

1940-1949

Mansfield Independent School District celebrates a century of education

The Mansfield Independent School District celebrates its 100th anniversary this year with a look at the past century. Each month in the *Mansfield News-Mirror* will print a decade in the life of the district. The first decade, 1909-1919, appeared in the Oct. 23 edition, the second, 1920-1929, ran in the Nov. 20 section and the third, 1930-1939, appeared Dec. 18. This week features the 1940s.

1940

■ The population of Mansfield is 774.

February: School board president C.J. Neeley receives a telegram from Sen. Tom Connally saying W.P.A. project No. 40451 authorized \$18,238 to build a gymnasium and two classrooms for Mansfield High School. The work would employ 40 men, many of them Mansfield residents. The native stone for the 18-inch thick walls came from Bisbee. A lunchroom was built above the gymnasium. The original tin roof lasted until 1986.

Feb. 28: The school board grants authority to A.D. Roach to sponsor a county-wide library project to be operated in the Mansfield schools.

Feb. 29: "Gone With the Wind" wins the Academy Award for best picture, while Vivien Leigh wins best actress for her role in the film and Hattie McDaniel becomes the first black person to win an Academy Award, winning Best Supporting Actress for her role in the film.

■ "Pinocchio" and "Fantasia" are released by Walt Disney. "Fantasia" proves to be a huge disappointment for the company.

March 15: Equipment is bought for the new football program.

April 9: W.C. Moseley and G.H. Steward are elected to the school board. J.C. Neeley is elected president and F.S. Gilstrap is elected secretary.

■ Principal Ernie Ray and the entire faculty with the exception of Annie Lee Knox will be retained for the next school year. Knox will be rehired if an additional teacher is needed.

April and May: Hitler invades Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg.

May 3: Construction begins on the gymnasium as the lumber bid is awarded to Wm. Cameron Co. Inc. The resignation of Superintendent A.G. Weaver is accepted by the board effective July 1. Ernie Ray is elected as his replacement for 1940-1941.

May 29: Ben Barber is given permission to use one of buses to make a field trip with the agricultural boys. Barber's salary is approved for next year at \$2,100.

■ The cost of a first class

stamp is three cents.

July 31: L.W. Mershon is elected high school principal for the school year along with Mrs. Mershon provided the school has 13 teachers.

■ Nylon stockings go on the market.

Aug 21: Annie Lee Knox is hired as the 12th high school teacher. Thelma Jones and Susie Moody are retained to teach at the colored school for a term of seven months.

Sept. 16: President Franklin Roosevelt signs the Selective Service Act.

■ Dick and Mac McDonald open McDonald's Bar-B-Que in San Bernardino, Calif.,

Sept. 20: The Mansfield Tigers lose to the Italy Gladiators 76-0. The new football program is led by Coach Roy "Bull" Knight and ends the season 0-6-1. Games were played at Geyer Field, now a baseball field on Broad Street.

Sept. 28: The board approves dismissing classes Oct. 16 so teachers can assist the draft board with registration.

Oct. 9: John Lennon is born.

Oct. 18: Trustees approve \$300 to finish the gymnasium project and to let the city have any rock that is left over.

■ CBS introduces the color television in New York City.

Nov. 27: The Mansfield school district will offer facilities and cooperate with the State Department of Vocational Training for out-of-school youths between the ages of 17-24 for national defense. A rodeo to benefit the gym is approved.

■ The first Bugs Bunny cartoon, "A Wild Hare," is released.

Dec. 17: School children will be permitted to hold social functions, including dancing, in the gymnasium under the supervision of Superintendent Ernest Ray and the faculty.

■ "In the Mood," "Only Forever" and "I'll Never Smile Again" are popular songs.

1941

Jan. 20: Franklin D. Roosevelt is sworn in as president for a third term.

Feb. 4: The civic league is allowed to use the gym for one night subject to the approval of Superintendent Ernest Ray on the night of use.

■ A gallon of gas costs 12



1948 Mansfield High School girls basketball team

cents.

March 15: The Business and Professional Women's Club is granted use of the gym for a dance March 17.

March 26: Ernie Ray is rehired as superintendent for the next school year.

April 8: F.S. Gilstrap, J.M. Galloway and H.I. Bratton are elected to the school board. Roy Knight is elected principal. The faculty was kept as it was with the exception of the 13th teacher. The board is not in a position to hire more than 12 teachers. An Easter holiday is approved.

■ The unemployment rate is 9.9 percent.

