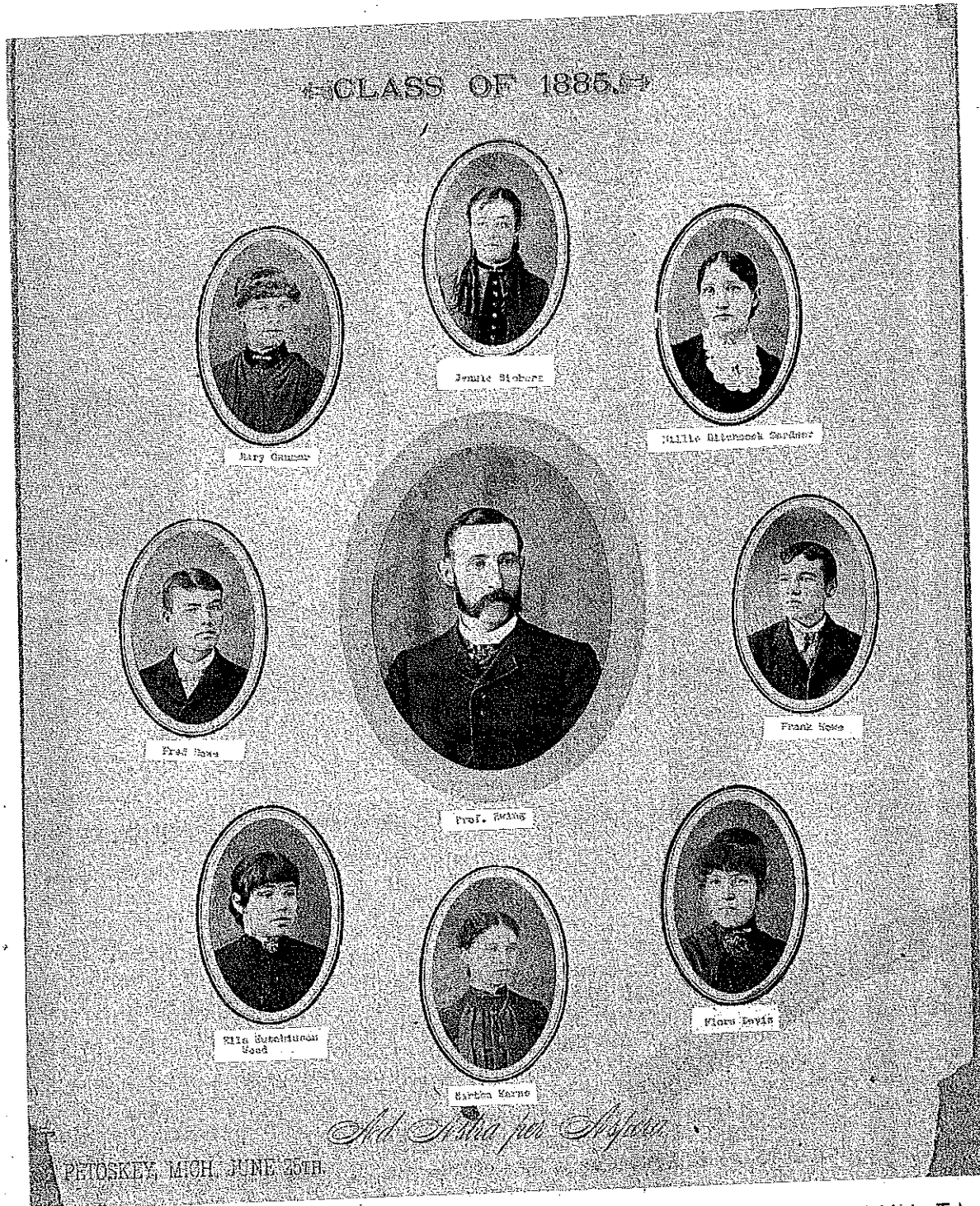


***PETOSKY HIGH SCHOOL***  
***Petoskey, Emmet County, Michigan***

***Centennial Committee Seeks Ideas For Celebration***  
***For 100<sup>th</sup> Commencement***  
***1885 -- 1985***

# PETOSKEY HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION Class of 1885

Petoskey News-Review  
Thursday, November 8, 1984  
Front Page



**THE MOTTO** printed below the Petoskey High School class of 1885 picture was "Ad Astra per Aspera," Latin for "To the stars through hard-

ship." (Original poster courtesy of Little Traverse Regional Historical Society.)

# SCHOOL CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE SEEKS IDEAS FOR BIRTHDAY PARTY

Petoskey News-Review  
Thursday, November 8, 1984  
Front Page  
By Dianne Murray

Who's the oldest living Petoskey High School graduate?

