

# The Buckland Times <sup>50'</sup> #11

August 1997

Alive and pretty well, thank you!

Editor: Susan Way 74 Hudson St., Manchester, Ct. 06040



The Case family band on stage at the Buckland School auditorium. Pictured from left to right: Eunice, Patria, Beaton, Warren, Neil, Hattie & Harper Case.

## Music in Buckland

On a warm summer evening in the 1920's music could be heard in several corners of Buckland. Charlie Glode remembers listening to the Case family's music drift over the fields from Meekville. Julian P. Palmes and his parents moved to 1315 Tolland Tpk. in 1902 Gladys Adams tells us in her book. He "was a drummer all his life" and had a collection of drums. He marched in local parades as part of the "Spirit of '76" and he later moved to Burnham St. where drumming could often be heard in the evening. Of course all that practicing could be hard on some ears. Norman Southergill remembers that their landlord James Crooks, a blacksmith before he retired and a Civil War veteran also marched in the "Spirit of '76". He also remembers listening to the watchman at the trolley generating station (the building still stands next to the old Buckland Train Station) playing his violin in the evenings. Dick Reichenbach mentioned the dance held at the tobacco warehouse to celebrate it's opening in 1923. Dick Keeney remembered the music and dancing twice a week at the Boukas "Dance Hall", an open air pavillion which stood behind their big gray and white farmhouse on Buckland St. Refreshments were served. I haven't heard who provided the music. It was rented out to various organizations in the summer. This was later the home of the Paquin family, and they continued to rent out the pavillion in the summer. Bob Southergill remembers an ethnic fair held here. In 1940 Miller's Dance Hall opened up on the east end of Tolland Tpk.

Perhaps the center of Buckland social and musical life was the monthly PTA meeting. The new Buckland School was built in 1922. The PTA took on the job of raising money to buy furnishings and equipment. The monthly meeting was a fund raiser as well as a business meeting and was the focus of much community effort, "everybody pitched in". There were card games and refreshments. Alice Jackson Cusson remembers her mother baking all day when it was her turn to provide those refreshments. The Case family's contribution to the effort was the musical entertainment. Carol Keeney Hougas tells me that in later years musical and theatrical productions became an important part of Buckland School life under the direction of their school Principal. Buckland at this time was a comparatively quiet corner of

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The Family of Harper & Hattie Case

As I began by saying, some of that music came from a house on the west side of what would eventually be known as Angell St. Here for many years lived the family of Harper and Hattie Case. I had a very nice conversation with their son Beaton Case who was born July 3, 1914. He told me some of his family's story and gave me a music lesson as well while he explained the kinds of instruments they played and the kinds of music they played. His father Harper W. Case was born in 1886 in Colchester, and moved to South Windsor with his family when he was about 5 yrs. old. Harper's father George Case had purchased a farm of about 30 acres with "contents of buildings, stock, tools, implements and furniture, said farm and everything upon it excepting my own wardrobe and a few relics which belonged to my father" along with a piece of "wood and sprout land". So says the deed from John W. Burnham. This grey house still stands at the top of the highest hill on Pleasant Valley Rd.. This was the house that Beaton knew as his grandparent's house. I found them there in the 1900 Census. Notice that at that time it was also the home of his great grandparents Leander and Mary Brown. George Case was a tobacco farmer and had his own warehouse. In his spare time he liked to umpire local baseball games. Beaton had no trouble remembering that his grandmother Mary made great pancakes, pies, and marmalade and raised turkeys, chickens and cows.

west of Clark St. and the South Windsor border. Here is where most of their children were born and where their oldest daughter Amelia died in 1918 at the age of 8 during the Flu epidemic. In that same year Harper Case bought the house on Meekville Rd. from Mary F. Irish. He had purchased 28 1/2 acres of farmland on the west side of Meekville from Daniel Calnan in 1917. Soon after the Case family moved to Meekville. I found them there in the 1920 census. Some of you who knew the Case family will not remember Patria Case. She was born on St. Patrick's Day and named Patria, which in Latin means native country. When at one point Hattie Case was not feeling strong enough to care for her family of 7, Patria went to live with her grandparents George and Mary Case and was raised by them. I'm sure some of you have wondered where the name Beaton came from. He was named after his uncle Beaton Squires, but I'm sure that's not the beginning of that story.

