

# What Became of the Little Red Schoolhouse?



FACTS AND FIGURES—TALES AND PHOTOS  
OF EARLY MENDOCINO COUNTY SCHOOLS

Volume 3

WILLITS-LAYTONVILLE

979.415  
WHAT



**WHAT BECAME OF THE LITTLE RED SCHOOLHOUSE?**

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**DEDICATED TO**

**THELMA SAWYERS, GRADUATE OF WILLITS HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 1917  
TEACHER, HISTORIAN, THIRD GENERATION NATIVE OF WILLITS**

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**Cover Photo: Little Lake School-First School  
District formed in Mendocino County-May 8,1859**



## MILL BROOKSIDE SCHOOL

BROOKSIDE SCHOOL was built in 1953, at Spruce and Lincoln Streets, near a stream called Willits Creek, from which it takes it's name.

The school originally had classes Kindergarten through sixth. The first principal was John Hardwick, with an enrollment of 384. Thelma Sawyers taught here from 1953 to 1960.

In 1954, Harold Engstrom took over as principal of both Brookside and Baechtel Grove Schools. He was assisted by Mrs. Anna Daniels. Each served a half day at each school sharing the same office space.

This arrangement continued until 1959, when Mr. Engstrom became Vice-Principal of Willits High School.

Enrollment at Brookside was 384 in 1953-54; 421 in 1954-55; 483 in 1955-56; 470 in 1956-57 and 442 in 1957-58.

Special education classes were added later.

The 1983-84 school year finds John Casias, Jr. as principal with an enrollment of 784.

The 1987-88 enrollment is approximately 800 students. One double classroom is owned by the school district. The office trailer includes the boys' and girls' bathrooms and the custodial room.

There is a permanent building, which includes the classroom for the Special Education Teacher.

There is another small building with a supply room on one side and the Director of Curriculum for the Willits Unified School District's Office on the other side.

There is a tripple wide trailer which includes a well-equipped library and an art room.

The students have a large playyard equipped with swings, bars and water balls, small basketball court and four-square games. They have a large area in back of the buildings to play baseball.