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THE HISTORY OF THE MAGNOLIA SPRINGS SCHOOL

The first public school bell rang in Magnolia Springs in September 1918.

Mrs. Maribah Walker Massey enrolled twelve in an old frame building known as the town hall. This first school house was not ceiled and the wind whispered around the rafters while the teacher conducted her classes. Seats or desks were unknown so rough benches and old chairs were used.

The three Rs were the order of the day. The school term was four or five months long and the teacher received the fabulous salery of Forty dollars a month.

Miss Lillie Wetzel acted as county superintendent which bridged the gap between the time of Mr. Lambert and our present beloved superintendent Mr. S, M. Tharp. Mr. Frank Fuller was president of school improvement.

Some of the names of the children of the first school were as follows; Fuller, Benson, Carson, Shindler, Schindler Nelson and Underwood.

I want to pause for a moment to pay tribute to the first teacher of this first school in Magnolia Springs. Mrs. Marabah Walker Massey, the wife of a soldier in France and the mother of a three months old daughter, lived in a room on the end of the school house. She did all her own house work and cared for her baby. During the school day she would have occasional assistance from the school children to help tend the baby. Mrs. Massey attended four days of institute, took care of herself and her baby and taught school. This is an example of the courage of our Baldwin County pioneer teachers.

Another of the teachers of the first school was Mrs. Mack Moore who is still a resident of Magnolia Springs. Mrs. Moore's love for the Magnolis Springs School has never grown cold through the years.

In about the year 1926 a beautiful new modern brick school building was ready to take the place of the old Town Hall.

The principals of the new school were as follows; Mrs. Harper, Mrs. Louis, Mr. Edwards, Mrs. Robinson, Miss Essie Carson, Mrs. Ollie King, Miss Mazie

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McGowan, school population evolved to 553 students, 20 teachers and an 18-room building, with an office and cafeteria. A home economics building was later erected. In 1966, Aaronville graduated its first senior class.

In 1969, school curriculum expanded to instruct grades 1-9. A year later, a federal government order resulting from the Civil Rights Act forced the school's closing, and the area's black students were integrated into Foley's elementary and high schools.

The school re-opened in 1973 as Foley Middle School with grades 7-8. Mr. Ivan Jones presided as principal. Special education classes were added to the curriculum, while a librarian provides students with timely information and instruction in accurate research. In 1985, the sixth grade was moved from Foley Elementary to Foley Middle. Closing the 1987-88 academic year, Foley Middle School had 25 faculty members and 461 students in grades 6-8.

In 1989, a new Foley High School was constructed, allowing the middle school students to move to the former high school campus on Pine Street, and grades 4 and 5 to leave the elementary campus and begin studies on the former middle school site. As a result, Foley Intermediate School was established with Marge Moore as principal. That year, Foley Intermediate School had 340 students and 18 faculty members. By 1998, the school population had reached 418 students, with faculty positions increasing by seven. Magnolia School opened in January, 1999, taking 130 students and 7 faculty members from this campus.

Currently, the campus houses 276 students, 25 faculty and a support staff of 12. Completion of a 12-classroom addition, new media center, science lab, computer lab, restrooms, office and kitchen are anticipated within the next year.

FOLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Foley Elementary School, created in 1907 as part of the Foley School, remains one of the county's largest elementary schools. The school has undergone numerous changes over the years, and in 1986 under the leadership of Ms. Brenda Pierce, became a separate entity for the city's K-5 population. Then in 1989, due to an increase of more than 1,000 students, grades 4 and 5 were moved to the new Foley Intermediate School.

Under the current leadership of Dr. William Lawrence, Foley Elementary provides quality educational opportunities for 550 children attending grades K-3 residing inside the city's schooling district, as well as the outlying 100 squares miles.

With an emphasis in communication skills, FE students have experienced improvements in community based technology such as a schoolwide television broadcasting system, the introduction of a computer laboratory designed to improve writing skills as well as a complete science laboratory, replete with a networking computer area.

To better meet the changing needs of its students, faculty and staff created a series of engaging, interactive summer programs. During the past three years, students have participated in Summer Academic Camp for Kids, a four-week intensive designed to jumpstart students about the year ahead. The Baldwin County Summer Migrant School serves families who have recently moved to the area and are seeking employment in either agriculture or fishing markets.



CONNECTING WITH NEIGHBORS AROUND THE CORNER AND WORLDWIDE.

GULFTEL, INTERNATIONAL PAPER COMPANY AND THE SNOOK FOUNDATION ARE OFFERING GRANTS TO DEVELOP COMPUTER COURSES AND INTERNET SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC

CLASSES ARE HELD AT THE HISTORIC SUMMERDALE SCHOOL LIBRARY.

MAGNOLIA SCHOOL

The newest K-6 grade school in the Baldwin County School System, Magnolia School is a dream come true for the riverside community. In the early 1900's, the town hall, now known as Magnolia Springs Community Hall, was used as the first schoolhouse for area students. In 1927, a school building was erected which later became known as the Magnolia Springs School.

When the school was extensively damaged by fire in 1985, students were permanently transferred to various Foley campuses. Twelve years later, bids were approved for a new Magnolia School, the ground broken and the building begun. The facility was completed in December 1998. It encompasses 72,000 square feet, replete with 27 classrooms, a cafeteria, computer lab, library, gym and office space. Opening enrollment for the school's 1998 opening was 362. By May of the next year, attendance had increased by 60 students.

Because the new facility was not completed for the fall 1998 term, students, faculty and staff were sent to temporary classrooms at Foley Elementary, Foley Intermediate and Foley Middle schools. Classes were overcrowded and space was at a minimum. And from August to December, the community grew with excitement as they watched their new school come together. Then over the Christmas break, teachers office staff, and county workers moved "classrooms." When the new semester began in January 1999, both faculty and students excitedly occupied their new facility.

Magnolia's student enrollment for May 1999 was 422 students. The school population is comprised of 300 Caucasian students, 115 African-American students, 0.86-percent Hispanic, 0.43-percent Asian and 0.43-percent other. Additionally, 197 students receive free lunch/breakfast, and 56 students receive reduced lunch/breakfast.

There are 33 teachers and two administrators at Magnolia School, with 50-percent holding a Master's Degree or higher. Seven teachers are currently working on additional degrees or certification.

SUMMERDALE SCHOOL

Founded in 1907 with an attendance rate of five students, Summerdale was literally a one-teacher school. The next site, built in 1913, consisted of three rooms and large hall. In 1938, the wings were remodeled and expanded. Up until 1942, Summerdale School taught all 12 grades. However, in