

Oral History Excerpted Transcript of Ichabod Crane Schoolhouse Alumni

*Interviewee: Tom Peduzzi*

*Interviewer: Sharon Palmer*

*Interview recorded at Ichabod Crane Schoolhouse June 9, 1986*

(“T” represents Tom, “S” represents Sharon)

Tom attended school at the Ichabod Crane Schoolhouse (then also known as (“the white schoolhouse”) from 1925-1928.

**T:** We lived up the hill[about a half mile] on Fisher Road. At that time there was no name on it, just an old dirt road.

**S:** You walked from your house down Fisher Rd. to the school where it used to stand, where Fisher Rd. comes into Route 9H. Was it all dirt roads at the time?

**T:** Oh yes.

**S:** Do you remember the color of the schoolhouse?

**T:** White. We called it the white schoolhouse.

**S:** Was it the same name, did you call it Ichabod Crane School?

**T:** Ichabod Crane Schoolhouse or the white schoolhouse, it was known more as the white schoolhouse...the inside was always painted once a year about two weeks before school. It was usually the color blue.

**S:** The walls inside?

**T:** They'd have different shades of blue. One year the teacher didn't like it all. She said, “Oh, what a horrid blue!”...I can remember the blue and I can remember what she said, just as if it was yesterday, “What a horrid blue!” ...She was not very easy anyway. She was very, very strict...if you got out of line, she'd use those switches. She'd make us cut these switches about 5'- 6'

long from the willow trees. She'd keep them right in this corner, behind her desk, there'd be a pile of maybe 8 or 10 of them and she'd use them—oh yes.

Sometimes we'd get to fooling around, you know, and the first thing you know she'd spot you and get that whip. You didn't dare tell your folks when you got home because you'd get another whipping! It wasn't like the teacher was mean or anything like that.

**S:** So the parents backed up everything the teacher did?

**T:** Oh yes, they backed her up, one hundred percent.

**S:** She and her husband lived on McCagg Road?

**T:** Yes. He'd drive her to school in the horse and buggy. Drop her off and go back. And they had a car, a Model T Ford, and they used it a few times. But one day it broke down

and they couldn't start it and she was late. So he had to bring her to school in the horse and buggy and she made the remark that the car will never replace the horse and buggy. They were not dependable.

S: Do you remember any games you played?

T: We played "Fox and Geese" and the boys played a game called "Duck on a Rock." It's a stone with a rock on top and another rock on top of that, and you'd stand about 25 feet away, then you'd take another rock and try to knock it off. The boys liked that; the girls didn't participate. The we had another game called "Kiddie-I-Over" with a team of maybe four on this side of the building, and four on that side of the building and you'd throw the ball over the building so the other fellows would catch it, and they'd all run around and the guy that had the ball would try to tag one of the other gang. If you were tagged you were on his side. So the team with the most won. You never knew who had the ball see, all four would come after you but only one would have the ball and you wouldn't know which way to run. He would hide it and then tag someone.... The ball would just roll over the roof and you had to holler, "Kiddie-I -Over!" If it didn't quite make it you would holler "Kiddie-I-Under!"

S: I also want to ask you about the lessons; did you have geography?

T: Yes and arithmetic, English, geography, history.

S: Did you have science?

T: No, no frills. The three R's. They taught us how to write—penmanship. *The Palmer Method*. You made a lot of circles to form the letters...*script*. No printing.

S: And you had arithmetic and geography.

T: Yes, and reading. I think it was on Friday, every Friday afternoon, the teacher would read a story, a book, from 2- 3pm. She'd read two or three chapters for about an hour. Every Friday, that was very interesting.

S: What type of books?

T: Oh, like Huckleberry Finn. We'd all sit in our seats; everyone seemed to look forward to that