

## Ilion School Building Cornerstones

# Old Morgan St. School Once Pride of Mohawk Valley

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### Old Morgan St. School Once Pride of Mohawk Valley

July 7, 1940 - Utica Observer newspaper article

Ilion - The proposal that Ilion school district expend about \$21,000 this year of the proceeds from the sale of the old Morgan Street School brings back the memories of that institution to many elderly residents of Ilion.

The school was originally a stone building and was the second school in the village. The first is still standing in Main St., but is now part of a private dwelling.

Started in 1850

It took the taxpayers two years to make up their minds about a new building. It was proposed in January, 1848 but was not started until 1850. A brick addition, much larger than the stone building was constructed in 1850. It cost \$23,000 and for years was the most imposing school house in this part of the Mohawk Valley.

The stone building was not used as a school for a time. The Ilion Cornet Band and the No. 1 Fire Company used it for meetings and the First Liberal Christian Society for a library. Later increased attendance caused it to be reopened for the kindergarten and primary grades.

## New Addition In '81

Another addition was built in 1881. It consisted of a tier of recitation rooms built on the southeast corner of the main building. A tower room on the third floor was made into an office and library. An office on the ground floor was built in 1900 and a \$7,000 addition the same year brought relief from overcrowding.

When the present high school building was completed in 1921 the Morgan Street School was sold and razed to make room for the Municipal Building.

The cornerstone was salvaged and is housed at the Public Library. The school bell is in the high school library together with a plaque in memory of the late E. A. Powers, member of the Board of Education and in charge of buildings from 1874 until his death a few years ago. Three of the four present janitors of the local schools have worked at the Morgan Street School.

## 1958 - Cornerstone Placed for Addition to Ilion High



**PLACE CORNER STONE** — Ceremonies of placing the corner stone at the new addition of the Ilion High School yesterday were witnessed by members of the Board of Education, a faculty member and others. Robert Kerr, Board president, is shown kneeling at left ready to use a trowel to seal the copper box in the corner stone; kneeling

ing at right is John Murray, superintendent of the contracting firm, Brown Construction Company; standing from the left are Harry Tiffi, mason; Pete Green, custodian; George Anderson, elementary supervisor; Douglas Miller, past president of the Board; Mrs. Alice Bamford, a faculty member; George Friis, past president of the Board.

(Staff Photo)

photo caption - **PLACE CORNER STONE** - Ceremonies of placing the corner stone at the new addition of the Ilion High School yesterday were witnessed by members of the Board of Education, a faculty member and others. Robert Kerr, Board president, is shown kneeling at left ready to use a trowel to seal the copper box in the corner stone; kneeling at right is John Murray, superintendent of the contracting firm, Brown Construction Company; standing from the left are Harry Tiffi, mason; Pete Green, custodian; George Anderson, elementary supervisor; Douglas Miller, past president of the Board; Mrs. Alice Bamford, a faculty member; George Friis, past president of the Board.

July 25, 1958 - Herkimer Evening Telegram article

ILION - Several members of the Ilion Central School Board of Education headed by Robert Kerr, president, attended ceremonies during which the corner stone for the new high school addition was placed yesterday.

The addition will be completed and ready for use by the time school opens, it was announced.

Contained in a copper lined box placed inside the corner stone were the following items:

Floor plan of the old and new high school building, directory of Ilion Central School system for 1957-58 naming administrators, faculty and board members, a directory of the 1956-57 Herkimer County Teachers Association, a brochure used in 1954 for centralization.

A brochure for the building program drawn in 1955, a pamphlet on Ilion, hand-book of the new York State Education law and a hand-book of the Public High School Athletic Association.

Taking part with Kerr were Douglas Miller, past president of board George Friis, past president; George A. Anderson, elementary supervisor; Miss Alice Bamford, faculty member; John Murray, superintendent for the Brown Construction Co., contractors for the addition; Pete Green, custodian of the addition, and Harry Tiffi, a mason.