Beaton remembers a name that was carved into a windowsill in his bedroom - Harold B. Irish. This was Buckland's other Irish family. If there is any connection with Irish which moved to the Hartman Plantation in 1927 I not aware of it. Harold Irish served and died in the First World War.

U.S. Census 1900, South Windsor. The families of George Case & Leander Brown, all born in Ct., their parents also all born in Ct.

|                 |          |       |              |    |             |             |             |           |
|-----------------|----------|-------|--------------|----|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| Case George     | Head     | M. W. | Dec 16 1837  | 17 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut | Farmer    |
| Mary C.         | Wife     | M. F. | Feb 18 1843  | 56 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |           |
| Harper W.       | Son      | M. W. | Dec 11 1878  | 21 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut | At School |
| Leander B.      | Son      | M. W. | Sept 1858    | 41 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut | At School |
| Nelson G.       | Son      | M. W. | Sept 1873    | 26 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |           |
| Marcus E.       | Son      | M. W. | Sept 1875    | 24 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |           |
| Urcia E.        | Daughter | M. F. | June 1877    | 22 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |           |
| Bridget Leander | Head     | M. W. | Jan 1842     | 58 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut | Farmer    |
| Mary E.         | Wife     | M. F. | Aug Aug 1846 | 54 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |           |
| Hattie P.       | Daughter | M. F. | Feb 1878     | 21 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut | At School |

Hattie Case was born Henrietta Amelia Squires in Pool's Harbor, New Foundland, Canada (near St. John's) the daughter of John and Amelia Squires. They came to South Windsor when her father became minister of the Wapping Community church. He served from 1907 to 1913 and then moved on to another parish in the tradition of the Methodist church. The parsonage was then at 1790 Ellington Rd. Harper and Hattie became acquainted quite naturally at church services and socials which were very important social events in Connecticut's farm country. They were married by her father Dec. 25, 1909 and began their married life on Chappel Rd. in the white house just

Harper Case eventually owned more than 100 acres of land mostly west of their house, good farm land that he bought from Fanny Clark, Herbert McIntosh, Frank Bourassa and Martin Hageman. In 1922 when he and his neighbors decided to join the Connecticut Valley Tobacco Grower's Association he grew 40 acres of Broadleaf tobacco, and harvested 97,000 pounds of tobacco. He lost his farm to the Hartford - Conn. Trust Co. while he was a member of the Assoc. as did many other farmers. (for more about the Assoc. and the 1920's please see The B.T. # 3, 4&5) From that time on he worked for other tobacco farmers.

U.S. Census 1920, Part of Meekville, Manchester, Ct.

|            |          |           |          |      |    |             |             |             |
|------------|----------|-----------|----------|------|----|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1611-11-10 | Palmer   | Leander P | Head     | 1871 | 48 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
|            |          | Harper W  | Wife     | 1878 | 41 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
|            |          | Beaton    | Son      | 1914 | 6  | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
| 1611-11-16 | Barnett  | Joseph    | Head     | 1855 | 64 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
|            |          | Harper W  | Wife     | 1878 | 41 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
|            |          | Hattie P  | Daughter | 1878 | 41 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
|            |          | Beaton    | Son      | 1914 | 6  | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
| 1611-11-16 | Barnett  | Charles   | Head     | 1855 | 64 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
|            |          | Hattie P  | Wife     | 1878 | 41 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
| 1611-11-16 | Case     | Harper W  | Head     | 1878 | 41 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
|            |          | Hattie P  | Wife     | 1878 | 41 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
|            |          | Beaton    | Son      | 1914 | 6  | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
| 1611-11-16 | Hunter   | William   | Head     | 1878 | 41 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
|            |          | Hattie P  | Wife     | 1878 | 41 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
|            |          | Beaton    | Son      | 1914 | 6  | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
| 1632-11-11 | Maschick | Frederic  | Head     | 1878 | 41 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
|            |          | Hattie P  | Wife     | 1878 | 41 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
|            |          | Beaton    | Son      | 1914 | 6  | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
| 1632-11-11 | Shelton  | Charles   | Head     | 1878 | 41 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
|            |          | Hattie P  | Wife     | 1878 | 41 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
|            |          | Beaton    | Son      | 1914 | 6  | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
|            |          | Hattie P  | Daughter | 1878 | 41 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
|            |          | Beaton    | Son      | 1914 | 6  | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
| 1701-11-11 | Blake    | Quinn     | Head     | 1878 | 41 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
|            |          | Hattie P  | Wife     | 1878 | 41 | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |
|            |          | Beaton    | Son      | 1914 | 6  | Connecticut | Connecticut | Connecticut |

