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ACKERMANS GIVE OLD BELL PART OF SCHOOL'S HISTORY

One of the lost sounds of yester-year is the ringing of a school bell hastening youngsters to class. In today's living children are hustled off to school by a glance at a kitchen clock, mothers' voices saying "Hurry up, you'll be late to school," or a radio announcer intoning.

Many of today's students in Glen Rock have never heard a school bell. Many of their parents have however and the bell they heard is still in Glen Rock and earlier this year was returned to the school system.

Now on display in the hallway of Central School on Maple Avenue is the school bell which for 40 years hung in the tower of School No. One, forerunner to the present Central School.

"The old wooden building" as School No. One was often called after the advent of Central School, was located on the present parking site of Central School. It was built in 1899 and the classes occupying the original one-room schoolhouse on the corner of Ackerman Avenue and Rock Road were moved to the "new" school in March, 1900.

The bell for the school was purchased by the Board of Education from the Clinton H. Meneely Bell Company of Troy, N. Y.

It was rung to call the children to school in the morning and then again to go into the school. It was rung at lunchtime when it was time for the youngsters to start back to school and again to go into the school. During the morning and afternoon when school let out for recess, the sound of the bell brought it to an end and the students filed back into the school.

On occasions when the weather was too bad to hold school, which were rare indeed according to one long-time resident, the bell tolled earlier than its usual morning time.

The bell was not used as a fire bell and was only rung for school purposes except when local boys gained entrance, as they had a way of doing, and the bell chimed at "unusual" hours. When this happened all the men in the neighborhood race to the school but the boys always managed to get away.

The sound of the bell was a part of daily life to those in Glen Rock from 1900 to 1925 when Central School was completed. The wooden building, long considered a fire-trap, was replaced by the 10-room original portion of Central School. But then, as now, the school problem was pressing and before long the wooden structure was

back in full swing and both School No. One and Central were at capacity use until the completion of the Junior High School in 1939.

When the wooden structure was demolished in 1940 the bell was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Harrison K. Ackerman Jr. Mrs. Ackerman was the owner of an impressive collection of bells and this bell was a prized addition to her collection. The bell was embedded on an outdoor fireplace in their yard until last fall when they moved to Wyckoff. The Ackermans donated the bell to Central School as an historical memento.

The bell, along with a brief historical note on its history, is mounted on a stand and can be seen in the school's hall.