Which family has had the most generations graduate from Petoskey High School?

How many students have graduated from Petoskey High School?

A centennial committee is trying to find the answers to these and other questions.

Petoskey schools will mark its 100<sup>th</sup> commencement of June 6, 1985. The first graduation was held June 25, 1885. June 1985 will mark the 101<sup>st</sup> year after the first graduation, but there were no seniors in the 1885, making this the 100<sup>th</sup> graduation class.

The centennial committee is looking for ideas to mark the occasion and is planning to promote the idea throughout the year, rather than just at graduation.

*We're brainstorming, trying to get together ideas of what to do*" for the 100<sup>th</sup> commencement celebration, committee member Bill Todd said.

In addition, according to Todd, the group plans to collect memorabilia and artifacts of years past such as pictures of school buildings, sports teams, various functions, yearbooks and more. Volunteers also may be needed, depending on what projects the committee decides to tackle, he said.

Still in the discussion stages are plans to have someone write a history of the school and to develop a logo to use on signs, graduation diplomas and stationery letterheads.

Ideas and material should be forwarded to: Centennial Committee, Spitler Administration Building, 1130 Howard St., Petoskey 49770.

Centennial committee members are Todd, William McCune, Richard Thomas, Marilyn Douma, Don Festerling, John Scott Jr., Chris Kelbel, Bob Doctor and Laurie Smith.

The Class of 1885 was comprised of Jennie Siebert, Millie Hitchcock Gardner, Frank Howe, Flora Davis, Martha Warne, Ella Hutchinson Wood, Fred Howe and Mary Gaumer.

There is some discrepancy in the spelling of a few of the graduates' names when an old newspaper clipping is compared to the names on the class photo. In the July 1, 1885, edition of the *Petoskey Record*, Jennie Siebert's last name is spelled Seibert and Hitchcock's is spelled Hichock.

Petoskey News-Review  
January 18, 1968

## Graduate of First PHS Class Dies at Age 99

Mary Florette Davis, who was 99 years old, died September 27, 1967, at Petoskey Geriatrics and Care Center Wednesday afternoon. She had been a patient there for two years.



Mary Florette Davis

Services will be held at the Desnoyer Funeral Home Saturday at 10 a.m. with Rev. Ralph Witmer officiating. Interment will be in Greenwood Cemetery.

Born in Manistee September 27, 1868, she moved to Petoskey with her family in 1878. She was a member of the first graduating class of Petoskey High School in 1885—83 years ago.

Miss Davis lived at 106 E. Mitchell st. where she was associated with a rooming house for 85 years.

Until she died she was the oldest living member of the First Methodist Church in Petoskey.

There are no survivors.

Miss Davis is at the Desnoyer Funeral Home where friends may

**Petoskey Schools Built First State Street Building in 1876**  
**Petoskey High School football squad of 1903**  
 {Photo courtesy of Little Traverse Regional Historical Museum}

**Petoskey News Review**  
**Thursday, March 21, 1985**  
**Page 6**

*This is part of a continuing series on the history of the Petoskey School District, which is marking its 100th commencement this year.*

By **WILLIAM S. McCUNE**

Mrs. Alley's shanty school meted out elementary education to Petoskey students for two years, and if any of her barefooted urchins did not learn basic reading and numbers, it was not the fault of their teacher.

The number of students was growing with the town, and by 1876 it became obvious that a more substantial building was needed.

In response to public demand, a two-story, two-room brick schoolhouse was finally built on the corner of State and Howard streets.

If the narrow, slit windows and solid walls gave the building the appearance of a prison, no one seemed to notice it and after several changes it persisted as the primary school of Petoskey.

It survived a fire in the forest around it, and endured numerous complaints about its small size. The building was gradually enlarged and by 1879 had four rooms and three teachers.

Mr. Barber was the first principal and he was assisted by two teachers, Miss Watson and Miss Briggs. Miss Briggs spent most of her time with the 25 small children in an old converted bowling alley nearby.

Teachers were paid \$765 a year. The remainder of the school budget was \$1,494. Discipline was maintained by

"moral suasion" or, occasionally, by the "moral goad." With every seat taken, the total enrollment exceeded 100 pupils.

Petoskey was beginning to assert itself. The population had grown from 1,105 in 1877 to 2,500 in 1882. The Grand Hotel had been built on Mackinac Island and in Petoskey the Arlington Hotel by the Bay was in the planning stages.

The city had built a water system at a cost of \$20,000 and a sanitary sewage system was about to be built. The first 28 Bell telephones had been installed, the first long distance conversation had taken place in the Ottawa language between Hiram O. Rose and Amos Fox, and electric lights were replacing gas-flares.

