

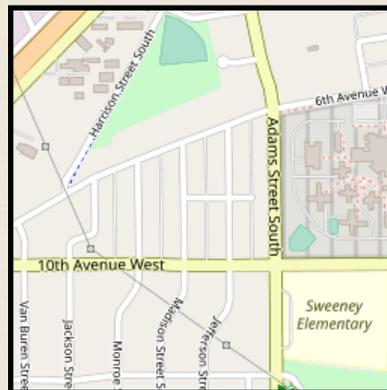
Grace Sweeney was a member of the National Education Association, the Minnesota Education Association, the Retired Teachers Association, and the Alpha Omicron Pi national sorority. She was also affiliated with the National Association of Social Science Teachers.

Grace was also very interested in poetry and literature. She read as many as five or six books a week at the age of 88!

“I have thoroughly enjoyed my work with the children of our community,” said Grace, “And I have always considered it a great honor and a privilege to have been entrusted with the direction of their education.”

In 1967, Grace and her husband, Edward, were honored to have a new elementary school named after them. The dedication was on Sunday, October 1, 1967. Grace Lehmann used to attend Grandparents’ Day at Sweeney School, where she delighted some of the grandparents who had Mrs. Sweeney for a principal or teacher during their own school days.

Grace Lehmann Sweeney died on April 11, 1987. She was 92 years old. Her burial was celebrated on April 14 at St. Mary’s Catholic Church with Fr. James Schoenberger the celebrant. Interment was at the Catholic Cemetery in Shakopee.



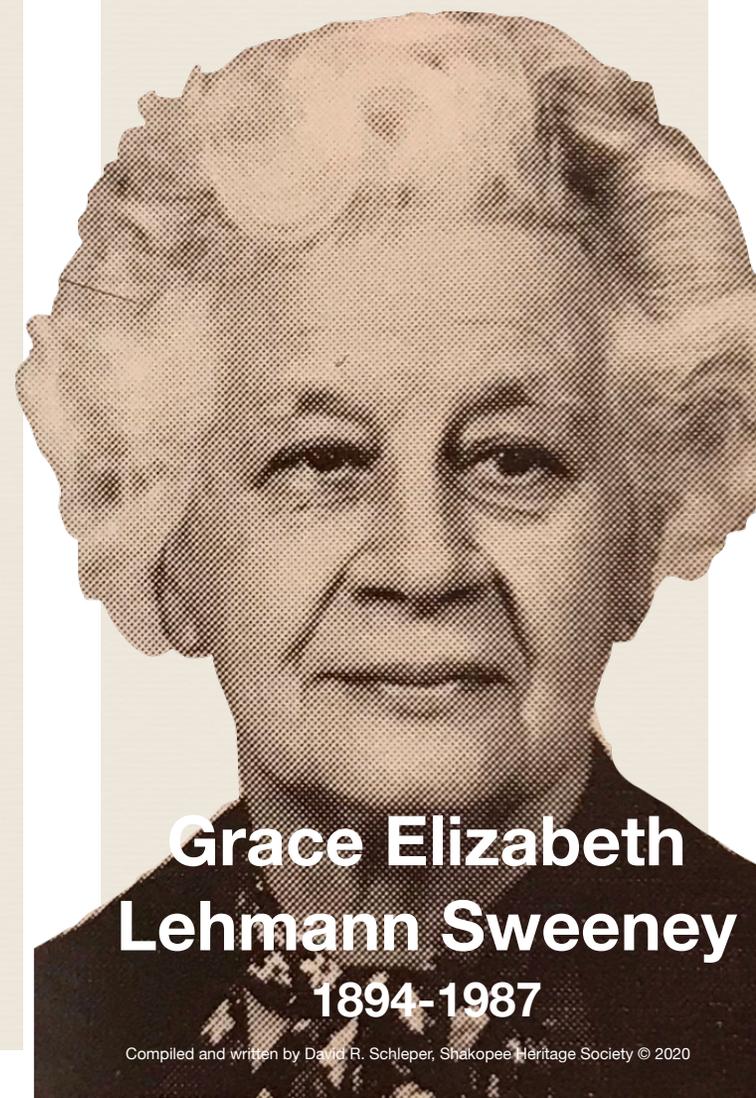
SHAKOPEE HERITAGE SOCIETY
2109 Boulder Pointe, Shakopee, MN 55379

952-693-3865

shakopeeheritage.org



SHAKOPEE
HERITAGE SOCIETY



Grace Elizabeth
Lehmann Sweeney
1894-1987



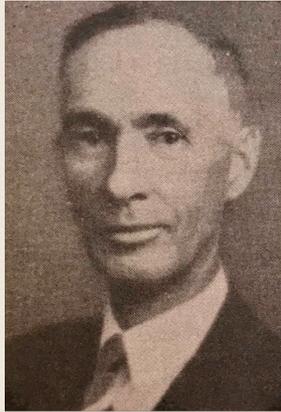
Grace Elizabeth Lehmann was born on November 29, 1894 in West St. Paul, Minnesota, the daughter of August and Catherine Ryan Lehmann.

Grace remembered “With teaching more or less a family occupation, as long as I can remember. I have always wanted to be a teacher.” Her mother, Kathryn Ryan Lehmann, and eight of her aunts and uncles were teachers!

Grace Elizabeth Lehmann married Edward Joseph Sweeney (1875-1936), son of Michael and Mary Catherine Mahar Sweeney. Grace and Edward had four children, Robert, John, Edward Jr., and Cathleen.

After graduating from the University of Minnesota, Grace Lehmann Sweeney taught English, social studies, and chemistry in Rushford, Graceville, and Melrose before arriving in Shakopee in 1924.

Starting in 1927 until 1931, Grace taught biology and Latin at Shakopee’s high school. Then, after her husband,



E.J. Sweeney, Grace’s husband, and superintendent in Shakopee on the left. On the right is the Edward and Grace Sweeney Elementary School, which is located at 1001 Adams Street South in Shakopee.



Edward died on March 4, 1936, Grace again went back to Shakopee faculty at the high school. In 1950, she became the principal, and continued the until 1961. She then worked part-time as an English and Latin teacher until her retirement in 1965. She retired after 33 years working with the Shakopee schools.

Grace loved her students and teaching, but was known to be a disciplinarian. One time, she caught a student making and sailing paper airplanes during class. For his punishment, Grace made him make and sail out the window 100 paper airplanes, and then go down to pick them up. “However, about mid-way through the project, the school superintendent, Al Wurst, came up to the classroom with most of the airplanes: He had spent the last several minutes picking them up and was wondering what was going on.”



Al N. Wurst, superintendent of Shakopee schools from 1945-1961.

While she was the high school principal, Grace Lehmann Sweeney introduced counseling in the school system, joined the National Merit Scholarship program, and the school’s participation in the World Affairs competition.

In 1965, the Scott County Teacher of the Year program recognized Grace for her outstanding achievement in education award.

Grace had a long lasting support of the progress of Shakopee. She served on the City Chapter Commission, was active in the Scott County Red Cross, active in the Democratic Party, involved in the Program Valley Business and Professional Women’s Club, and active in the Shakopee Book Lovers' Club. Grace had a keen interest in current events, and closely followed politics. She saw every U.S. President in person, from Teddy Roosevelt to John F. Kennedy.

To get a fuller understand about teaching her students, she served as a housemother at the Shakopee Reformatory for Women during the time while she was instructing students in the social sciences.