

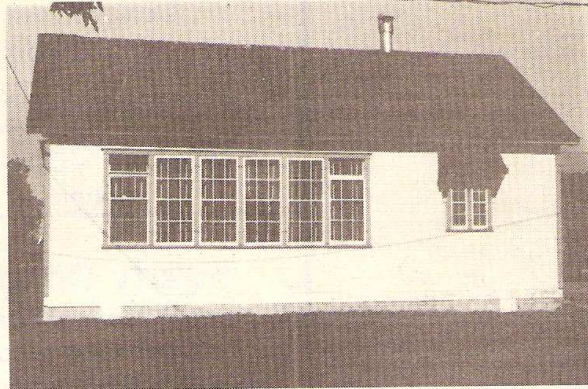
# Kleefeld almost a village

• by J. C. Fehr

The district of Kleefeld, a few miles southwest of Plum Coulee, was first settled in the 1880s. A number of people settled in the vicinity of the crossroads of sections 27-28-33-34 of 2-3W. This then became almost a village.

A private school was begun in 1890, with the location of the school being NW corner of NW 27-2-3W. This school operated until 1920, when many of the private schools were closed. The pupils were sent to Plum Coulee and Grimsby until 1927, when the Kleefeld School District No. 2160, established by a Rhineland by law No. 346 on December 7, 1926, was organized. A new school was built in 1927 on SW 34-2-3W one half north of the old school site.

The public school operated until January 1, 1967, when it became part of Plum Coulee Consolidated. During these 40 years there have been a total of 12 teachers who have taught in this school. Some of the teachers include Jacob H. Janzen, Tien Warkentine, John J. Janzen, Elizabeth Krueger and Ted Klassen. The school was later moved to Gnadenthal,



The Kleefeld School No. 2160

where it served as a classroom until 1982.

Kleefeld on the east reserve near Steinbach is famous for its honey. This Kleefeld here also had it's beekeeper in the famous teacher, John J. Janzen. He had two terms of teaching at Kleefeld, one of three years and one for nine years. He taught full time for 40 years in the west reserve. He is retired now but still does substitute teaching in the Garden Valley School Division on a fairly regular basis. For the Kleefeld reunion, held on June 24, 1979, he had composed

a song, paying tribute to all the people of the area. Some family names in this area include: Penner, Klassen, Peters, Plett, Hildebrand, Wiebe, Kuhl, Dueck, Doell, Wall, Giesbrecht, Funk and Braun.

Today many of the homesteads have been cleared up and are used for raising crops like potatoes, sugar beets, peas, rapeseed, grain, etc. Tall cottonwoods along roadsides remain where once the school stood. A half a mile south of the crossroads is the Kleefeld cemetery where many of the pioneers were laid to rest.



This photo shows the people who organized the reunion in 1979.

Photos courtesy H. J. Wiebe