## 1964 - School Cornerstone Box Opened After 50 Years



# *School Cornerstone Box Opened After 50 Years*

May 6, 1964 - Herkimer Evening Telegram newspaper article

## **School Cornerstone Box Opened After 50 Years**

ILION - A dramatic ceremony was held by Ilion Central School Board at close of the meeting last night when William Hughes, president, used a huge pair of pliers to cut open a cornerstone box placed at the corner of Ilion High School about 50 years ago.

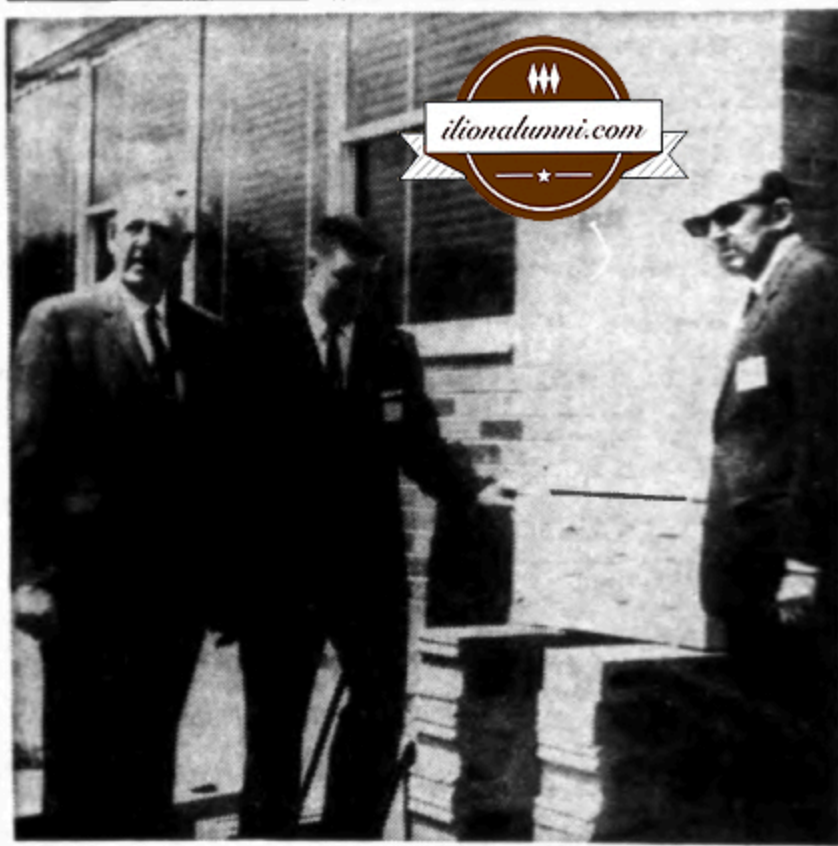
The box, measuring about 1 1/2 feet long and about eight inches deep, was taken from the part of the high school now being demolished to make way for a new high school.

It was set in place in the autumn of 1913, according to musty and mildewed records found inside. The high school was opened to students the following year.

The high school, part of which was destroyed by fire about a year ago, was built on a three and one-third acre site purchased for about \$4,000, according to the records. The school was built with a \$96,000 bond issue.

The box was crammed with records, including copies of the Ilion News and Ilion Citizen, newspapers no longer in existence. The copies were dated April 11, 1912.

A poll list of the 1,248 voters who approved the \$95,000 bond issue referendum was included. Hughes, examining the booklet, was surprised to find his mother, Salena, on the list.



Participating in the cornerstone laying ceremony yesterday for the new Ilion Junior-Senior High School dedication ceremony, were from left, My-

ton Jordan, Richfield Springs, the architect; Leo J. Sammon, high school principal and Dr. James Anderson, president of the Board of Education.

## ***New School Open House Attended By 1,000***

Photo caption - Participating in the cornerstone laying ceremony yesterday for the new Ilion Junior- Senior High School dedication ceremony, were from left, Myron Jordan, Richfield Springs, the architect; Leo J. Sammon, high school principal and Dr. James Anderson, president of the Board of Education.

May 23, 1966 - Herkimer Evening Telegram newspaper article

### **New School Open House Attended by 1,000**

ILION - About 1,000 persons attended the dedication and open house program yesterday afternoon at the new \$1,281,000 Ilion Junior - Senior Central High School.

