



2012 Jamboree being held in honor of Washington Grade School

Vernonia was incorporated in 1891, but there was already a school here. Before there was a school, though, there was a district. School District #12, which later became the current District #47J, was started October 27, 1875. Fern Hill School was then built on land donated by Clark Parker, one of the early settlers. They started the building on November 8, 1876. It stood near Mist Dr. and 10th St. (10th St. no longer exists). It was the first public building in Vernonia. The 12 children went to school for three months and the first term was taught by Ozias Cherrington.

A new town school (name unknown) was built on State Ave. near the junction with Stoney Pt. Road in 1893. By then the students attended for 'almost 5 months'. The second town school (name unknown) was built in 1913. The first high school, Vernonia Union High School was built on A St. and opened on November 17, 1922. It cost \$30,000 to build.

By 1925, when the Oregon-American Mill was open and had caused an increase in population, there were 410 grade school students and 134 high school students. As a result, Lincoln Grade School was built on Bridge St. It still exists but is now owned by a

private individual. In 1913, a new multi-room town school was built on Bridge St., the first Washington Grade School. It had one room for elementary students and one room for high school students. A playshed and additional classrooms were added later.

On May 2, 1930, bids were sought for removal of that first Washington Grade School as construction of the new Washington Grade School was set to begin sometime in the following week or two. The *Vernonia Eagle* announced on May 9, 1930, that "Excavation on foundation of east wing on new Washington Grade School has been started by David Aim, Portland Contractor, who was the successful bidder to construct Vernonia's new \$75,000 grade school." By August 15, 1930, construction was nearing completion and the classrooms were expected to be finished September 1. By August 29, 1930, the *Eagle* was reporting, "Despite rumors to the contrary, the grade school will start October 15 as scheduled...while the gymnasium will not be completed and a few finishing touches will remain to be done." The gymnasium and the rest added another \$15,000 to the bill.

The school was in use by the time the *Ea-*

gle printed their September 19, 1930 issue, which included the architect's drawing used on the front page of this Jamboree issue.

New Washington Grade School saw 81 years of students before closing for good at the end of the 2011-2012 school year. That school will be demolished this year and the new school building will house all students, kindergarten through high school.

Washington Grade School's beauty and longevity are the reason this year's Jamboree has been named "in honor of Washington Grade School".

By the next Jamboree, the new school will have seen it's first year of operation and all three of the existing schools; Washington Grade School, Vernonia Middle School, and Vernonia High School, will have been torn down. Only the playshed will remain on the site, which will be made into a large park with soccer fields, baseball fields, and other amenities.

This year is the 56th time Vernonia has put on a Jamboree and invited the whole world to come enjoy the event. We hope you enjoy Jamboree and come back for the 57th Vernonia Friendship Jamboree and Logging Show to see old friends and meet new ones.