**The Case Family Band**

Chances are though that those of you who were attending Buckland School in the 20's and 30's will remember Harper Case best for his music, his fiddle playing and the Case family band. I find myself wondering what might have inspired Harper to teach all of his children to play a variety of instruments apparently with the idea of playing together as a band. Hattie Case played the piano, but Beaton tells me his father was the inspiration behind the band and the family's music teacher. He took this task seriously giving his children a good basic music education. Beaton tried to pass a little of that on to me while we talked. Beaton feels his father was a better teacher than he was a musician. He must have had some music education himself when he was young, but Beaton did not know from whom.

Each child began learning on the drums then eventually taught the next youngest child what he or she had learned while taking lessons on the saxophone or another instrument. They learned to read music. They did have some outside lessons. Beaton remembers taking drum lessons from Francis Hart. He identified the watchman at the trolley generating station who played his fiddle in the evenings as Julius Strong. Harper took a few lessons from him.

And the family played together first for PTA Thursday night fund raisers, wist parties and the monthly PTA meetings. He says everybody came and everybody helped out. Providing entertainment was his family's service to the community. As they got older and more practiced they played for Square dances at Wapping School, weddings and other events including Charlie and Ruth Glodes wedding. Eventually Harper made arrangements for them to play at the Legion Hall in Weathersfield and every Saturday night they all piled into their Model A for the ride to Weathersfield.

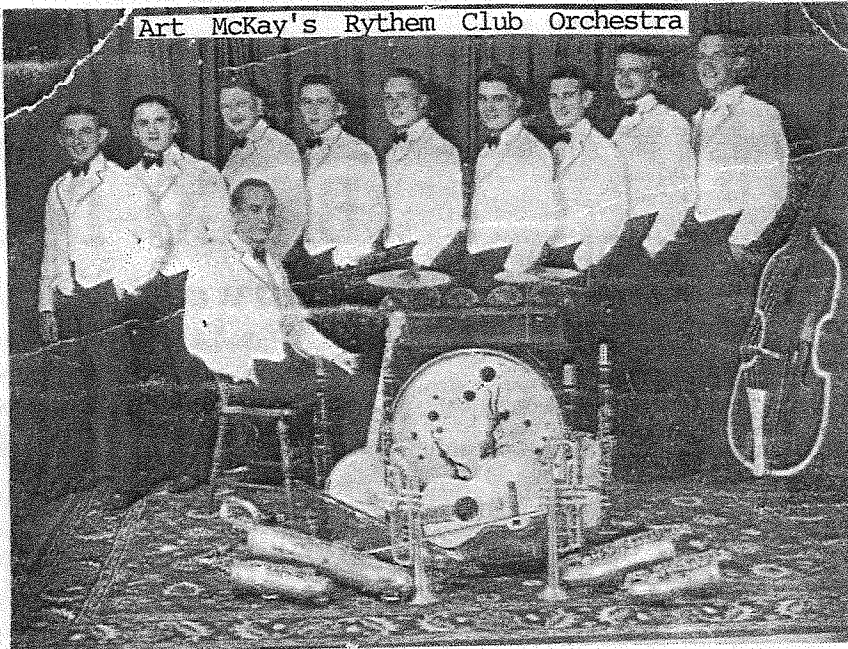
They played old fashioned dance music that changed with the times. Some of that music Beaton liked, some of it he didn't, but he played on. For one night's effort they earned enough to buy a week's groceries.

Warren and Beaton went on to play with other groups like Art McKay's pictured here, at high school dances that were held after basketball games in the State Armory, with Bill Kanehl at Jarvis Grove. At the Oak Street Grill and Raimander's both on Oak St., very busy places on Thursday, Friday and Sat. nights filled with workers from the Cheney Mills. Beaton played with the Pratt & Whitney club Orchestra that played at some big events around the state, and with one group or another at the Bond Hotel, Norwalk Inn Manchester Country Club, Cavey's and at many weddings, including Charlie & Ruth Glodes wedding. He mentions lots of other local muscicians including Tony Dzen who played acordian, and who lives on North Main St., I believe.

Beaton played mostly baritone sax and clarinet and even did some singing, which began one night when the hired singer didn't show up. Of course he went to see all the Big Bands at the State Theater in Hartford, Artie Shaw, Hal Kemp. The orchestras that he admired the most were Lawrence Welk's and Guy Lombardo's especially for their broad saxophone sound and tone that were their distinguishing sound. He sang me a few bars of Guy Lombardo's theme song to illustrate what he meant. You remember. Benny Goodman's clarinet of course was another favorite of his.