Placing the cornerstone to officially dedicate the sprawling new building was included in the three-hour program. Dr. James S. Anderson, president, Board of

Education, presided at the ceremony, along with Leo J. Sammon, Jr., principal, and Myron Jordan, architect.

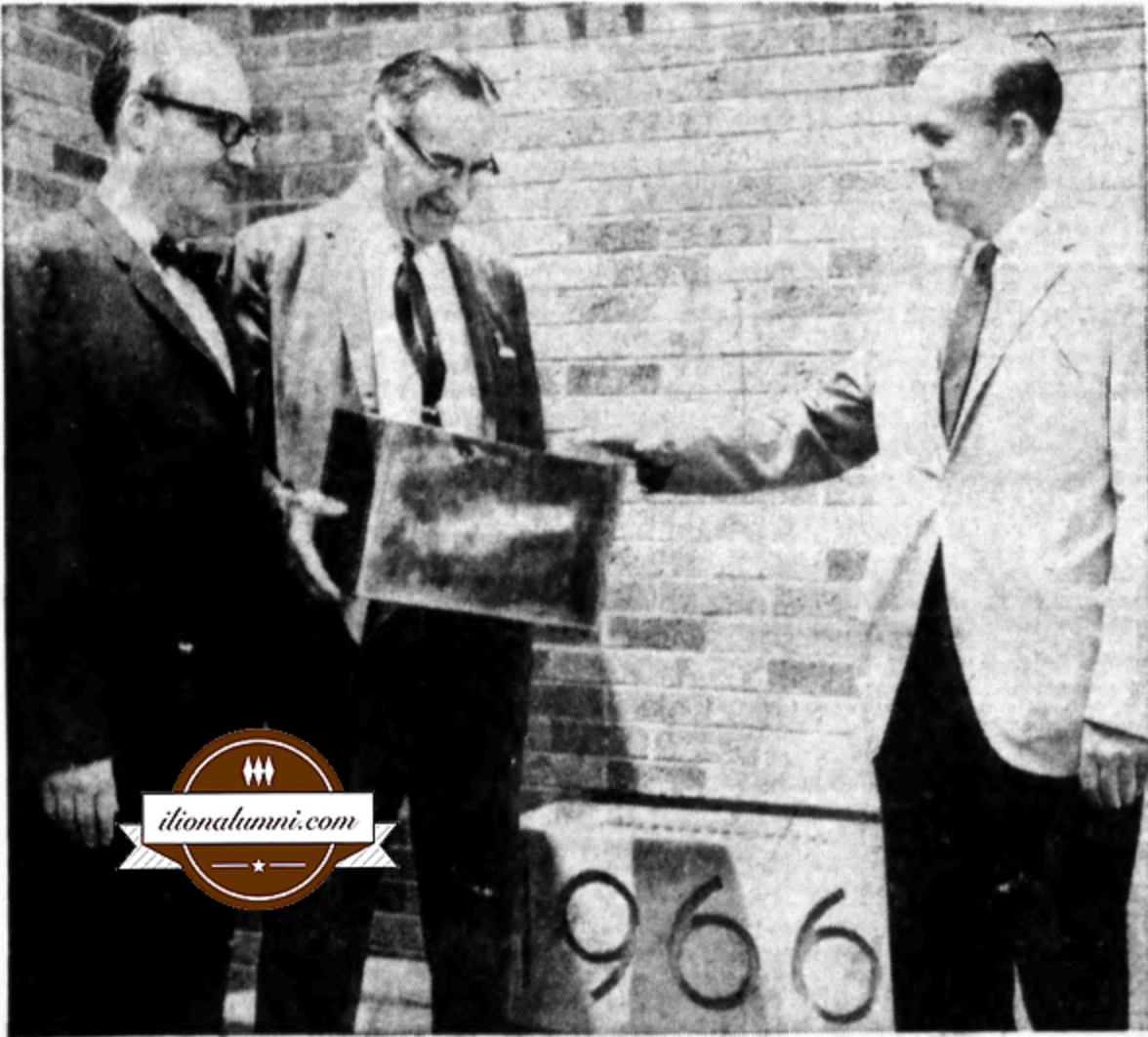
Also present were School Supt. George E. Anderson, members of the school board, and other officials, including John McKay, Jr., representing McKay Construction Co., Oneida, general contractors.

