

The New School Buildings, 1970

Many area residents had long realized the Old School, with its wood construction, downstairs boiler for central heating and narrow stairwells, was a fire hazard. A District #140 committee also concluded the current structure was not compatible with modern teaching techniques and innovations.

After approval of a \$1,155,000 bond issue for construction in 1968, planning began for a new school that would be quite different from all previous schools in the Walla Walla Valley, including open floor plans, movable walls, carpeting, and earth-tone color schemes.

In June 1969, a crew began tearing down the old Prospect Point school building that had stood since 1910. School officials saved three landmarks from the old structure: the bell, the sign and, of course, the fire escape, which had been host to many fire drills in which older students and teachers caught the spiraling younger children at the bottom of the slide.

After demolition, the iconic fire escape was remounted on the school playfield for several more years as a combination landmark and slide.

Reser Road was rerouted to accommodate a four-building complex, and the new school opened for the 1970-71 school year.

Thanks to Benjamin S. Cawthra for much of this history, and to Bygone Walla Walla for images used in this brochure.

WALLA WALLA 2020 HISTORIC RESEARCH & PLAQUE SERVICE

If you would like to honor a building or property by obtaining a research report on its history all the way back to when it was bare ground owned by local Tribes, and by displaying a handsome plaque listing the date of construction, along with the names of owners and builders, you can do so by contacting the Walla Walla 2020 Historic Research & Plaque Service.

For qualifying properties, Walla Walla 2020 will research the title, construction, and occupant history, and provide a written report along with proposed plaque language. The research fee for residences is \$125; the fee for other properties ranges from \$250 -300 depending on the complexity of the title and occupancy history.

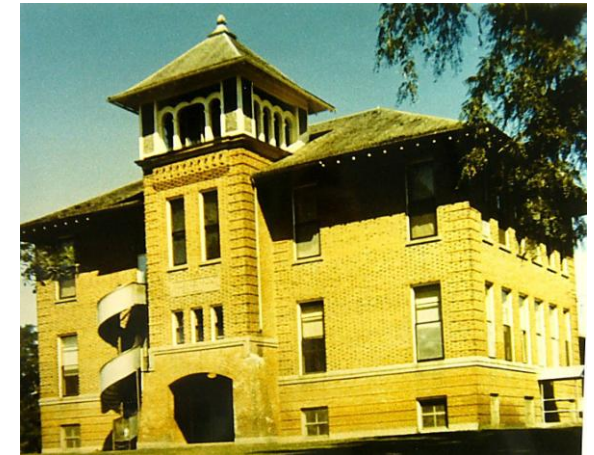
Qualifying properties may be in any neighborhood but must be more than 50 years old, and have retained their architectural integrity. For those properties accepted, a photo of the current property along with the completed research report will be included in the Walla Walla 2020 Interactive Map of Historic Properties available on the internet at www.ww2020.net under the Architecture & Neighborhoods tab.

Following completion of the report, the property owner may order a plaque for display on the property. The cost of a basic 9"x 6" six-line plaque is \$50, with additional lines and sizes available on request. Application information is available online at www.ww2020.net.

Historic Sites & Markers Project

For more information on the CCC Camp and other little-known Walla Walla area historic sites, go to www.ww2020.net/historic-sites. If you would like to help with the marking & interpretation of this and other significant sites, please send tax-deductible donations to Walla Walla 2020, PO Box 1222, Walla Walla WA 99362, call 509-522-0399, or email ww2020@charter.net.

PROSPECT POINT SCHOOL



The 1910 brick school building replaced the wooden, two-room Abbott School, until the current school opened in 1970.

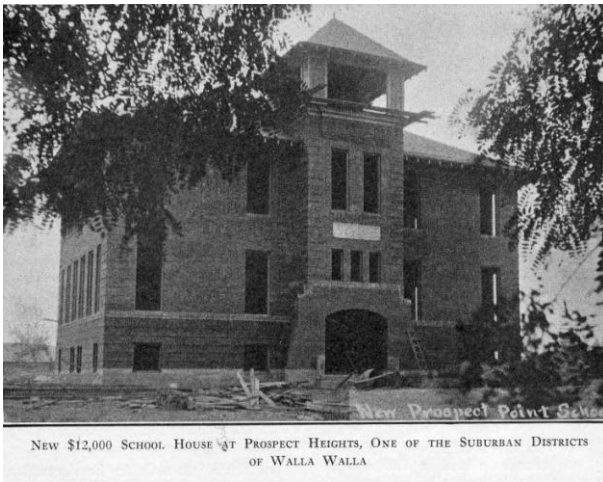


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Prospect Point School

Prospect Point began as its own school district in the old two-room Abbott school building in 1904. The Abbott School was sold in 1910 to the Falbo family who built a house on the foundation just east of the school.

In the same year, a new two-story brick building was constructed at a cost of \$12,000, to which a spiral fire escape was added in 1923. In 1912, a nearby church building was moved to the school grounds and housed a cafeteria and classrooms as well as a stage. In 1950, a bond election resulted in the construction of an addition to the main building containing two classrooms, a gymnasium and multipurpose rooms.



After consolidation of the Prospect Point School District with Walla Walla School District #140 in 1957, these buildings were torn down for the construction of the current school, which opened in 1970.

The Prospect Point School District

The origins of the elementary school at Prospect Point date to the 1890s, when it became clear to area residents that existing facilities were too crowded.

The Prospect Point area was named as a result of a contest held when the area was designated for a new housing development south of the Walla Walla city limits. Originally named Prospect Heights, it soon became known as Prospect Point. In 1904, members of the Prospect Point community resolved to split from the Berney School District to form their own district.

Area families filed a petition on May 26, 1904 requesting the creation of a new District #73 on all of the Ransom Clark Donation Claim. Clark had settled on the land in the 1850s, and died in 1859, leaving his property to his wife, Lettice, who later married H. A. Reynolds, a prominent landholder in the Prospect Point area and founder of the first flour mill in Walla Walla just southwest of the school along Yellowhawk Creek.

The new school district grew rapidly. In 1910 the board held an election to build a new school and sell the Abbott schoolhouse. The large new Prospect Point School opened its doors in November, located northeast of the current playground at the corner of Howard & Reser.

Expansion of the Old School

In 1912, the school board purchased a nearby Methodist Church and moved it to the school grounds. The white structure became known as "The Little Building" and

housed the cafeteria and first and second grades, as well as a stage that hosted many school programs over the years.



The Little Building

Enrollment climbed from 106 students in 1941 to 173 in 1950, when a bond election raised \$29,000 toward additional facilities, consisting of two classrooms, restrooms, locker space, and an all-purpose room with a stage that included a kitchen and cafeteria. The all-purpose room served as an auditorium to seat 500, and as a gymnasium with seating capacity of 200.

The fifties were the "Golden Years" of the Old Prospect Point. After a close vote leading to consolidation with District #140, Prospect Point held its last eighth grade graduation in 1959, and new seventh and eighth-graders attended Garrison. The period 1904 to 1959 was fueled by the decidedly independent spirit of the Prospect Point community that had motivated the school and made it a success.

By the time the old buildings were torn down for the construction and opening of the new school in 1970, they had served the community well for 60 years.