

## **HISTORY OF EMBUDO PRESBYTERIAN SCHOOL**

This History is from the program for the  
60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Embudo Presbyterian School  
1887 - 1947

### **THE WAY PAVED FOR A SCHOOL**

It was in the late eighties when young Tomas Atencio and Miss Susan Thresher were thrown from the two-wheel sulky in which they were returning from Taos, New Mexico. Their horse ran away, but when Tomas found that they were only bruised and shaken, he was ready to laugh. However, Miss Thresher said that it was no laughing matter, and commanded him to kneel with her at the roadside to offer a prayer of thankfulness for their safety.

Miss Thresher was a non-commissioned, Baptist Christian worker who lived in Rinconada. She made her home a sort of community center. Each Sunday people come from far and near to attend the services which she conducted in the Spanish Language. She sang and prayed with them and taught the Bible. During the week she rode a burro to Dixon and other nearby points to visit in the homes and distribute Bibles.

During this same period Vicente F. Romero from el Prado, Juan Manuel Martinez of Rodarte, and Jose Mondragon and Miss Alice Hyson of Ranchos of Taos came to Dixon for a series of meetings. These were held in Mr. Hermenegildo Salazar's home.

At that time, the public school was open only three months out of every year and instruction was very poor. There was no Catholic school. Parents who had been influenced by Miss Thresher and other itinerant Christians, greatly desired a church school for their children. They were able to secure the services of Lucas Martinez of Rodarte, who was one of the first converts of the Rincones church.

### **THE EARLY DAYS OF THE SCHOOL**

Embudo Presbyterian School was opened in 1887. Mr. Lucas Martinez taught for two years. Mr. J. J. Vigil who followed him, remained about the same length of time. People who remember the early days say that there were between twenty-five and thirty pupils in those years.

### **FIRST PUPILS**

Among the first pupils were: Rev. Tomas Atencio, Juan A. Brown, Vicente Martinez, Leonardita Salazar, Pilar Salazar, Juan Antonio Salazar, Mrs. Anita Sanchez, Mr. Bonifacio Romero, Mrs. Inez R. Lucero; Mrs. Onofre R. Atencio, Reynaldo Romero, Mrs. Elique Duran. Mrs. Tomas Archuleta, Esquebula Montoya, Sara Sanchez, Juan Sanchez, and Mentor Romero.

### **SCHOOL IN PRIVATE HOMES**

For many years. Mr. H. Salazar provided living quarters for the teachers and later for the ministers. The first school room was also in his home. Afterwards school was held in the homes of Juan I. Romero, Antonio Martinez, and Refugio Romero,  
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respectively. These rooms were small, had dirt floors, adobe fireplaces, and only one window.

### **CHANGES IN GRADES TAUGHT**

In 1943 the eighth grade was dropped, and in 1935 the seventh grade. This change was made to encourage more children to take advantage of the superior training offered at our Presbyterian Junior High, Allison James, in Santa Fe. This year we have had twenty-eight former pupils attending either Allison James or Manual schools. Three more were living at Manual, and attending the University of New Mexico.

The dropping of the upper grades made possible a larger enrollment and better training in the lower grades of our own school. The average age of our twenty first graders is seven years. Three of them are passing to second grade before they reach that age.

### **COOPERATION WITH CHURCH**

In 1940, the children's Sunday School classes were moved to the school in order that each department might have the advantage of a separate rooms for classes. This has afforded opportunity for a much finer type of instruction. During the past year, the same arrangement has been made for the Mission Study classes and the Sunday Evening groups. Every summer Vacation Church School is held in the building. Week Day classes in religion have been a part of our program from the very beginning.

### **PROMOTION OF COMMUNITY HEALTH**

The health of the community has always been a real concern of the school. We have been fortunate since 1914 to have a health center and later our fine Embudo Presbyterian Hospital which has shouldered the greatest part of the load for us.

Sick room supplies are loaned to families caring for prolonged illness in the home, but only the most simple remedies for skin diseases and supplies for first aid, are dispensed at the school. However, instruction in health, routine physical examinations, suggestions to parents, and preventative measures will always be the responsibility of the teacher.

We cooperate closely with all government health agencies, and have provided a room for weekly clinics. For many months a visiting dentist cared for an average of fifteen people a day on his weekly visits. Movies and special speakers on health subjects are frequently provided for the public. When teachers are available, community classes in First Aid and Home Nursing are held at the school. .

### **HOPES FOR THE FUTURE**

No one can deny that Embudo Presbyterian School has done much to uplift the level of the community educationally and spiritually. We are aware of the fact that countless needs have not been met adequately. Many people have scarcely tasted the blessings of the Christian life, and the social and recreational life of the community is still on a very low level. With the cooperation of the alumni and the

church at large, and the blessing of God, this school and community center can go forward to do much greater things in the years to come.

After Mr. Vigil left, the school was closed for a short time. In 1892, Mr. Juan Quintana and his wife came to Dixon. He acted as both evangelist and teacher. The following year, Miss Kate Kennedy, the first English Speaking teacher, arrived on the scene. She remained for eight years. Many of the leading church people of today give her the credit for what they have become.

### **SCHOOL IN THE CHURCH**

The church was organized in 1889 with eight members: Juan Manuel Romero, Juan Julian Gonzales, Juan Montoya (elders); Juan I. Romero, Deluvina Romero, Onofre Romero, Bonifacio Romero, and Narciso Gonzales. About 1903 the school was moved to the first church building. Even this was not large enough to accommodate the enrollment, which had now reached more than sixty.

