



By Jeff Borden
Of The Dispatch Staff

Though it was only a quarter-mile long, the walk a group of Hilliard schoolchildren took last week spanned 81 years.

Twenty-seven fifth-grade students from Avery Elementary School spent the day studying in a one-room schoolhouse much as their grandparents did in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

Old-Time Education Heard

TEACHER RUTH Layman did her best to simulate things as they were when there were only 45 states in the union. Boys sat on one side of the room, girls on the other. A pair of students kept a good fire going in the pot-bellied stove situated in the center of the building. The kids had to forego hot cafeteria lunches for something they brought in a bag and even the water cooler was replaced by a jug of warm water.

The students were the first ever to use the reconstructed Grandview School on the Franklin County Fairgrounds as an actual classroom. Built in 1891 and last used in 1917, the one-room brick schoolhouse has been completely restored by the Northwest Franklin County Historical Society.

The building, which boasts many turn-of-the-century artifacts, was moved to the current site last year and opened for public inspection at this

summer's Franklin County Fair. The society is hopeful other groups will be able to use the building for education projects.

MRS. LAYMAN said her students had "a regular day of class, but we related it to the building."

For a start, the kids walked down Avery Rd. from their modern building to illustrate the lack of school buses. "They hated the walking," Mrs. Layman chuckled. "You'd have thought they'd never carried anything in their lives. It was only a quarter-mile, but they acted like they'd walked five miles with a 100-pound load."

Once at the restored schoolhouse, the kids settled in for a day of class without the benefit of what Mrs. Layman termed "special area teachers" such as physical education, music and art instructors. And there was no library.

INSTEAD, THE kids compared subjects taught now with those offered at the turn-of-the-century.

Even at recess, the class continued to live in the past. The boys had to forego the nearby monkey bars and other playground equipment. But they had a choice of playing marbles or kick the can. The girls worked at hop scotch.

About the only concession to current times was the use of restroom facilities on the fairgrounds, Mrs. Layman noted.

STUDENTS DID continue their regular studies during the day and will prepare reports on the differences between such things as transportation and curriculum, Mrs. Layman added.

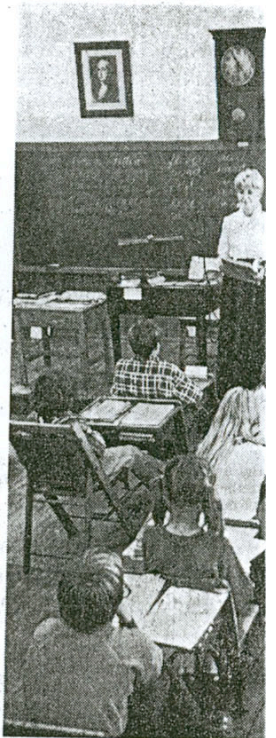
While the students seemed to enjoy themselves, they were obviously not happy with all the arrangements.

As Mrs. Layman summed it up, "They really looked forward to this day, but they're glad it's only one day."



STOVE STUFFERS — Steve Whitt, 11, son of Mr. and Mrs. William Whitt, 1539 Dexter Ave., Hilliard, left, and Shawn Hilbig, 12, son of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Hilbig, 5225

Dexter Ave., Hilliard, stoke up the pot-bellied stove in the center of the one-room schoolhouse.



ATTENTIVE CLASS — Fifth-grade students from Avery Elementary School in Hilliard listen to teacher Ruth Layman as she lectures. The students spent a day in a restore