Yet, it was still a frontier town, where gunfights were common and lynching often speeded the course of justice. Perhaps the citizens needed some higher education.

In July 1881, the city voted a tax of \$2,500 for a high school, and it was built on West Lake Street between Summit and Ottawa before the snow flew that fall. The first principal was Mr. Clayton, who was soon followed by John T. Ewing.

There were two other teachers, who, for the first time, graded students according to state law.

Courses were offered in grammar, stenography and arithmetic. Summer courses were given in the Methodist Church auditorium on Williams Street.

It was from this high school that the first class was gra-



uated 100 years ago, in 1885 during a crowded commencement ceremony at Mitchell Hall on lower Mitchell Street.

Invigorated by the northern climate, Petoskey High School students began to take athletics seriously.

Ernest Ohle of Hortons Bay played on the first football team in 1881. It was an informal beginning, but in those days of the flying wedge, when players wore neither helmets nor shoulder pads, and were protected only by nose guards, it was a rough game. No passing, few penalties.

The players kept warm in the winter weather by rubbing the snow on their hands, and the toughest team usually won.

As players were better organized, year after year Petoskey became the recognized champions in 1904, 1905, 1906, 1912, 1923, 1931 and 1935.

*William McCune, a Petoskey physician, is a member of the Petoskey Schools Centennial Committee. The logo accompanying this article was designed by Shannon Weston, a senior at Petoskey High School.*

MEMBERS OF THE CLASS OF 1896  
 PETOSKEY'S 100<sup>TH</sup> CLASS GRADUATES  
 CLASS OF 1985

Petoskey News-Review, Thursday, June 6, 1985, front page

Petoskey News-Review  
 February 11, 1985



MEMBERS OF the Class of 1896: (front row from left) Joanna Smith, Carrie Jennings, Ida Patton and Isabelle Finety; (middle row) Eloise Dearment, Madge Andrus, Bertha Petis,

Ina Atkin and Martha Bauerle and (back row) Jennie Bull, Cora Lee, Lewis Atkin, Jennie Cunningham and Archie Petrie. (Photo courtesy of Little Traverse Historical Society)

## Petoskey's 100th class graduates

By DIANNE MURRAY

In 1874 Petoskey's only public education facility was a board shanty, 18 by 20 feet, located off East Lake Street.

Nineteen students attended school that first year and on June 25, 1885, when the first group of seniors graduated, they walked down the aisle and sat on the floor of Mitchell Hall auditorium.

After they listened to a "neat little speech," Dr. H.T. Calkins, school board president, conferred diplomas upon the Class of '85, according to the *Petoskey Record*.

Petoskey High School has come a long way since then.

The Class of 1985 has 182 members as compared to eight members in that first class—and the Petoskey High School building is a far cry from the one where Mrs. Rachel Alley presided over "a few barefooted urchins."

Tonight, the members of the Class of 1985, their families, relatives and friends will gather to celebrate the 100th graduating class from Petoskey High School.

Ceremonies begin at 8 p.m. in the Bay View Auditorium. Delivering the commencement address will be Dr. Harlan Hatcher, president emeritus of

the University of Michigan.

A special tribute, signed by Gov. James Blanchard, state Sen. Mitch Irwin and state Rep. Pat Gagliardi was recently passed to mark the occasion.

In part, the tribute reads: "Petoskey High School has excelled as a place where students come to expand their horizons and delve into the mysteries that surround us in our world. How successfully they do this is dependent upon their willingness to learn, the skill of their teachers, the effectiveness of the curriculum, and the expertise of the school administrators.

"These important ingredients have been very much in evidence at Petoskey High School for the past century. The efforts of many people have made this success a reality. They deserve not only our commendation, but also our encouragement to keep up the good work."

Following graduation ceremonies, a dance will be held at Petoskey Middle school gymnasium. All 1985 graduates and their families, alumni and others in the community are welcome to attend. The Reef Petroleum Orchestra and its big band sound and rock group will entertain beginning at 9:30 p.m. Admission is free.



Fred Krusell

### Fred C. Krusell may be oldest Petoskey grad

At age 96, Fred C. Krusell may be the oldest living graduate of Petoskey High School.

Krusell recently answered a query from the Petoskey Schools centennial committee, which is trying to find the oldest living graduate.

The Boca Raton, Fla., resident wrote that his 1906 graduation class consisted of three boys and nine girls. He wrote that about two years ago the only other living member was a girl named, Martha Siebert. If she is deceased, "I must be the only living member at 96 and if living to March 19, 1985, I would be 97."

Krusell, who said his health is good and that he still drives his own car, was born and raised on a farm on Greenwood Road, in Petoskey.

The June 1985 class will be the 100th graduating class from Petoskey High School.