**The Farrand brothers**

Here we have two pictures which show that both Country and Big Band music were once native to this part of Connecticut. This surprises me for some reason. These pictures were given to me by Lenny Farrand who remembered that his brother Jimmy had once played with Beaton & Warren Case in Art McKay's orchestra. From Jimmy's collection of clippings you



Art McKay's Rythem Club Orchestra

Art McKay's Rythem Club Orchestra with Art seated in front. Lft. to Rt. Jimmy Farrand, Charlie Genovesi, Eddie Batson, Eddie Dziadus, Beaton Case, Warren Case, Bill Braithwaite, Bill Kanehl, Harvey Gould.

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can see that there was once a very active musical night life in Manchester. Jimmy Farrand was something of a natural music talent. He apparently had only a few lessons from George Smith on the banjo. That's him at the back of Hank Keene's Conn. Hill Billies. He and Lenny grew up on North School St. Their musical world grew up around technological changes that began back in the 1800's.



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Hank Keene and His Conn. Hill Billies

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Vaudville to TV

Apel's Opera house, built in 1889 was once the center of cultural events in North Manchester. Most of you will know where that building still stands next to the R.R. tracks, Oakland St. and the Farmer's Coop. Perhaps we can call this a practical Yankee version of an Opera House. It has very little in common with Carnegie Hall. It looks like a warehouse and it served as one for many years afterwards, but for years it was host to all kinds of cultural activities and many of the traveling musical, and theatrical troupes that were then traveling around the country. According to William E. Buckley in A New England Pattern "The arrival of the motion picture brought about the end of the road company era." I'm sure we can add to that the invention of the phonograph and radio. Have you visited the Communications Museum on Main St. in East Hartford yet? Eventually movie theaters began to appear. Do you know where Turn Hall was, or for that matter where it still stands today? Lenny Farrand tells me that Bill Cambell ran the movie projector there. He was also a clerk at the Railroad station. You can still see the ticket window and projection booth, apparently it was built with movies in mind. Was it Manchester's first movie theater? Who played that piano for the silent films that still stands on the stage? Have you figured it out yet? Many of you know someone who held their wedding reception there I'm sure. I believe I'll keep you in suspense till the next issue.

New kinds of music were sweeping the country with new dance steps to go with them. An energetic generation coming of age loved the music and loved to dance. Several people around town opened up places with room for music and dancing. Turn Hall was one of these. I found it listed in the 1922 City Directory. There was a Monte Carlo Dance Hall (or Pine Grove Tavern at 402 Tolland Tpk. in 1931 -3, the City View (or Keeney's) Dance Hall on Keeney St. 1933 - 1965 and Miller's Dance Hall at 750 Tolland Tpk. appears in 1940. (Was that in Buckland or Oakland?) But there were apparently some places that never made the Directory, the Boukas Dance Hall and Jarvis' Grove for instance, there was also a dance hall in Highland Park for Case factory workers.

Miller's Dance Hall & Farm

I spoke with Ray Miller who still lives on Tolland Tpk. just across the street from 743 Tolland Tpk. where he grew up. Miller's Dance Hall was his father Peter's idea. Ray helped move the building from the corner of Middle tpk. and Walker St.. The building had 10" by 12" beams and the building was 35' wide 100' long. They moved it on the back of a model A Ford truck, if you can imagine that. Lenny Farrand said "Well that must have been Jarvis' Grove." They had a ball field there and a dance hall." I mentioned roof collapsed one winter under too much snow and ice. Thankfully noone was inside, and it was rebuilt, this time 45' wide and 110' long with timber ring and bolt hardware to hold the beams in place. This building still stands as part of "The Jester's Court" banquet hall. Miller's Dance Hall was open on Saturday nights. Musicians earned \$5.00 for the night. Ray's mother Mary was the cashier, and it's been said that

not much escaped her notice. She ran a tight ship. to Ray Miller that the tobacco shed standing behind his house is one of the best kept that I've seen. He said that he and his father moved that too from Glastonbury one spring. He thinks his father paid about \$1,000 dollars for it and it was no easy job, though he remembered it as just something that needed to be done at the time. The Dance Hall was set up on a piece of land that could not be farmed. The Of course the Dance Hall was just a side line for the Miller family. They were farmers. Tobacco was their cash crop. Peter Miller was a member of the Tobacco Grower's Assoc. in the 1920's and suffered the downturn in the tobacco market and the depression right along with most of the other farmers in Buckland.

