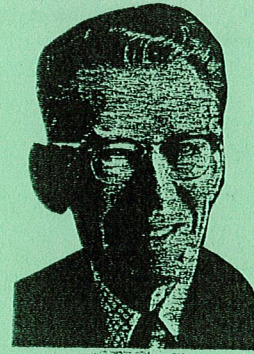


The Principal's Corner

What is a Musson?



AL MUSSON

I would like to share my finding on the man whom our school was named after, Alpha R. Musson. Many people remark about the unusualness of our school name and I never heard any tangible information about its origin. If the truth be known, even I've always thought it was a pretty ridiculous name for a school, but I was willing to overlook it because we have such a terrific staff and extremely supportive parent community. The name just didn't seem very important. Well, after reading about Mr. Musson, I have changed my mind. I wanted to share a little Musson history with you.

Alpha R. Musson was born on a potato farm near Alma in 1901. He attended Alma College where he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in chemistry. He later went on to the University of Michigan earning a master of Arts degree in education. Mr. Musson began teaching in Stanton, Michigan in 1919 and then moved to Britton, near Adrian, where he taught math and science. In 1929 he came to Rochester as a chemistry, physics, math and industrial arts teacher. He met his wife, Lousia at his first Rochester teachers meeting. After they were married in 1936, they moved into a house on Castell where they lived for the rest of their lives. Al taught for five years at the old Rochester High School, which was recently remodeled and now housed the Rochester Community Schools Boards of Education offices. For about two years during that time, when a tight budget no longer allowed the system to employ a band director, Mr. Musson also willingly served in that position. In 1934, Al Musson was named principal at Rochester High School and he enthusiastically carried out his duties until 1946, when he left education to become the executive director of the Oakland county Tuberculosis Association. He was drawn to the TB Association by the challenges of reducing the incidence of TB with education and the use of mobile x-rays. It was during this time that Mr. Musson was elected to the Rochester Board of Education serving from 1952 to 1958. Under his guidance as an active school board member, the small rural school districts in the area consolidated to form Rochester Community Schools. In 1960, Al Musson decided to return to his first love of teaching and he accepted a junior high science position. Because he continued to be an innovative and dedicated educator, he developed a revolutionary ninth grade science program based entirely on lab work, using no textbooks.

In addition to his works with the school system, Mr. Musson was very active throughout his lifetime as member of many community organizations, including the Kiwanis Club, Rochester Area Youth Guidance and First Congregational Church. He and Louisa raised two children and were wonderful grandparents to five grandchildren. Lousia died in 1972 and Al ten years later.

We are proud of Al Musson and all that he stood for. His love of children and youth led him to make significant contributions not only to Rochester Schools, but also to the community at large. He set a shining example of dedication and community service for all of us to follow.