

# Northwest School News

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NUMBER 2

## ALUMNI REUNION

### SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 30

Northwest School Alumni Association officers and other former Aggies recently met at the school with Principal E. N. Reiersgard and laid out plans for the 1968 Northwest School Alumni Reunion set for Sunday, June 30 — the last day which the Northwest School officially exists as an institution.

A number of classes will be hearing from their classmates on special plans.

The final yearbook of the Northwest School of Agriculture, a special historical number, will be handed out on reunion day to persons who have already ordered copies; also, books will be available for those who wish to purchase them at this time. The yearbook may be ordered by mail; however, if you are present at the reunion, you can also have your book autographed by former classmates, faculty, and others. If you wish to order your yearbook by mail, send your check/or money-order of \$6.00 to Superintendent's Office, Northwest School.

A bronze plaque was presented to the school, on behalf of the Northwest School Alumni Association, on Commencement Day — March 22. The class of 1916, led by Ole Flaas, will dedicate this bronze plaque paying tribute to the contribution of the Northwest School to life in the Red River Valley. The plaque will be placed on the Memorial Monument at the entrance to the school.

A brief business meeting will probe alumni on their ideas on the future of Northwest School Aggie alumni activities. Ensign Jonathan Saxman, '64, of Georgetown, who is

(Continued on Page 4)



Final Graduation at Northwest School — March 22

The 60th and final Commencement exercises were held at the Northwest School of Agriculture, Crookston, on March 22 in Kiehle auditorium. The graduation rites, at which time forty-two seniors received their diplomas from Dr. B. E. Youngquist, superintendent of the University of Minnesota Northwest School and Experiment Station, signaled the final phasing out of the 63-year-old school.

Seated on the stage are the two students, University of Minnesota staff members, and Northwest School alumni who participated in the Commencement program and also in the final ceremonies which passed the "educational services torch" to the University of Minnesota Technical Institute. Seated in the foreground are members of the 1968 graduating class.

The two seniors at the Northwest School of Agriculture who had the highest scholastic standing in the graduating class were Gary Webster of St. Vincent, highest average, and Charles Steiner of Foxhome, second highest average. In addition to the two highest ranking students named, four other students were on the scholastic list of six highest seniors. In order of scholastic rank, beginning with the third highest, were: Donald Chisholm, Grand Forks, N.D.; Steve Boman, Twin Valley; Barbara J. Nelson, Grygla; and David Bohnsack, Hillsboro, N.D.

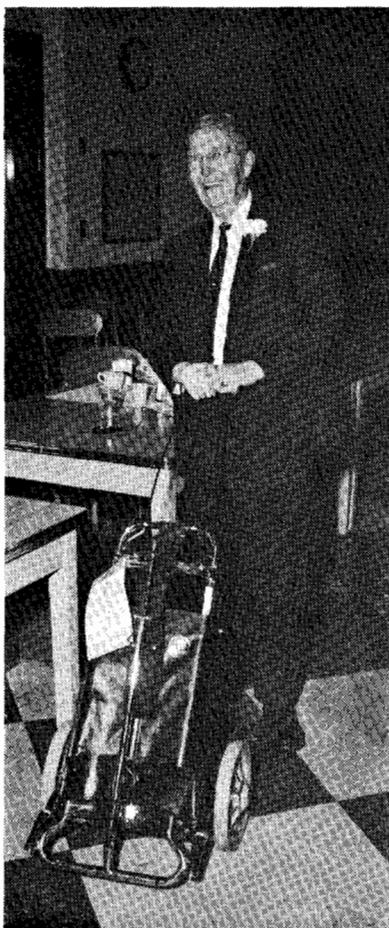
A Citizenship Award has been presented at Commencement each year to the two top citizens, one boy and one girl, of the graduating senior class. This year, the award was presented to Lawrence Schreiber of Foxhome and DeAnn Lalli of Graceton. Gold citizenship pins were presented to the honored students.

### E. N. Reiersgord Honored on March 19 at Northwest School

A farewell recognition party was given for E. N. Reiersgord on March 19 by employees of the Northwest School and Experiment Station, U of Minnesota Technical Institute, and the Northwest School senior graduating class.

Mr. Reiersgord, principal, who has been with the Northwest School of Agriculture for twenty-four years, will retire from the University on July 1, 1968.