Visitors were welcomed to view all the classrooms and other facilities, and were served coffee and cookies in the cafeteria.

A musical program was also part of the ceremonies. The Ilion High School Choir, directed by Mrs. Jasmine Poplaski, entertained as did the Junior High School Girls Sextet, Boys Quartet, The Belles, the Ilion High School orchestra, and the Ilion High School band.

The new modern building has space for about 1,100 high school students, and about 300 elementary pupils. The latter will be transferred to the new Barringer Rd. Elementary School, now under construction, when it is completed next March.

Construction at the new high school started in Aug. 1964 to replace facilities lost in the fire of April 21, 1963. Included in the rebuilt section is the auditorium, gym, library, music rooms, language lab, and homemaking section.



**CORNERSTONE** laying ceremonies and open house were conducted yesterday at Ilion's new Barringer Rd. Elementary School. Superintendent of Schools George E. Anderson, left, and board members, George J. Friis and Dr. James S. Anderson discuss the cornerstone laying. Friis holds the copper box which was placed in the cornerstone.

**THEY LAY THE CORNERSTONE**

Photo caption - CORNERSTONE laying ceremonies and open house were conducted yesterday at Ilion's new Barringer Rd. Elementary School. Superintendent of Schools George E. Anderson, left, and board members, George J. Friis and Dr. James S. Anderson discuss the cornerstone laying. Friis holds the copper box which was placed in the cornerstone.

**They Lay The Cornerstone  
Ritual Precedes Open House At New Ilion Grade School**

June 12, 1967 - Herkimer Evening Telegram newspaper article  
By Mary Lupinski



ILION - A cornerstone laying ceremony preceded open house yesterday at Barringer Rd. Elementary School. Several hundred residents attended.

The cornerstone, placed by Board of Education member, George J. Friis, contained a copper box filled with newspapers and clippings pertaining to Ilion education and the new school, a copy of the Teaching of Reading; a copy of the state laws on education, pictures of the school under construction and pictures of all the children who entered the school the first few days it was open in April; copies of the Golden Quill with pictures of the 18 seniors who received Regents scholarships this year and a copy of the school district's cooperative review.

Friis, who completes 22 years of service on the Board of Education, will not seek reelection in the annual school district meeting this month. Girl Scouts Mary Ellen Daily and Michelle Lamanna and Boy Scouts Bernard Helmes and Thomas Lester, raised a flag presented by the Ilion Memorial Post, American Legion Auxiliary. All American flags in the classrooms, cafetorium and out doors were gifts of the Auxiliary.

Also taking part in the program were board members, Arthur Dauten, president, and Dr. James S. Anderson. Other board members present were Dr. A. H. Applegate, Robert F. Kerr, J. W. Miller and Alan Van Winkle.

"This is the day that many of us have worked so hard to accomplish", Superintendent of Schools George E. Anderson said. "This is the culmination of the hopes and dreams of the members of the Board of Education, school administrators and the teachers."

Anderson recognized the many people who were instrumental in completion of the new \$1,290,- 292 school, including the Citizens Advisory Committee, former board member, Donald C. Porter; Mrs. Fanny De John, whose property was purchased for the school site; Board of Education, and the Parent Teacher Association.

## Related Sources

Fultonhistory.com Newspaper Archive References:

[Utica Daily Observer](#) - Old Morgan St School Once Pride of Mohawk Valley - July 7, 1940

[Herkimer Evening Telegram](#) - Cornerstone Placed for Addition to Ilion High - July 23, 1958

[Herkimer Evening Telegram](#) - Ilion School - July 25, 1958

[Herkimer Evening Telegram](#) - School Cornerstone Box Opened After 50 Years - May 6, 1964

[Herkimer Evening Telegram](#) - New School Open House Attended by 1,000 - May 23, 1966

[Herkimer Evening Telegram](#) - They Lay The Cornerstone - June 12, 1967

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