained the entrance area and a separate coatroom for each classroom. There were hooks along the wall for clothes and a shelf for lunch boxes. On a table in each coat room, there was a large crock with a tap at the bottom for drinking water. The water crock was filled daily by someone carrying pails of water from the well outside. There was also a washbasin on a small table in the coatroom with a pail below for emptying the washbasin. A mirror hung on the wall above the table.

There was an ABC chart over the blackboard, a map or two on the wall and a globe to show that the world was round.

Each day, one of the students would have to take the flag and raise it up the flag pole in the morning. At the end of the day, the flag had to be taken down. A different student was assigned this task each day.

Some students walked up to 3 miles, sometimes through rain, blowing snow, snow covered roads and muddy roads. In winter darkness fell before some of the students reached home.

A family living close to the school usually served as janitors for cleaning, sweeping the oiled wood floors and filling the water fountain daily. Double desks sat in neat rows, with inkwells in the middle of each desktop. The textbooks that the families bought, often secondhand from the neighbours, were kept inside the desks.

The entire school yard was well-used. The school yard had a football/soccer field, baseball diamond, volleyball courts, sand pits for track and field practice, a kick-the-can area by the northeast shrubs, cricket posts set up in the spring and areas used for skipping games, hopscotch or hide-and-seek. An area in the northwest corner would be flooded to create a rink for hockey games and free skating in the winter.



Log house built by boys during noon hours.

The log house that the boys built in the bush was for boys only. If the girls wanted to go there, they had to bring some sort of sticks with them.

A teacher that taught at Thalberg North School for a year beginning in September, 1950 said there were about 39 students in her Grade 1 to 6 class. A second room, for Grades 7 to 11, was taught by different teacher, who was also the principal. She said she was teaching on a special permit granted by the Manitoba Department of Education after graduating from Grade 12 and completing a 6 week summer course at the Normal School in Winnipeg. Her salary was \$1200 for the year. The following year she attended the one year teacher training course required for a permanent certificate, and went on to a 41 year career in education. She also said that in the spring or early summer they made a field trip to Winnipeg. The principal and she took all his class and the older students from her class to visit Assiniboine Park, the Free Press building, and Canada Packers. They traveled in a truck, with the principal driving and the children sitting on benches in the back.

A school inspector would make regular visits to the school. He would always ask the students questions to determine their progress. The younger students would all have to read from a book to the inspector. He had them all standing side by side against a wall and they would take their turn reading. After his assessment of the students in the school, the students would have an extended recess as the inspector interviewed the teacher.

During the year 1958-59, it appears that the number of high school students was increasing and it was necessary to move Grades 7 and 8 into the elementary classroom. This resulted in Grades 1 to 8 being in the elementary classroom and Grades 9 to 12 in the high school classroom.

During the year 1959-60, there was a sufficient number of high school students to allow for two high school teachers during the year. A classroom building was built at the north-east corner of the school yard. This classroom building was used as a second high school room. Grades 1 to 8 remained in the elementary classroom.

For the school year 1960-61, the number of elementary students registered increased to 40 students. The elementary students were split into two classes and two elementary teachers were hired. The separate classroom building was then used as a second elementary room for Grades 1 to 4. At this time, Grades 5 to 8 remained in the elementary classroom in the main school building and the Grade 9 to 12 high school students were in the second classroom of the main building.

The high school continued in operation until June of 1961 when it was closed permanently. After that time, the students attending high school were bussed to Beausejour. Grades 1 to 8 were then housed in the elementary classroom of the main school for the school year 1961-62. The high school classroom in the main building was not used.

The separate classroom building was converted into a teacher's residence in 1963.

The elementary school continued to operate with Grades 1 to 8 in the one classroom until 1966. In 1966, Thalberg South and Gull Lake schools were closed. The students from those schools were bussed to Thalberg North school. Two classrooms were needed in Thalberg North to serve what had been the three school districts. The two classrooms were the old high school classroom and the original elementary classroom in the main school.

On Jan. 1, 1968 the small school districts were dissolved. They were now a part of the Agassiz School Division. Agassiz School Division continued to operate the school at Thalberg North.

A third classroom was moved onto the site and used from 1968 to 1970.

In June of 1971 the Agassiz School Division closed the school permanently. All students were then bussed to Beausejour.

Teachers (list of teachers was taken from various sources and may not be entirely accurate):

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Teachers</u>
	The Thalberg School District was formed on April 2, 1907 by By-law No. 5 of St. Clements (District No. 1411)
1907-1908	Nora S. Furst
1908-1909	Felix Sauer
1909-1910	Felix Sauer
1910-1911	Felix Sauer
1911-1912	Karl Karger
1912-1913	Gustave Pfaff
1913-1914	Gustave Pfaff
1914-1915	Gustave Pfaff
1915-1916	Bertha M. Nauer
1916-1917	Bertha M. Nauer
1917-1918	Helen G. Macleod (1-2), Elizabeth M. McCurdy (3-4)
1918-1919	Helen G. Macleod (1-2), Martha Della Crowe (3-4)
1919-1920	Helen G. Macleod (1-2), Martha Della Crowe (3-7), Marjorie Casey (3-6) night school
1920-1921	N. Jean Carey (1-2), Ethel Chevard (3-6) Fall 1920, Kathleen Griffin (3-7) Spring 1921
1921-1922	Sophie Adamik (1-2), Kathleen Griffin (3-7)
1922-1923	Mary M. Gardiner (1-2), Mary Milovitch (3-7)
1923-1924	Mary M. Gardiner (1-2), Mary Milovitch (3-7)
1924-1925	Hazel Dahlgren (1-2), Marguerite Breland (3-6)
1925-1926	Eva Schwartz (1-2), Annie Wedro (3-6)
1926-1927	Winnifred I. Borley (1-2), May Jessie Borley (3-5)