The party was held as a pot-luck supper. Following the supper hour in the Dining Hall on the school campus, a humorous program on the theme "This is Your Life" portrayed several incidents in Reiersgord's



**ONE OF FIRST NORTHWEST SCHOOL STUDENTS . . .** Mrs. Darragh Geddes (nee Ella Fossbakken) of East Grand Forks was among the first students to attend the Northwest School of Agriculture. Her two brothers and a sister — Chris, Lewis, and Mollie Fossbakken of Fosston were members of the first graduating class of eleven students in 1909.

Mrs. Geddes recalled that she also started at the Northwest School in 1909 at the age of thirteen, coming to the school as an orphan. Her father, Paul, died in a barn fire at the Fossbakken farm in 1908. Then, she stated, she was out of school for six years as her brothers could not afford to send her, but she returned and graduated with the class of 1919. Her late husband also was a graduate of the Northwest School, graduating in 1914.

She is shown visiting, on Commencement day at the Northwest School, with Dr. Austin A. Dowell of Nevada, Iowa, on the left, who was superintendent of the Northwest School and Experiment Station from 1927 to 1937, preceding the late T. M. McCall, and Dr. B. E. Youngquist who has served as superintendent of the Northwest School and Experiment Station for the past twelve years.

(Photo — Courtesy of Crookston Times)

### E. N. REIERSGORD HONORED AT NW SCHOOL

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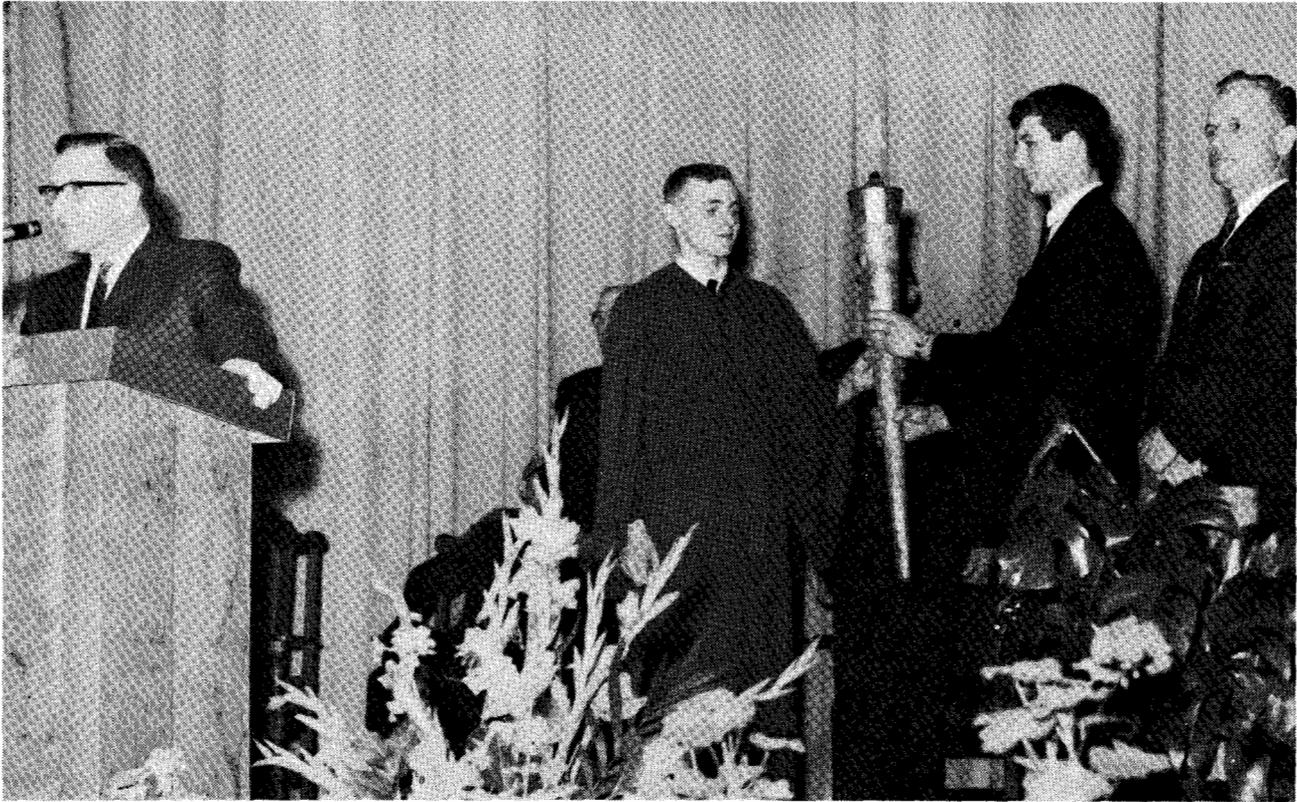
teaching career as well as undergraduate days at college.