April 30: The board votes to go to a 12-grade system for the coming school year.

■ Greta Garbo retires at age 36.

June 22: Germany attacks Russia, which immediately sides with Britain.

Sept. 24: The State Bank of Mansfield is named school depository. The funds from the state, county and rural aid are received at such times and in small amounts that the board is unable to meet monthly payroll. The president and secretary of the board of trustees is authorized to sign notes in the amounts to take care of monthly payroll.

■ "Citizen Kane," "Dumbo" and "The Maltese Falcon" are popular films.

■ "Chattanooga Choo Choo," "Daddy" and "I'll Be With You in Apple Blossom Time" are popular songs.

Oct. 16: Roy Knight resigns as principal.

Oct. 31: Mount Rushmore is completed.

Dec. 7: The Japanese

launch a surprise attack consisting of two full regiments on the United States fleet at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, drawing the United States into World War II. More than 2,300 Americans are killed.

Dec. 8: U.S. and Britain declare war on Japan.

■ Willys Jeep is introduced for use by the U.S. Army.

■ Hitler changes his policy from expulsion to extermination of Jews, Catholics, Poles, homosexuals, gypsies and the handicapped. Concentration camps, such as Auschwitz, are expanded to include extermination.

■ A scrap metal drive rescues the Mansfield Tiger football program. The Tigers earn first win in the second game of the season over Cedar Hill. Tickets to the game are 15 cents for students and 25 cents for adults. After the season, the program ends until after World War II.

1942

Jan. 1: Declaration of United Nations is signed in Washington.

Jan. 20: Nazi leaders attend the Wannsee Conference to coordinate the "final solution to the Jewish question," the systemic genocide of Jews known as the Holocaust.

Feb. 11: School will be dismissed Feb. 16 in order for teachers to help register men for the army.

■ A mass meeting is called for Feb. 18 for the purpose of raising property values.

■ RCA Victor sprays gold over Glenn Miller's million-copy seller "Chattanooga Choo Choo," creating the first gold record.

March 4: The school district's tax equalization committee instructs the tax assessor and collector to interview owners about cows, autos, tractors, money and other personal property before assessing taxes.

■ Little Golden Books debut.

■ Auto production ceases to make room for the production of war materials.

April 8: G.C. Wilson and T.E. Tipps are elected to the school board. Ernie Ray is elected superintendent for 1942-1943 school year as well as the rest of the faculty.

April 18: Lt. Colonel James Doolittle leads a raid over Tokyo. Doolittle chooses bombers capable of taking off from the short runways of aircraft carriers, carrying 2,000-pound bombs and flying a very long distance. Sixteen B-25B Mitchells participate in the mission. After bombing Tokyo, the planes fly toward China. Unable to find their way in the darkness and clouds after 13 hours of flight, Doolittle and his crew are forced to parachute into the night. Doolittle receives the Congressional Medal of Honor for planning and leading the Tokyo Raid.

April 27: Joe Bell is elected to teach farm machinery repair in the National Defense School.

■ War bonds are introduced, raising \$13 billion.

■ More than 120,000 Japanese and persons of Japanese ancestry in the western U.S. are moved to "relocation centers," some for the duration of the war.

April 29: Trustees decide school will be dismissed for two days (May 4-5) to enable teachers to register the sugar rationing applicants.

■ Rural aid salaries will be paid to teachers as set up in the current equalization aid law for the next school year.

■ A bottle of Coca Cola costs 5 cents.

May 11: The Business and Professional Women's Club will use the gym for the Pioneer Days Celebration and square dance.

A secret ballot is taken on whether or not to allow pupils without the proper credits to pose as graduates. The votes were 3 against, 2 for, therefore it will not be allowed for pupils to pose as graduates.

June 24: Thelma Jones is elected to teach in the Colored School for the next school year.

■ The draft age is lowered from 21 to 18.

■ Napalm is invented.

July 29: Trustees decide a telephone is to be installed in the school building.

Aug. 26: The school district considers transporting and instructing pupils of the Lone

Star District in Johnson County in exchange for the current funds of the Lone Star School.

■ "Road to Morocco," "Casablanca," "Bambi" and "Holiday Inn" are released.

Sept. 22: Erma Nash is named principal of the grade school.

■ Hit songs are "White Christmas" from the movie "Holiday Inn" and "Deep in The Heart of Texas."

Nov. 9: Trustees decide school will close Nov. 19-20 for the purpose of rationing gasoline.

