

Fort Klock School: Another Chapter

This writer has been connected with Fort Klock School from the August day in 1954 when it was greatly damaged by fire. As the restoration began in the late 1950's, one of the most active participants was George Moyer who was once a trustee of old Fort Klock District No. 3. In addition George's wife, Grace, taught there and their daughter was a student. George had stated that the small piece of land east of the school had been purchased years before when the Education Department required the District to purchase more land than the school sat on as a recreation area for the students. The piece of land once had been surrounded by a woven wire fence now falling into disrepair. Brush had also dominated the small lot. Possibly some forty years ago when Fort Klock was to be opened as a museum our long sign was erected on that lot. Little was thought regarding who actually owned it. In mid 2011 the question again arose. On a visit to the property tax office in Fonda a bit of information emerged, a reference to a deed. The tax map did not show the little lot. At the County Clerk's Office a copy of the deed dated September 29, 1913 was recovered. Irving E. Fitcher and Edna M. Fitcher deeded the property to Edgar Sponable as trustee of School District No. 3. The school district was to hold the land as long as it was used for school purposes. If it was not, the sellers were to re-purchase it. Fort Klock Historic Restoration was interested in gaining title to this lot. The organization designated Paul Flanders and Skip Barshied to pursue the matter. Upon contacting the St. Johnsville Central School Superintendent they were advised to hire an attorney.

The services of attorney John Kirkpatrick of Fort Plain were secured: The path to obtaining ownership was to get a quitclaim deed from Daniel Tourtellot, the present (current) owner of the once property of the Fitchers, then to secure a quit claim deed from the Central School System which had acquired title to the land when the assets of the old District No. 3 were transferred to the Central School System. The two quitclaim deeds were signed, John Kirkpatrick continued with all of the formalities and the land was transferred to Fort Klock Historic Restoration. The organization owes a debt of gratitude to all who made this transaction a reality. An age-old problem was solved.

Skip Barshied

Stone Arabia

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