As a gift, he was presented a new Arnold Palmer golf set including a complete set of clubs and a golf cart.

Serving on the arrangements committee for the program were David J. Anderson, Leon Flancher, Robert A. Heckman, Mrs. Henry Gebhardt, and Miss Berneil Nelson.

HAVE YOU ORDERED THE  
HISTORICAL ISSUE OF THE  
"NORTHWEST SCHOOL AGGIE"

Send \$6.00 for  
a copy — Mail to  
Superintendent,  
Northwest School,  
Crookston, Minn. 56716



**TRANSFER OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES . . .** With the phasing out of the Northwest School of Agriculture at Crookston, the "torch of educational service" carried these past sixty-three years was transferred to the University of Minnesota Technical Institute during ceremonies held in conjunction with graduation of the last Senior class of the Northwest School on March 22.

David Bohnack of Hillsboro, N.D., president of the Northwest School's class of 1968, transfers the "lighted torch of educational service" to Ronnie Tobkin of Perham, treasurer of the Student Senate of Minnesota Technical Institute. Making the charge to carry out the newly required educational needs was Dr. B. E. Youngquist, on the far left, superintendent of the Northwest School of Agriculture, while Dr. S. D. Sahlstrom, on the far right, director of Minnesota Tech, assumed the new challenge for the University of Minnesota Technical Institute, Crookton.

(Photo — Courtesy of Crookston Times)

The presentation of the last graduating Senior class was made by E. N. Reiersgard, principal, and Superintendent B. E. Youngquist presented the diplomas to the 1968 graduates. With this 60th Commencement, a total of 5,433 students have graduated from the Northwest School of Agriculture.

Gary Webster of St. Vincent gave greetings from the class of 1968. Bringing greetings to the 1968 graduates were a number of former and present staff members of the University of Minnesota including: Dr. Stanley D. Sahlstrom, director, University of Minnesota Technical Institute, Crookston; Dr. Keith N. McFarland, assistant dean and director of resident instruction for the College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics at the University of Minnesota, St. Paul; Dr. Austin A. Dowell, professor and dean emeritus, University of Minnesota, and former superintendent of the Northwest School and Experiment Station, 1926 - 1937, now living in Nevada, Iowa; Herman F. Skyberg of Fisher, a 1916 graduate of the Northwest School and a member of the University of Minnesota Board of Regents; and Dr. B. E. Youngquist, superintendent of the Northwest School and Experiment Station.

A mixed quartet composed of Mr. and Mrs. Glen Torkelson and Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth R. Miller, with Mrs. Richard Widseth (nee Clarice Thureen), as accompanist, sang "The Halls of Ivy." Kenneth, Glen, and Clarice are Northwest School alumni. Ole A. Flaot of Fisher, class of 1916, presented a bronze memorial plaque to the University of Minnesota, Crookston. This tablet memorializes the contributions of the Northwest School of Agriculture during its 63-year history. It will be mounted on the granite memorial located on the school campus.

The Reverend Eyrich E. Hansen of Crookston gave the invocation. Mrs. William A. Johnson of Crookston, organist, played the recessional.

## ALUMNI REUNION SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 30

(Continued from Page 1)

graduating from the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland, in June plans to be at the reunion. Also, Dr. Harold P. Morris of Silver Spring, Maryland, a member of the class of 1918, plans to attend the reunion. A number of faculty members, of past years, also will be in attendance.

Alumni will be interested in seeing the many changes which have been made on the campus because of the transition from a high school to a two-year technical college. Trees and shrubs are being removed and replenished, a new lighting system is now in operation, and a few buildings are being removed or refurbished. One new multi-purpose building which houses a classroom, postoffice, bookstore, and Food Services laboratory has just been completed and now in use.

Activities will get underway about 3 p.m. The campus is available all day if groups of Aggies arrange to use facilities earlier.

A "smorgasbord" will be served at 5:30 p.m. at the Dining Hall. The meal will be available to alumni, former students, and faculty; however, meal reservations should be made by June 21, if possible. Reservations should be mailed to Superintendent B. E. Youngquist, Northwest School, Crookston.

Pioneer Days are being celebrated in Crookston June 27 - 30 so there will be early and late evening activities.