Nov. 20: Future vice president Joe Biden is born.

1943

Jan. 12: C.V. Back becomes mayor of Mansfield.

Jan. 15: The Pentagon is completed and becomes the world's largest office building.

■ The Great Depression ends. Unemployment levels fall to 1.9 percent.

■ Withholding tax on wages is introduced.

Feb. 7: The Japanese evacuate their forces and the Allies take control of the Guadalcanal.

March 8: Government aid to the school lunch program is approved. A schedule proposed by Superintendent Ray to turn out school earlier to help the farmers is approved.

March 31: Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Oklahoma!" opens on Broadway.

April 13: President Franklin D. Roosevelt dedicates the Thomas Jefferson Memorial in Washington D.C.

April 26: Ernie Ray is re-elected as superintendent for 1943-1944 as well as the rest of the faculty.

May 25: G.C. Wilson and C.O. Arber investigate costs of replacing the coal house at the Lone Star School.

■ Due to a shortage in copper, the penny is struck in steel.

July 9: The school board accepts the contract with the Lone Star School board and will teach its pupils in the coming school year.

July 24: Mussolini is arrested.

Aug. 3: Future president John F. Kennedy's PT109 is sunk by a Japanese destroyer.

Aug. 10: Cordelia Martin is hired as a commercial subjects teacher.

Aug. 20: Trustees decide teachers will be paid in 12 installments instead of nine. It was expressly understood that the total annual salary for any teacher, principal or superintendent would be the same as the state aid salary schedule or the same as the total of the nine months.

■ Frank Sinatra and Glenn Miller are popular musicians.

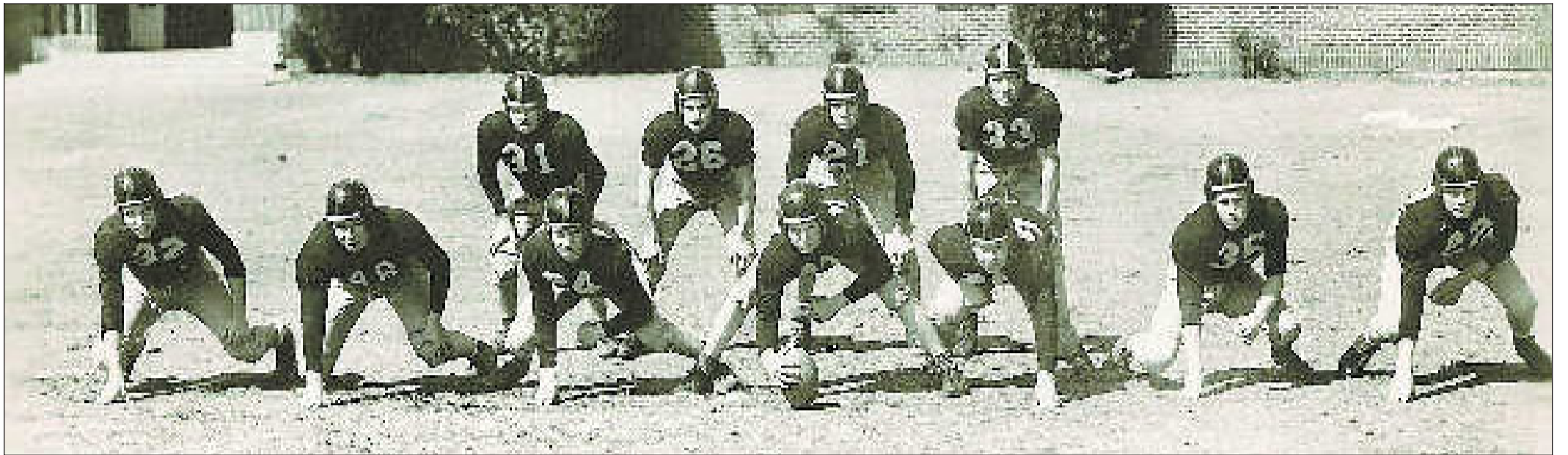
Dec. 20: School is dismissed two days early for the Christmas holiday because of an influenza epidemic.



The fifth grade at Mansfield grade school in 1946

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1948 Mansfield High School Tigers football team

■ Mary Orr is hired to teach in the high school for the remainder of the school term.

■ "For Whom the Bell Tolls," "Heaven Can Wait" and "Lassie Come Home" are in theaters.

Robert DeNiro, Janis Joplin and Mick Jagger are born.

