

Albion Academy

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the public to raise money for the school. Even the 600-specimen Kumlien Cabinet was sold to Capt. O. P. Saunders for \$500 to keep the Academy in the black. A March 2, 1888, letter from the University of Wisconsin to Principal Maxson of the Albion Academy commended the Academy on the quality of exceptional school work performed by the students sent to the University!

In 1890 the Academy began publication of a monthly magazine, *The Albion Campus*. Although the students and teachers enjoyed great rapport, the Board was looking at the lack of funding and considering what to do with the property. The Academy was eventually closed and the property was purchased in 1894 by Beloit Professor Peter Hendrickson who continued the academy lessons.

In 1901, the property was sold to a conglomerate of 16 Norwegian Lutheran churches who managed the Academy until 1918. The major decision to close for good was the 1915 fire that destroyed Main Hall, eliminating the dining room, laundry and library of the Academy. Another factor

was the free public high schools in Cambridge, Edgerton and Stoughton. And the third factor for closing was the entrance of the U.S. into the Great War in Europe.

Keeping the cost to students as low as possible and having no endowment to cover expenses beyond the student cost finally defeated the Board's ability to keep the Albion Academy open. But the camaraderie and family atmosphere of the school kept the alumni very close to each other. They are the people who began the Historical Society, preserved the Academy and its history for future generations to remember the early education of Wisconsin. They even moved a one-room school next to the Academy in 1960 to show the range of educational opportunities to Wisconsin kids.

All the three floors of Kumlien Hall were filled with historical memorabilia by 1965 when a disastrous fire totally destroyed the whole building in December. The Society members used their insurance money, wonderful donations from the community and an appropriation from the Wisconsin Legislature to build

a two-story replica of the Hall. Today we can still show and tell the story of education in Wisconsin.

The History of the Albion Academy is a book compiled for the 1975 Bicentennial by a 1918 graduate of the Academy, Svea Adolphson, a dedicated teacher in the Illinois school system for many years. It is available at the Museum for purchase. She also helped set up the classroom in the Museum and her handwriting is on the chalk board showing the schedule of classes.

Come see us in Albion just north of Edgerton on Sundays in June, July and August from 1-4 p.m.



Albion Academy Orchestra. (Photo from Elizabeth Page Larson courtesy of Albion Academy Historical Society)



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