Plan to attend the reunion — see classmates — see the new college now well launched.

**WE PLAN TO SEE YOU  
AT  
ALUMNI REUNION**



**FATHER AND SON** — Alumni of the Northwest School of Agriculture. Roy L. Boman of Twin Valley was a member of the graduating class of 1932. His son Steve Boman was a member of the 1968 graduating class. The elder Boman farms in the Twin Valley area and he is a certified seed grower. Steve plans to attend the U of Minnesota Technical Institute this fall. In this picture, Steve and his father are visiting in Trojan Inn (formerly Aggie Inn) during a coffee hour for parents and students on Commencement Day, March 22.

(Photo — Courtesy of Crookston Times)

## AROUND AND ABOUT WITH NW SCHOOL ALUMNI

\*\*\*Marwood Hamrick, '50, formerly of Angus, was recently elected to the position of divisional director for the Washington County Chamber of Commerce. He is a co-owner of the firm Thompson-Hamrick, Realtors and makes his home at Cottage Grove, Minnesota.

\*\*\*Dr. John R. (J. Reuben) Thompson, '39, has resigned from his position as associate professor and agronomist at the Southern School and Experiment Station, Waseca, where he had been on the staff since 1952. He has accepted the position of superintendent of Agricultural Experiment Stations, University of Hawaii at Hilo, Hawaii.

\*\*\*Mrs. James Preston (nee Peggy Bjornson), is making her home at 1306 McKinney Street, Boise, Idaho. Mr. Preston is head of the Industrial Arts Department in one of the Boise high schools.

## \* \* \* CALENDAR \* \* \*

### Northwest School and Experiment Station

**Sunday, June 30**

Northwest School  
Alumni Reunion

**Wednesday, July 17**

Crops and Soils  
Field Day

**Tues.-Wed., Aug. 13-14**

International Sun-  
flower Conference

**Feb. 22 - March 2 (1969)**

R.R. Valley Winter Shows and  
N. W. School Farmers' Week

## *Northwest School News*

Issued Quarterly by  
THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
NORTHWEST SCHOOL OF  
AGRICULTURE  
B. E. Youngquist, Superintendent  
Office  
Northwest School and Exp't. Station  
Crookston, Minnesota

# The Northwest School of Agriculture

1905 — 1968

The 60th and the final Commencement exercises were held at the Northwest School of Agriculture, Crookston, at 2 p.m. on March 22, 1968.

The Commencement ceremony, at which time forty-two Seniors received their diplomas from faculty, signaled the final phasing out of the 63-year-old school.

The educational service of the University of Minnesota at Crookston now becomes the sole duty of the two-year technical college which was launched the fall of 1966.

Eleven students were in the first class that graduated from the Northwest School. Peak enrollment at the school came between 1938 and 1958 when the enrollment ranged between 400 and 475 students. In the second decade, better than a half thousand school teachers were trained to meet the needs of the flourishing country schools. A special Teachers' Training curriculum was a necessity between 1912 and 1919.

#### INDUSTRY GIVES LAND AND BUILDINGS

James J. Hill's gift of land to the Northwest School and Agricultural Experiment Station have been integral partners in research and education in agriculture since its founding here in the 1890's. It was in 1895 that James J. Hill donated most of a section of land to the University of Minnesota for the purpose of founding an agricultural experiment station. Interestingly enough, James Hill attached a clause in the land transfer which stipulated that within a decade a school must be built to teach what was learned from the process of research.

A University of Minnesota Regent, Herman F. Skyberg of Fisher, a Northwest School of Agriculture graduate of the class of 1916, in remarks delivered at the Commence-

ment exercises, said many were dismayed at the gift for it would take away some good "duck hunting grounds."

One of the earliest research projects was land drainage. James Hill continued his interest in the school by giving the Station a building where the most modern classrooms and laboratories were built and it served the school up until 1959. The building was named Hill building.

T. A. Hoverstad was the first superintendent and he served until 1905. The school began that year and opened with 31 students. A decade later, the enrollment had grown to 200 students. In the 1930's, the Station saw a major rebuilding and remodeling project to handle the ever-increasing student body. The student enrollment continued to grow until the late 1950's when school bus lines of organized school districts brought secondary-level schools to the homes of rural people. This decline eventually helped lead to the final phasing out of the Northwest School.