1944

■ A loaf of bread costs 15 cents.

Feb. 11: The PTA sets up guidelines concerning lunchroom workers. Rules addressed: not talking out of shop, following recipes and menus by the head matron, absences, being on time and salaries.

■ The school board agrees to sponsor construction of a shop building.

■ Meat rationing ends.

■ The unemployment rate is 1.9 percent.

March 21: Ben Barber speaks to the board about the cost and methods of construction of the new shop building. The board discusses means of raising money and an advertising campaign to give students a better picture of the shop program.

April 4: F.S. Gilstrap, Lon T. Hubbard and D.S. Wilson are elected to the school board. G.H. Stewart is elected president and F.S. Gilstrap is elected secretary. Ernie Ray is elected superintendent as well as the rest of the faculty.

■ Howard Aiken and Grace Hopper design the first Mark series computer at Harvard. The computer is 55feet long, 8 feet wide and weighs 5 tons. Used by the Navy for gunnery and ballistic calculations, the Mark I was operational until 1959.

June 6: The Allies invade Normandy on D-Day. The operation is the largest amphibian attack of all time with 175,000 troops landing along a 50-mile stretch of the Normandy coast. More than 5,000 ships are involved. There are approximately 10,000 Allied casualties and between 4,000 and 9,000 dead, wounded or captured German soldiers.

June 20: The same contract to haul and educate is agreed upon with the Lone Star Schools for 1944-1945 school year.

June 22: President Roosevelt signs the G.I. Bill of Rights.

July 5: Ernie Ray resigns as superintendent to joining the Army.

July: The World Bank is created.

July 19: R.L. Huffman is hired as superintendent. He is given a two-year contract and rent allowance provided such as allowed by state officials in the equalization aid budget.

July 20: An attempt to assassinate Hitler fails.

Aug. 1: Anne Frank and her family are betrayed and sent to concentration camps. She would die in 1945.

Sept. 1: Repairs will be made to the Colored School after discussion regarding the size of the building and number of rooms. The board ac-

cepts \$37.10 from the 1944 senior class to be used on the construction of a new water fountain in the building.

■ Sunscreen is created by Benjamin Green to protect soldiers in the South Pacific. Green who would continue his experiments and later create what would become known as Coppertone suntan cream.

Sept. 5: Mary Lillard is hired to fill a teaching vacancy.

Nov. 7: Franklin Delano Roosevelt is elected to a fourth term as president.

Dec. 15: Former band leader Glenn Miller is reported missing in action after his plane disappears while flying to Paris to play for troops that had recently liberated France.

Dec. 16: Battle of the Bulge begins. This was the largest battle fought in World War II.

■ Diana Ross, Joe Frazier and Jerry Springer are born.

1945

Jan 20: Franklin Delano Roosevelt is sworn in as president for a fourth term.

■ The unemployment rate is 1.9 percent.

April 12: President Franklin D. Roosevelt dies of a cerebral hemorrhage in Warm Springs, Ga., and Vice President Harry S. Truman is sworn in as president.

April 30: Adolf Hitler commits suicide.

May 25: Lon T. Hubbard resigns from the school board having been elected to the City Council. All faculty is re-elected for the next school year.

May 7: Germany surrenders.

May 8: Declared VE Day for Victory in Europe.

July 16: Manhattan Project tests first atomic bomb over Alamogordo, N.M.

July 28: A B-25 bomber flies into the Empire State Building, damaging the 78th and 79th floors and killing 13 people. The pilot could not see because of foggy conditions.

Aug. 6: The United States drops the atomic bomb "Little Boy" over Hiroshima.

Aug. 9: A second atomic bomb, "Fat Man," is dropped on Nagasaki leaving mass destruction and thousands of deaths.

Aug. 14: VJ Day-Victory in Japan is declared when the United States receives word of Emperor Hirohito's surrender of Japan.

Aug. 18: Roberta Tipps and Willie Mae Witten resign. It was determined that a 15th teacher was needed with possibility of a 16th. Nell Barber is hired to fill the English vacancy. Roy Goodman is hired as the added teacher. Superintendent R.L. Huffman presents a three- to five-year plan of building and improvement for the Mansfield school. He then retires from the meeting to help Mrs. Huffman with a watermelon cutting for the board. Upon his return he was notified of a \$25 per month expense account.

■ The average cost of a new car is \$1,020.

■ A gallon of gas costs 15

cents.

Oct. 16: Trustees take a tour of the school building to decide on a plan to add an additional classroom. No quorum is present so no action is taken.