### **A SCHOOL BUILDING ERECTED**

In 1910, the present school building and teachers' home was erected under the direction of Miss Dora Fish. The local people contributed half the cost of the school building. The men made 30,000 adobes, hauled the rocks for foundation, and forty women did all the plastering. At that time there were only two schoolrooms and accommodation for two teachers. The first year that school was held in the new building, there were 125 enrolled, Miss Frances Davis was in charge. Her assistant, Miss Frances Hawley, who taught smaller children, reported that she had more than 75 children in her room.

### **INSTRUCTION IMPROVED**

Miss Sarah B. Sutherland is perhaps best remembered of the later teachers for she remained fifteen years. She is responsible for introducing athletics, playground equipment, organized classes in homemaking, and manual arts. She did much to make the school an interesting place, and a community center. It was during the years of her service that a third school room was built, and a new room added to the living quarters to accommodate a third teacher.

### **THE GOSPEL PREACHED**

The development of Christian leaders has been one of the greatest contributions of the school.

Six ministers had their early training in Embudo School. They are: Rev. Tomas Atencio, Rev. Victoriano Valdez, Rev. Julian Duran, Rev. Elias Atencio, Rev. Eluid Valdez, and Rev. Enoch Ortega.

It is interesting to note that Tomas Atencio, a pupil the year the school was opened, has come back this anniversary year to give his last of forty-three years in the ministry to Embudo Presbyterian church. He gave nineteen years to the church in Dixon.

### **THE SICK HEALED**

Anita Salazar (Mrs Andrew Martin) served for many years as a nurse at Ganado Mission Hospital for Navajo Indians. She was director of nurses much of that time. In recent years a number of girls, formerly of our school, have become nurses aides at Embudo Presbyterian Hospital.

### **CHILDREN INSTRUCTED**

Carlota Romero (Mrs. Ofene Garcia) taught for a time at the Presbyterian Day School at Chacon, and Casimira Barela (Mrs. George Martinez) had been one of our teachers at Embudo School this year. For several years three of our former pupils have been serving on the staff at Allison James School. They are: Florinda Martinez, Sidney Brown, and Rebecca Martinez (Mrs. Sidney Brown).

### **THE CHURCH GOVERNED**

All seven men on the session of the church at the present time were former pupils of the Mission School. They are: Diego Valdez, Jose Paz Martinez, Juan S. Martinez, Juan S. Romero, Epifanio Atencio, Frank Martinez, Amadeo Lucero, and Silviano Martinez.

### **RECENT DEVELOPMENTS**

Many improvements have been made on the property and much up-to-date equipment has been supplied during the past fifteen years, in order that our teaching might meet the standard of other progressive schools, and our community service fill the needs of the times more adequately.

### **ACTIVITIES FOR THE ENRICHMENT OF LIFE**

4H club work was introduced in 1933, and since that time has continued to provide interesting and valuable training for boys and girls in rural life and home making. Inspired by club work, one girl, Neomi H. Martinez, has taken a four year course in Home Economics at the University of New Mexico, and is now ready to go out over the state as a Home Demonstration Specialist.

The community library was first opened to the public in 1934. Since that time both young and old have continued to come once a week to borrow books and magazines.

Visual education aids have been used extensively in recent years. Educational films are shown to the entire student body twice a month, with Embudo Presbyterian Hospital's 16mm sound projector. Considerable use is also made of the slide projector. Quite frequently movies and slides are shown to the public at both school and church for educational and recreational purposes.

## TEACHERS

		Present Address
Mr. Lucas Martinez	1887-1889	
Mr. J. J. Vigil	1889-1891	Cerro, N. Mexico
Mr. Juan Quintana	1892-1894	Mrs. Quintana still lives in Albuquerque
Miss Kate Kennedy	1894-1902	
Miss Isa Dwyre	1902-1904	
Miss Elizabeth Rogers	1904-1906	
Miss Carrie E. Fenton	1906-1908	
Miss A. B. Leadingham	1903-1909	
Miss Dora M. Fish	1909-1910	
Miss Frances M. Davis	1910-1914	
Miss S. Frances Hawley	1910-1914	332 E. Kiowa, Colorado Springs
Miss E. Josephine Orton	1914-1916	
Mrs. M. M. Burchett	1914-1916	
Miss Sarah B. Sutherland	1916-1931	Hanover, Indiana
Miss Famy B. Mills	1920-1923	
Miss Mary Lou Willis	1921-1923	
Miss Mary D. Smith	1921-1925	
Miss Adah M. Hennis	1923-1924	
Miss Margaret J. Bielby	1923-1926	Executive San Miguel School Sells, Arizona
Miss Petula DuMez	1926-1927	
Miss Hazel Midkiff	1926-1927	
Miss Mable Whitmire	1926-1929	Executive Agua Negra School Holman, N. Mexico
Miss Lupita Casias	1928-1931	Mrs. Higinio Ruybalid, Chimayo
Miss Helen Bloss	1929-1930	
Miss Helen Warnick	1930-1932	
Miss Edna Luhde	1931-1934	Executive Home of Neighborly Service Brighton, Colo.
Miss Cora Houk	1931-1938	Sheldon Jackson School Sitka, Alaska
Miss Minnie A. Cook	1932-	Dixon, New Mexico
Miss Juanita Ortega	1934-1940	Office Assistant Embudo Presby. Hospital Embudo, N. Mexico
Miss Dorothy Barnes	1938-1940	Mrs. Tony Duran, Dixon
Miss Jane Pears	1938-1939	Kolhapur, India
Miss Cande Ortega	1940-1945	2303 Bush St. San Francisco, 15
Miss Mildred Stoner	1940-1941	
Miss Fanny M. Reed	1941-	Dixon, New Mexico
Miss Elizabeth Lyon	1945-1946	Hanford, California
Mrs. George Martinez	1946-	Dixon, New Mexico

Note: Incomplete records have made it impossible to list all the teachers. We would appreciate any additions and corrections. also any addresses which we

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