At one time in the history of the United States, there were more than one hundred schools like the Northwest School in the nation — a six-month residence school designed primarily for farm youth. There were five of them in Minnesota located at Grand Rapids, Waseca, Morris, and Crookston. The school at St. Paul was intended to serve older youth and was founded in the late 1880's. The Southern School of Agriculture at Waseca is the only such institution now left in the state and this was launched under the leadership of B. E. Younquist in 1952.

#### THE CHANGE BEGINS

When enrollments were on the decline in the 1950's, an in-depth study

of the schools of agriculture as they existed in the state and as they once had existed in the nation was the subject of a doctoral thesis by B. E. Youngquist. The conclusion of the thesis was that the schools of agriculture were providing outstanding educational service. Further, there were even greater educational needs at the two-year college level. The doctoral thesis then became part of the force which triggered additional studies and ultimate action by the citizen-leaders of the Red River Valley and by the Minnesota State Legislature to phase out the Northwest School and to develop a new college on the existing campus. The Northwest School of Agriculture commenced phase out in the fall of 1965 beginning with the ninth grade class. The new U of Minnesota Technical College was then launched in the fall of 1966; and, currently, the enrollment has already grown to over 300 students.

The Northwest School of Agriculture was the first outlying school outside the St. Paul campus as was the Northwest Agricultural Experiment Station. Interestingly enough, the Northwest School and Experiment Station was the first Agricultural Extension institution in the Red River Basin — before there were county agricultural agents and before there were Agricultural Extension specialists or teachers of vocational agriculture.

#### AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH STATION TO CONTINUE

The Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota and leadership in the Minnesota State Legislature, at the time that policy was developed for phasing out the prep school, expressed concern that the Research Station must continue the mission

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## NORTHWEST SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE

1905 - 1908

(Continued)

of agricultural research. In fact, there was concern expressed by citizen-leaders that the Northwest Agricultural Experiment Station must gird to better meet the challenge of research for the future. The research scientists would now be programmed heavier for research and less for formal educational service. A new wing is being added to the Animal Science building which will become the agricultural research center with the superintendent, the research staff, and the clerical staff all located in one building together with classrooms, livestock pavilion, research laboratories, offices and seminar rooms. This facility will centralize the operations of the research station.

A portion of the Northwest School teaching staff has joined the technical college staff which is headed by Dr. Stanley D. Sahlstrom, director. A few of the instructors now have joined other institutions or other interests as the school phased out. E. N. Reiersgord, principal, who has been with the Northwest School for twenty-four years and retires from the University July 1, 1968, presented the final Senior class for Commencement. H. W. Soderburg will retire in 1969. He will assist research scientists with research and also teach welding in the college until his retirement.

### COMMENCEMENT

At the Commencement exercises, Ole A. Flaot of Fisher, a member of the class of 1916, presented a bronze plaque on behalf of the Northwest School Alumni Association. This will be mounted on the granite memorial which is located near the entrance to the campus; also, the plaque will be dedicated on Alumni Reunion day June 30. Mr. Flaot presented this memorial plaque as a tribute to the contributions of the Northwest School and Experiment Station to the enrichment of the Red River Basin. Dr. A. A. Dowell of Nevada, Iowa, former superintendent and dean emeritus of the College of Agriculture, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, paid high tribute to the leadership of the administration and staff of the Northwest School for providing research and educational leadership for rural people during better than half a century.

The final ceremony of Commencement day, March 22, was the passing of the "educational torch" of the Northwest School of Agriculture to the new University of Minnesota Technical College — a ceremony marking the closing of a glorious chapter in educational history and marking the unfolding of an exciting new chapter.

IN SUMMARY — THE NORTHWEST SCHOOL pioneered education, research, and service for farmers

in the Red River Valley. Introduced science to farming. Developed useful farm organizations. Gave birth to the Red River Valley Winter Shows and Northwest School Farmers' Week.

Five thousand four hundred thirty-three graduates have gone forth as citizen-leaders. Over half a thousand school teachers were trained to serve the country schools of the area. Tens of thousands of others, both young and old, have been touched — through the teachings of a dedicated and skillful faculty — at short courses, at county fairs, at meetings, through the news media, and at field days.

Life in the Red River Basin is materially richer. But, more important — the high precept and example and the firm guidance of the campus community developed a strong social and spiritual fiber among students.

The Northwest Agricultural Experiment Station continues — preparing to meet the exciting challenge of research for a rapidly changing scene.

No less, the leadership of the Agricultural Extension Service will escalate the call upon the expertise of the highly trained Northwest Experiment Station staff to help meet the growing demand for information.

**A chapter has closed — another unfolds.**