■ Percy Spencer accidentally discovers that microwaves heat food.

Nov. 13: The school board discusses repairing a car damaged by a bus.

■ In theaters "National Velvet," "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn" and "Spellbound" are hits.

■ F. Scott Fitzgerald publishes "The Crackup and Other Uncollected Pieces." "Cannery Row" by John Steinbeck is also published.

Nov. 27: Trustees decide the old shop room will be converted into a classroom. D.P. Morris is hired as English teacher for the remainder of the year. The board pays \$50 to make repairs on the damaged car.

■ Raymond Libby develops oral penicillin.

■ Goldie Hawn, Henry Winkler, Rod Stewart and Mia Farrow are born.

1946

■ The Cold War begins.

Jan. 10: The school district accepts the pupils and teachers of the Gertie School for the balance of the school year. Superintendent R.L. Huffman is given a three-year contract.

Jan. 29: The board calls for the payment of three bonds.

■ The Baby Boom begins.

March 26: The school district contracts with Gertie School for the next school year.

April 10: G.H. Stewart and C.O. Arber are elected to school board. H.E. Posey was appointed to fill the vacancy left by Lon T. Hubbard.

■ Robert Penn Warren's "All the Kings Men" and Evelyn Waugh's "Brideshead Revisited" are published.

May 16: "Annie Get Your Gun" opens on Broadway. A popular song from the musical is "There's No Business Like Show Business."

June 2: Italy abolishes its monarchy.

July 26: Trustees of the Gertie School will attend to the leasing of the Gertie School building with the money being used for repairs.

July: Bikinis go on sale in Paris.

Aug. 27: The board decides that any pupil marrying in the first or fall semester must drop out of school while any pupil marrying in the second or spring semester may finish the term.

■ Life expectancy is 66.7 years.

■ Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby and the Ink Spots are popular musicians.

Sept. 24: Trustees approve the purchase of the Presbyterian property.

Oct. 1: The Mensa Society is created.

Oct. 16: Twelve high-ranking Nazis are sentenced to death by the International War Crimes Tribunal in Nuremberg and are hung.

■ Tupperware debuts and is sold at department and hardware stores. It would later be pulled out and sold through home parties.

Oct. 18: Arrangements are made with the Citizens National Bank of Cameron to pay for the purchase of the Presbyterian property.

■ Notable deaths are W.C. Fields and H.G. Wells.

■ Popular movies are "It's a Wonderful Life," "Best Years of Our Life" and "The Postman Always Rings Twice."

■ George W. Bush, Cher, Dolly Parton, Sylvester Stallone and Donald Trump are born.

1947

■ The school district has 13 teachers and 330 students.

Jan. 28: New lunchroom equipment is to be purchased as outlined and approved by the government program.

■ The Homemaking Department will hold the Valentine formal in the gym.

Feb. 25: An April 3 election is called to elect three new trustees.

■ The Dead Sea Scrolls are discovered in Qumran.

March 24: Congress approves a two-term limit on the presidency.

April 8: Charles H. Harrison is elected mayor of Mansfield.

April 9: Dave Wilson, Olen Tipps and Richard Stone are elected new trustees.

April 10: Jackie Robinson joins the Brooklyn Dodgers.

April 29: The homemaking class is permitted use of the bus for a summer trip to Carlsbad Caverns.

June 11: Sugar rationing ends.

June 24: Mrs. Eagen places a small building on the school grounds, some convenient place north of the main building for a private music hall. Moving contractors are contacted for bids on moving the Lone Star School building to the Mansfield grounds.

July 8: Reports are broadcast that a UFO has crash landed in Roswell, N.M.

Sept. 17: U.S. Department of Defense is formed.

Sept. 18: The United States Air Force is formed

Sept. 30: The school grounds will be lit for football purposes and supervised by school officials. The football field will be operated by school officials.

Oct. 5: Harry Truman delivers the first televised presidential address.

Oct. 14: Chuck Yeager breaks the sound barrier.

Oct. 28: A petition circulates for the purpose of consolidating the Mansfield and Bludworth schools.

Oct. 29: The fire department reorganizes after a fire almost destroys the west side of town. Several buildings have smoke and water damage but are saved with the help of the Midlothian Fire Department. Three new pieces of equipment are added.

Nov. 1: Howard Hughes flies the Spruce Goose for the

first and last time.

Nov. 6: "Meet the Press" debuts on NBC.

