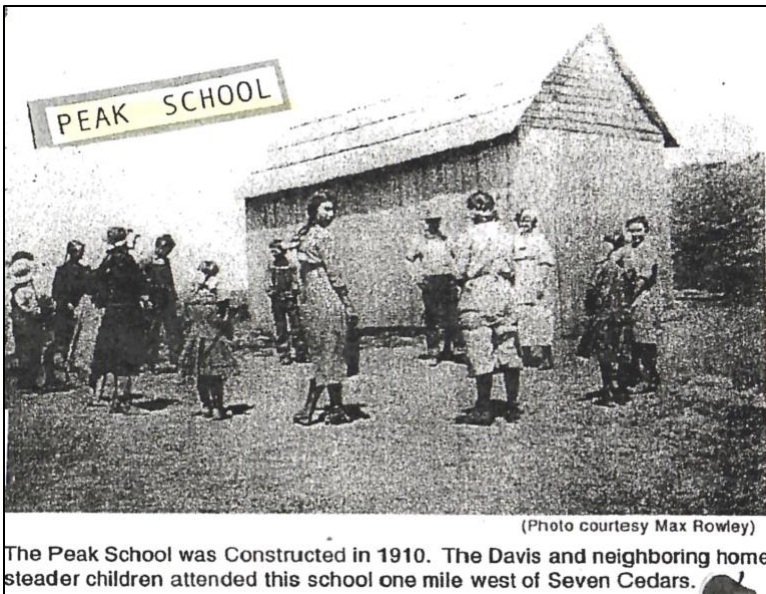


## Peak School District

The first Peak School was established in February 1908 out of a part of the Zenia and Hettenpome School Districts.<sup>1</sup>

The new Peak School District was to be “Bounded and particularly described” as follows:

Beginning at the N. E. corner of Sec. 86, Township 3 South, Range 6 East, H. M. run west on section line to N. E. Corner of Section 33 N, on section line to N. E. Cor. of Sec. 28, W on Sec. line N. W. Cor. of Sec. 29; S. on section line to S. W. Cor. of Sec. 29; W to Humboldt Co. line, S on county line to S. W. Cor. of Se1/4 of the Se1/4 of Sec. 80, T 4 S, R 6 E; E on Sec. lines to Twp. line, Twp. 4 S, R 6 E, ‘thence N on twp line to place of beginning.’<sup>2</sup>



The place was described as “located on Gray Point, which is a cold, open-ridge”.<sup>3</sup>

A petition against the formation of the district was filed in April of 1908 with the Board of Supervisors (acting as the County Board of Education at that time in history) but was denied.<sup>4</sup> The concern was that the new district was taking a part of the Zenia and Hettenpome school district territory and that it would take students away from the Hoaglin School District.<sup>5</sup>

An election was held on August 2, 1909, to vote on a tax to build and furnish a schoolhouse. The proposal passed. Fifty cents were levied upon every hundred dollars of assessed property within the new Peak School District to raise the total amount of \$250.<sup>6</sup> This was likely “the permanent log schoolhouse on the western slope of Kettenpom Peak about one mile west of Seven Cedars”.<sup>7</sup> Prior to the new schoolhouse being built, the school was held at the Davis home. Interestingly, the mailing address for the Peak School District was first Alderpoint and then in 1912 it was changed to Zenia, before returning to Alderpoint.<sup>8</sup> This fact may very well have been about the nearest functioning Post Office rather than the actual address of the school.

Miss Leo Herzinger, was the first teacher at the new school for the beginning of the 1908-09 school year. She closed the fall term on October 3, 1908.<sup>9</sup> Miss Emma M. Butts was the teacher at the Peak School District in the fall of 1910 but was “called to her home by the illness of her mother” in September, and another teacher had to take her place.<sup>10</sup> That teacher was, apparently, Miss Paula Thomas who closed the school on November 11, 1910 for the winter vacation.<sup>11</sup>

In 1912, the Peak School opened for the “fall” term on July 8th with Miss Lillian White, from the Pitt White

<sup>1</sup> “Board of Supervisors”, *The Trinity Journal*, February 15, 1908.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Supahan, Sarah, email communication with Canale, Peggy who had interviewed Calvin Stewart, October 25, 2023.

<sup>4</sup> “Board of Supervisors”, *The Trinity Journal*, July 11, 1908.

<sup>5</sup> “Board of Supervisors”, *The Trinity Journal*, February 15, 1908, May 23, 1908, and July 11, 1908.

<sup>6</sup> “Election Notice”, *The Trinity Journal*, July 17, 1909, and August 23, 1909.

<sup>7</sup> Keter, Thomas S., “A Compendium of People and Places for the North Fork Eel River Region during the Homesteading Era”, [http://wordpress.solararch.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/people\\_and\\_places\\_nferw\\_vol\\_1.pdf](http://wordpress.solararch.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/people_and_places_nferw_vol_1.pdf), 2017. Accessed August 23, 2023, 161.

<sup>8</sup> Disbursement Records, Historic Records Collection, Trinity County Office of Education.

<sup>9</sup> *The Trinity Journal*, October 3, 1908.

<sup>10</sup> “Local Brevities”, *The Trinity Journal*, October 1, 1910.

<sup>11</sup> “Local Brevities”, *The Trinity Journal*, December 10, 1910.