1927-1928	Winnifred I. Borley (1-2), May Jessie Borley (3-5)
1928-1929	Ethel M. Hicks (1-2), Inez M. Boddy (3-7)
1929-1930	Helen Margaret Stewart (1-2), Marjorie Sutton (3-8)
1930-1931	Helen Margaret Stewart (1-2), Marjorie Sutton (3-8)
1931-1932	Ruth Joy Davies (1-2), Ella Alma Klass (3-8)
1932-1933	Ruth Joy Davies (1-2), Ella Alma Klass (3-8)
1933-1934	Ruth Joy Davies (1-3), Ella Alma Klass (4-8)
1934-1935	Ruth Joy Davies (1-3), Ella Alma Klass (4-8)
1935-1936	Ruth Joy Davies (1-8), Ella Alma Klass (1-8)
	The Thalberg North School District was formed on June 19, 1936 by order-in-council No. 711/36 (District No. 2270)
1936-1937	Mary Kathleen Waychok
1937-1938	Mary Kathleen Waychok
1938-1939	Mary Kathleen Waychok
1939-1940	Walter C. Malenchak
1940-1941	Walter C. Malenchak
1941-1942	Anthony A. Allegaert
1942-1943	Peter David Tymchuk (Fall 1942), L. R. Rogozinski (Spring 1943)
1943-1944	Jennie Eugenia Senicie
1944-1945	Jennie Eugenia Senicie
1945-1946	Jennie Eugenia Senicie
1946-1947	Eldora Ann Reicksiedler
1947-1948	Doris Vivian McJohnston (grades 1-6, Fall 1947), Evan Nelson Stitt (grades 7-11, Nov 1947), Isaac Froese (grades 1-6, Spring 1948)
1948-1949	Orest Laurent Shewchuk (grades 7-11), Catherine Lesosky (grades 1-6, Fall 1948), Kenneth Conrad Norell (grades 1-6, Spring 1949)
1949-1950	William Ferens (grades 7-11), Herbert Fransen (grades 1-6)
1950-1951	William Ferens (grades 7-11), Catherine Lesosky (grades 1-6)

1951-1952	William Ferens (grades 7-11), Gloria Kuhn (grades 1-6)
1952-1953	William Ferens (grades 7-11), Tiena Victoria Warkentin (grades 1-6)
1953-1954	William Ferens (grades 7-11), Tiena Victoria Warkentin (grades 1-6)
1954-1955	William Ferens (grades 7-11), Catherine Lesosky (grades 1-6) Fall 1954, Verla M. Lewis (grades 1-6) Spring 1955
1955-1956	Sonia Pauline M. Podolsky (grades 1-6), John Morris Stokotelnny (grades 7-11)
1956-1957	Harry Shafransky (grades 7-11), Laura Johanna Thorarinson (grades 1-6)
1957-1958	Jeanette I. E. Lacey (grades 1-6), Harry Shafransky (grades 7-10)
1958-1959	Jeanette I. E. Lacey (grades 1-8), Harry Shafransky (grades 9-12)
1959-1960	Julia M. Thorarinson (grades 1-8), Walter Krivda (9-10), Peter Tkachyk (11)
1960-1961	Verna Nettie Funk (grades 1-4), Margaret Klassen (grades 5-8), Peter Tkachyk (9-12)
1961-1962	Adolph Richard Rattai (grades 1-8)
1962-1963	Adolph Richard Rattai (grades 1-8)
1963-1964	Henry Warkentin (grades 1-8)
1964-1965	Dennis Paul Kozak (grades 1-8)
1965-1966	Dennis Paul Kozak (grades 1-8)
1966-1967	Dennis Paul Kozak (grades 5-8), Ed. L. Patzer (grades 1-4)
1967-1968	Arlene Spence (grades 1-3) Fall 1967, Audrey Gunning (1-3) Spring 1969, Margaret Ann Stubel (grades 4-6)
1968-1969	Catherine Lesosky (grades 3-4), Theresa Ann Lesosky (grades 1-2), Margaret Ann Stubel (grades 5-6),
1969-1970	Catherine Lesosky (grades 3-4), Theresa Ann Lesosky (grades 1-2), Margaret Ann Stubel (grades 5-6)
1970-1971	Mary Goritz (grades 1-3), Catherine Lesosky (grades 4-6)

Principals

<u>School</u>	<u>Principal</u>
<u>Year</u>	(for the Thalberg North School #2270 only) For the years where there was more than one teacher at the school, one of the teachers was the Principal.
1947-1948	Evan Nelson Stitt
1948-1949	Orest Laurent Shewchuk
1949-1955	William Ferens
1955-1956	John Morris Stokotelny (1925-1972)
1956-1959	Harry Shafransky (1930-1986)
1959-1960	<i>none</i>
1960-1961	Margaret Klassen
1961-1966	<i>none</i>
1966-1967	Dennis Paul Kozak
1967-1968	Margaret Ann Stubel
1968-1971	Catherine Lesosky