

# ***HISTORY OF WAHAMA HIGH SCHOOL***

The year 1925 was the year for the beginning of change in Mason's school system. It was through the continued effort and determination of a small group of interested men that the idea of combining three districts for school purposes as accepted by a majority of voters, Mason High School ended and Wahama High School came into existence. The first floor of the International Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) building in Mason was remodeled into five classrooms. These rooms plus an old building on the old grade school lot was the beginning of Wahama High School in September 1925. The name WAHAMA was formed from the first two letters of the three independent districts - WAggener, HArtford and MAson. In a matter of two or three years, pupils from New Haven and Graham District were furnishing their own transportation to attend Wahama.

The change, initiated in 1925, really started a desire for something better for the youth of the area. Consequently, the land where Wahama is now located was secured and construction of the building no longer in use due to safety reasons was completed and opened for the first time in September 1931 for grades 9 through 12.

The curriculum offered at the original school included an academic program, a business program, a vocational agriculture program, and a general program. When they moved to the new location, provisions were made to add a course in vocational home economics. Basketball was the only athletic program offered until 1932 at which time a coach was hired who initiated football.

Again in 1947 through the combined efforts of businessmen and interested citizens, a stadium association was formed to finance construction of Bachtel Stadium which was completed in 1948. This association stayed in existence until most of the indebtedness was paid off. Then it was dissolved.

The following year the student body was greatly increased by the addition of the seventh and eighth grade from all the feeder schools in the area. This increased pupil load necessitated an addition to the building. Thus, in 1951 the wing on the southwest corner of the building was completed. This added three new classrooms and a room for the library.



WHS with additions 1958-1959

Increased emphasis on physical education plus a growing student enrollment created a need for more facilities to handle these activities. In 1957 the new existing gymnasium-auditorium was added to the school grounds. By 1962 the student body had out grown the original building capacity. As a result, construction on a new junior high was started. The plans were for team teaching in the seventh and eighth grades. However, before it was completed, the administration realized the ninth grade would have to be moved, too. This eliminated the prospect of team teaching, but the original plans of no halls and sliding partitions was followed and the building was completed in 1965, with the top floor being utilized one year prior to completion.

The temporary buildings moved onto the campus in the mid 40's for a band room and a shop were now definite relics and certainly needed replacements. This need was met in 1969 when construction was started on a new building for these two courses and completed during the school term of 1970-71.

Under the leadership of a new principal for the school term of 1971-72, a decision was made to move senior high to the newer building and move the junior high to the original high school building.

Much clamor followed with considerable work by interested citizens to get Wahama accredited by the North Central Association. This necessitated the addition of a new library. Plans were drawn to build an addition at the northeast end of the senior high. These plans included a room on the top level for the library and a science department on the lower level plus an extra classroom. This addition was completed in 1974.

The theory of team teaching and the open classroom was gradually phased out. The construction of walls in 1979 in the senior high building replaced movable partitions between the rooms. This gave the high school building a total of 16 rooms.

A building of four additional rooms was built outside along the edge of the parking lot out from the library in 1989. A portable building was moved beside these rooms which can be used as two or three classrooms in 1989.

A new cafeteria was built in 1995 closing what was known as the old junior high building. It was demolished in the fall of 1999.



One of the last photos of the old building - Fall 1999