Ranch, as teacher. Miss White closed the Peak school for the fall term in mid-November 1912. Miss White would “leave later to pass the winter in Eureka where her brother Floyd is attending High school”. She was said to have taught for a number of years at the Peak School.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, she is mentioned in the local paper as still teaching there in 1916.<sup>13</sup>

On July 7, 1916, there was a notice in the paper regarding an election for a District School Tax to build a new schoolhouse for the Peak School District. It was necessary to raise \$390 for this purpose. Voting on the tax was to take place on July 29, 1916.<sup>14</sup>

In August of 1917, the Peak Schoolhouse, as well as the Zenia Schoolhouse, were torn down. It was stated in the local paper that, “new buildings will be erected in better locations”. Miss Lillian T. White was to teach at Peak that fall, but it’s unclear how quickly a new building was erected.<sup>15</sup> That second Peak School was built at a site close to the county road. The maps below indicate the location of that second school site.<sup>16</sup>

The school was visited by several people from the Trinity County Office of Education on October 16, 1918. The name of the teacher at that time was Marion J. Turner who was trained at the Humboldt State Normal School. She was paid \$80 per month. There were 20 students enrolled and 17 present at the time of the visit. Their “Order and Attention” was listed as “Very Good” and so were the “Methods and Zeal of the Teacher. The “Condition of the School Building and Grounds” was listed as “Good”. The students were also recorded as “Good” in all of their studies except for the subject of writing which was listed as “Average”.<sup>17</sup> The next year a visit occurred on September 29, 1919, when Hettie S. Lowden was teaching 19 enrolled students with 13 present on the day of the visit. Miss Lowden had also taught at Long Ridge two years prior. Having an experienced teacher, all seemed well except for a mysterious note in the report: “District needs cooperation of people”.<sup>18</sup>

In July 1923, Bessie Firlotte was teaching 11 students at Peak School. Her salary was \$140 per month. At this time the students were doing well in all subject areas except for reading. The report gave them an “F” in this area. It was also noted that a teacherage was needed for teacher housing.<sup>19</sup> In August of 1924, the enrollment had risen to 17 students, but the “Methods and Zeal of Teacher”, in this case, Mary Louise Burgess, was reported as being only “Fair”. Mary Burgess was still teaching 17 students as of July 1925. The school, however, needed a flag and curtains.<sup>20</sup>

In July of 1927, the school changed teachers and was back with Lillian White, teaching only nine students. She was paid the same salary as was offered in 1923.<sup>21</sup> Lillian White continued teaching from 1923 until at least September 1932. The salary had actually decreased to \$135 per month. She had only nine students that school year.

Peak School operated for 30 years. By the 1938-39 school year the school was suspended and remained suspended until it permanently lapsed (closed) prior to the 1940-41 school year.<sup>22</sup> One informant believed the school was open until 1948. If so, it was opened again as a private school, funded by the parents of the children who attended, as the school does not show up in any educational records beyond 1941.

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<sup>12</sup> “Local Brevities”, *The Trinity Journal*, Nov 16, 1912; and Keter, Thomas S., “A Compendium of People and Places for the North Fork Eel River Region during the Homesteading Era”, [http://wordpress.solararch.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/people\\_and\\_places\\_nferw\\_vol\\_1.pdf](http://wordpress.solararch.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/people_and_places_nferw_vol_1.pdf), 2017. Accessed August 23, 2023, 161.

<sup>13</sup> “In the Local Field”, *The Trinity Journal*, July 1, 1916.

<sup>14</sup> “Election Notice for District School Tax”, *The Trinity Journal*, July 7, 1916.

<sup>15</sup> “Schools are opening”, *The Trinity Journal*, August 27, 1917.

<sup>16</sup> Supahan, Sarah, email communication with Canale, Peggy who had interviewed Calvin Stewart, October 25, 2023.

<sup>17</sup> *School Superintendents Record of Official Visits, 1918-1933*, Historic Records Collection, Trinity County Office of Education, 20.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 48.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 150.

<sup>20</sup> *School Superintendents Record of Official Visits, 1918-1933*, Historic Records Collection, Trinity County Office of Education, 175 and 202.

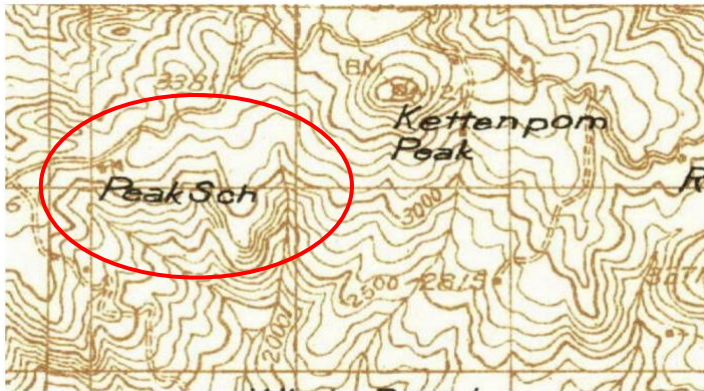
<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 254.

<sup>22</sup> Holland, James. *A History of Education in Trinity County; A Thesis presented to the School of Education*. 1971. Chico State College, 30; and *Warrant Records*, Historic Records Collection, Trinity County Office of Education.

See also Hettenpome, Hoaglin, Seven Cedars, and Zenia School Districts.



The Belcher map shows the location of the Peak School (lower left).  
A2: 26b



Peak School on the 1931 USGS map.  
(A2: 23)

The maps on this page are obtained from [http://wordpress.solararch.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/people\\_and\\_places\\_nferw\\_vol\\_1.pdf](http://wordpress.solararch.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/people_and_places_nferw_vol_1.pdf), page 161. The photo is found in "One Room Schoolhouses in Southern Trinity County" by the students of Hoaglin-Zenia Elementary School, 2008, used with permission.