■ "Miracle on 34th Street," "Black Narcissus" and "Gentleman's Agreement" are popular movies.

Dec. 14: Bill France Sr. holds a meeting in Daytona Beach, Fla., and NASCAR is conceived.

1948

Jan. 30: Mahatma Gandhi is assassinated in New Delhi.

Feb. 15: The first NASCAR race is run in Daytona Beach, Fla.

March 8: A 20-foot shed along the west side and a 40-foot addition to the south end of the present shop will be built with labor provided by G.I.s and the FFA boys.

April 3: Harry S. Truman signs the Marshall Plan to help Europe rebuild.

April 7: The World Health Organization is formed.

April 27: The following teachers will be re-employed for the next school year: Willie Pigg, Janet Brockett, D.P. Morris, Ben Barber, Mary Orr, Sue Nichols, Nancy Annen, Erma Nash, Elizabeth Smith, Mary Lillard, Alice Ponder, Charlotte Anderson, Mayme Harris and Thelma Jones.

June 13: Babe Ruth bids his final farewell at Yankee Stadium.

June 29: Trustees refuse the gym for the firemen's dance unless requested in writing by the City Council.

■ The 33 1/3 LP was introduced by Columbia Records.

July 27: The school board approves an additional room to be built at the Colored School.

■ The first Polaroid camera is sold in the U.S.

Oct. 26: After a general report on school conditions and possibilities of improvements, the superintendent gives a report on bonds, paint, bus problems, new buildings and the shop. There was also discussion on the married status of students.

■ Movies "Treasure of the Sierra Madre," "Hamlet," "The Snake Pit" and "Red River" are in theaters.

Nov. 2: Harry S. Truman is re-elected president of the United States.

Nov. 30: Trustees discuss the pros and cons of the Gilmer-Aiken committee. The Gilmer Aiken Act established a funding system that provided revenue for education from both state and local sources.

1949

■ The population of Mansfield is 1,200.

Jan. 4: Elizabeth Smith and Doris Barber resign. Leola Nichols and Blythe Harrison are hired to fill their vacancies. Superintendent R.L. Huffman is given a contract for an additional three years.

Jan. 20: Harry S. Truman is

sworn in as president of the United States.

Jan. 25: The first Emmy awards are handed out.

Feb. 26: The first non-stop flight around the world is made in 94 hours and 1 minute. The plane, Lucky Lady, took off from Carswell Air Force Base in Fort Worth.

March 29: The school district secures bids from several house movers to move the Lone Star School building to Mansfield.

April 4: NATO is established.

April 26: G.H. Stewart and C.O. Arber are elected to school board. Stewart and Coble retain offices of president and secretary.

■ Minimum wage is 40 cents an hour.

June 18: Trustees call for an election to equalize taxes in the district with the tax not to exceed in the amount of \$1.50 on a \$100 valuation.

■ "Death of a Salesman," "South Pacific" and "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" open in theaters.

July 5: An election is called for July 23 for the assumption of all bond indebtedness in the Mansfield Consolidated Independent School District and extended territory.

July 25: The result of the election to raise the school tax from \$1 to \$1.50 on the \$100 valued property fails by a vote of 68-56.

July 26: A citizens committee headed by E.A. Rosier meets with the board. Rosier presents the board with a petition signed by 47 qualified voters requesting another election raising the tax rate for school purposes from \$1 to \$1.45 on the \$100 valuation.

After a lengthy discussion by Superintendent R.L. Huffman asks why more money was needed under the New Foundation Program than under the old program, the board calls for an election to raise the tax rate to \$1.45 on the \$100 valuation.

■ "Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend" is a popular song.

■ "1984" by George Orwell is published.

Aug. 18: Trustees decide to sell the Lone Star School building and Gertie School building.

Aug. 29: The Soviet Union begins testing atomic weapons.

Aug. 31: Dennis Bradley is appointed to the school board to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Richard Stone. The Lone Star School sold to J.M. Galloway for \$1,250.

Oct. 1: Chinese Communists proclaim the New Peoples Republic of China.

■ Silly Putty is sold.

■ Dial telephone service comes to Mansfield, allowing residents to make their own calls rather than relying on the operator.

Sources: "The History of Mansfield, Texas, Mid 1800-1965 by the Mansfield Historical Society, Mansfield Independent School District school board minutes, info please.com, encyclopediabritanica.com, thepeopleofhistory.com, factmonster.com, historyorb.com, city archives, City of Mansfield election register.