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James Farrand, 17 year old son of Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Farrand of 185 North Main street, has become a member of Hank Keene's Connecticut Hill Billies, an orchestra broadcasting over the National Broadcasting Company's chain in New York, as a banjo player. He has appeared in vaudeville.

It was only twenty months ago that young Farrand began taking lessons of George Smith, local musician. After hearing him play, Hank Keene, who is a native of South Coventry, gave the boy a trial at the NBC studios in New York. His success was instantaneous and he was called back for further engagements.

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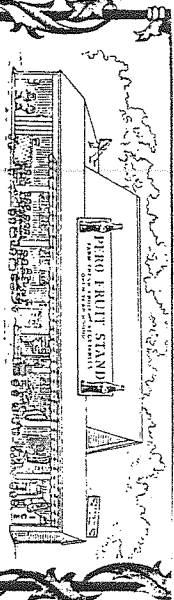
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Ray's mother was Mary Erickson before she was married, Howard Erickson's sister. I believe their father was Christian Erickson and that they lived for a number of years on Buckland St., next to the Boukas family. Ray remembers the cows, pigs (16 or 18), turkeys and chickens his mother raised. Chicks were cared for in the cellar and sold. There was a Poultry Assoc. and a regular competition held at the Manchester Armory. (Harvey Johnson's father was president of the Assoc. at one time.) and Mary Erickson Miller took some prizes with her Rhode Island Red Hens. Raising raspberries, making sauerkraut and pigs knuckles were some of her other talents. Peter Miller grew up in Hartford where his father was brewmaster at the New England Brewery on Windsor St. Among Peter's yearly jobs was helping to cut ice from nearby ponds. The Miller farm had a place to store ice in their barn. The Hackett farm owned the ice cutting equipment and in exchange for helping with the harvest the Miller's received so much ice which was packed down under one foot of sawdust. It would keep all summer this way. The Dance Hall was sold sometime after 1954.

Perhaps you're wondering as I did what happened to all of this live music and dancing in Manchester. It hasn't entirely disappeared. [Have you figured out where Turn Hall is yet?] Some folks had the answer in one word- television. Technology gives and it takes away. America became fascinated with television. People began to stay at home on Saturday night to watch the Ed Sullivan Show! There may be other explanations as well, which we may discuss in the next issues. It's seems quite clear to me that these places and social gatherings helped to knit Manchester's villages and neighborhoods together, not to mention many a budding romance and future family.



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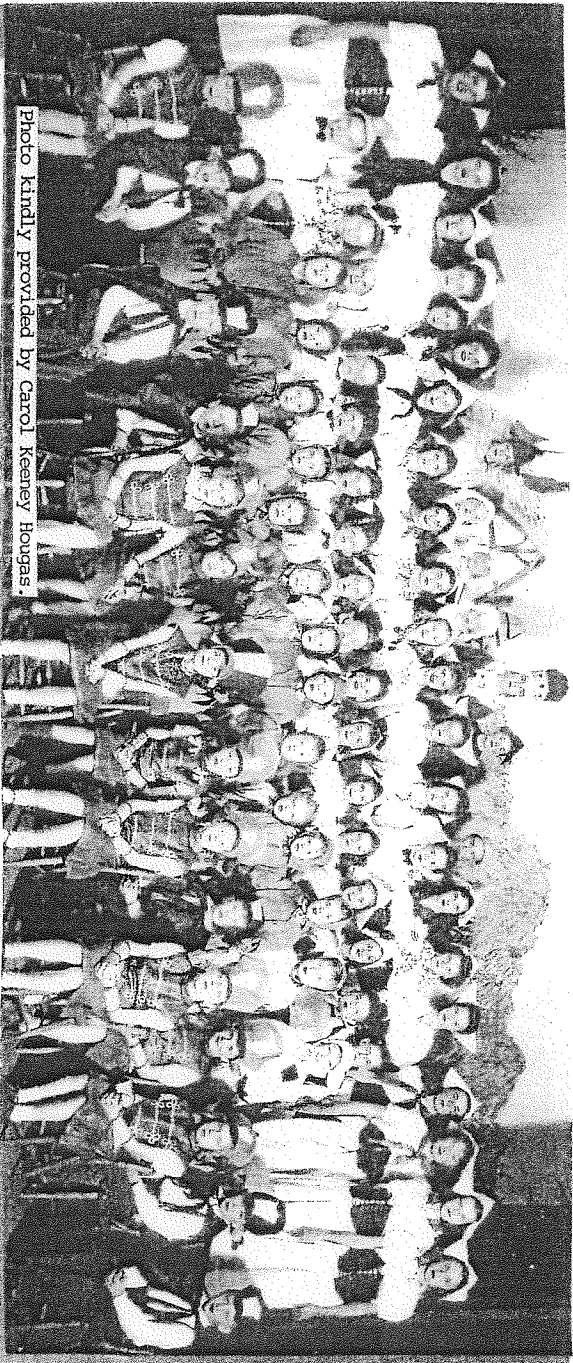


Photo kindly provided by Carol Keeney Hougas.

The students of Buckland School, about 1947, in costume for their production of "The Magic Piper" under the direction of their principal Ethel Robb. Top row from left. #3 Edith Williams, #4 Betty Brown, #5 Alice Cummings, #7 George Ewing, #9 Sam Coroner, #10 Sam Corder, #11 Melvin Patch, #11 Robert Culver, #12 Louis Warren, #14 Vivian West, #15 Dot Gerich, #19 Lois

## School Play Well Presented

### Youthful Performers at Buckland School Make Excellent Theatrics.

A capacity audience greeted the youthful performers of the operetta "The Magic Piper" at the Buckland school last evening. The operetta was opened with a poem by Vivian West, whose excellent performance set the tone for the rest of the cast. Against a background of old

Manchester Town, painted by the pupils, the opening scenes saw a picture of the in their city. Louis Warren, who played the part of the town clerk, made every entrance one of amusement to the audience.

#### Solo Parts Presented

Solo parts deserve much praise as sung by Rosemary Peck, as Gretchen, Shirley Machle, as Gretchen, Betty Brown, as Peter, Lisa Ewing, as Peter, Edith Williams, as Gretchen, Sam Coroner, as Peter, Alice Cummings, as Peter, Louis Warren, as Gretchen, Melvin Patch, as Peter, Robert Culver, as Peter, Sam Corder, as Peter, Vivian West, as Gretchen, Dot Gerich, as Peter, Lois Warren, as Gretchen, and the Crown. The solo parts were sung by Rosemary Peck, Shirley Machle, Betty Brown, Lisa Ewing, Edith Williams, Sam Coroner, Alice Cummings, Louis Warren, Melvin Patch, Robert Culver, Sam Corder, Vivian West, Dot Gerich, Lois Warren, and the Crown. The solo parts were sung by Rosemary Peck, Shirley Machle, Betty Brown, Lisa Ewing, Edith Williams, Sam Coroner, Alice Cummings, Louis Warren, Melvin Patch, Robert Culver, Sam Corder, Vivian West, Dot Gerich, Lois Warren, and the Crown.

The Kyrina Band, consisting of the Rhythm Band, consisted in red, white and blue and led by Jean Smith was compared to children of the first three grades. Their performance was equal to that of the older pupils.

#### The Kyrina Band

The Kyrina Band, consisting of the Rhythm Band, consisted in red, white and blue and led by Jean Smith was compared to children of the first three grades. Their performance was equal to that of the older pupils. The rats with their grey costumes and long tails played their part well and the audience waited eagerly for each entrance. The rats were made up entirely of first grade pupils. The game scene for act two gave the audience another chance to see the splendid performance of George Ewing, the piper. A dance was put on by the children of grades 4, 5 and 6. This was a central native scene. In act three the children are returned to their parents and the songs of wedding were uppermost in all the stages of the drama.

Row 2: #1 Eva Pasquallini, #8 Colleen Aborn, #9 Bill Keeney. Row 3: #2 Florence Patch, #3 Lila Lee, #6 Bunny Zaranda, #7 Bill Wright, #11 Dixie Dugan, #12 Lowana Aborn, #13 Betty Darna, #14 Carol Keeney, #17 Bill Glode(?). Row 4: #13 Michael Strange, #14 Howard Whaples. Row 5: #1 Barbara Armstrong, #4 Russell Culver, #5 Edith Glode, #7 Jean Senfluk, #11 Laura Pasquallini, #12 Irene Peterson, #13 Arlene Herring, #15 Frank Butkus(?).

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