

HISTORY OF BUNKER HILL

Compiled by
Mrs. Amanda Pope Forbes
1952

Bunker Hill! Why was it named Bunker Hill? So many, many times this question has been asked. And years ago an inquisitive little girl, Alice Bass, asked her father, Seabron Bass, this same question. His reply was,, “Well, we worked as hard to get our school as the men did to win the Battle of Bunker Hill, so I suggested we name it Bunker hill.”

The first school building, erected some time before the Civil War, was the usual type, one-room log house, with dirt chimneys at each end, in which burned huge logs. Split logs with pegs for legs were used for seats. Eveline Polk, who has descendants living in the community today, was one of the pupils.

After the Civil War a long, one-room, frame, “weather-boarded” building was built, and the school given the name of Bunker Hill. It stood about where the superintendent’s home stands today. This building had dirt chimneys, also, at each end. On the east side of the building was a door with a shutter-window on each side of the door, and this particular door was used by the boys only, from which a path led to a spring of water on the east side of the road.

On the west side were two shutter windows and a door which was used by the girls, and a path leading to a spring on the west side of the road. The seats were rough, wide planks on two legs; no backs. Under a window on each side of the room were long shelves with benches used as desks or tables when writing. The recitation bench was at one end of the building.

The first school “masters’ and “marms” of whom we have any record were a Mr. McLaurin, Seabron Bass, Miss Martha Missouri Edmonson, D. Porter McKennis, Jim Speed, Henry Yawn, Oscar Summers, O. H. David, and Rev. J. P. Carter.

Rev. Carter taught in the Baptist Church while another school building was erected. This was a much longer frame building than the first two. A rostrum was at the west end of the building, double doors at the east end, several glass windows and door on the north side. A stove stood in the center of the building. When the enrollment was large enough, which was sometimes seventy-five, two teachers used this room; each one teaching classes at opposite ends; no partition. A few years later a belfry was added in which hung a large dinner bell which could be heard for miles around. Later a room was added on the north side of the school house.

In this building the following “Professors” taught: Rev. J. R. Carter, Miss Lizzie Polk, Dr. Jim Robertson, Clyde Conerly, Miss Annette Applewhite, T. R. Burt, Albert Applewhite, Rev. Estes Bass (son of Seabron Bass) Quitman Langston, Fleet Burrow, G. L. Martin, Rev. S. A. Wilkinson, Rev. L. H. Harper and F. S. Hammond.

A two-story building was put up in 1919 or 1920. The principals during the life of this building were L. “Red” Sullivan and L. T. Aultman.

During the session of 1930-31 the present Smith Hughes Vocational Building was built. The superintendents have been K. T. Sullivan, O. F. Grantham, Garvin Allen, C. K. Williamson, W. M. Simmons and C. C. Mabry.

This community and school have been very fortunate in having had such outstanding men as administrators of it. Some have been noted Baptist Ministers, superintendents of the Baptist Orphanage, District Judge, lawyers, Delta plantation owners, doctors, Superintendents of education, College instructor or Religious Education and Psychology, and wide awakes school administrators. From this school have come many of like professions, due to the influence of this institution.

For years Bunker Hill has taken an active part in training its students to play baseball and basketball. Today it possess ten trophies, eight of which were won by basketball teams in the county, district, and state; and two awarded to two students who were selected as the best all-around players and sports in the district. Eight of these trophies have been won the past two years, since the new gym was built.

At present there is a member of the faculty, Mrs. Amanda pope Forbes, who is a descendant, a granddaughter of the second teacher of Bunker Hill academy, Seabron Bass, who names the school. Mr. Bass had a son, Estes, a daughter, Alice, and two granddaughters, Miss Ada Lee Pope and Mrs. Amanda Forbes who have in the past been faculty member of said school. He also has a grandson, Lowery Bass, son of Estes, who is Chemistry Instructor at Delta State Teachers' College, Cleveland, Mississippi.

His daughter, Mrs. Alice bass Pope, now owns a hand bell which once called the children from plat to Reading, 'Riting, and "Rithmetic. Today, thanks to the R.E.A., the children are called from play with the electric bell which sounds throughout the buildings and play grounds. This should be a memorial to the Ex-President of the R.E.A., Mr. C. e> Williamson, who helped make it possible for Bunker Hill Community and school to enjoy all of the modern conveniences.

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Shannon,

John Ulmer, a former classmate, introduced me to your web site. I have thoroughly enjoyed it and greatly appreciate all your work in gathering and posting all this valuable information.

In 1952 (I think it was), my mother wrote an article on the history of Bunker Hill School for that year's yearbook. (Article and pictures attached.) She and members of her family were teachers there since the school was formed.

In addition to her article, just before the school was started, the powers that be decided there was a need for a new school in the north part of the county. Goss and Improve were both wanting the school to be in their communities. Seaborn Bass, my maternal great-grandfather and a Civil War Veteran, lived in Carley (now Bunker Hill). He and some of the other people in the community wanted the school to be there, so they went to battle to get it. The rest is in the article.

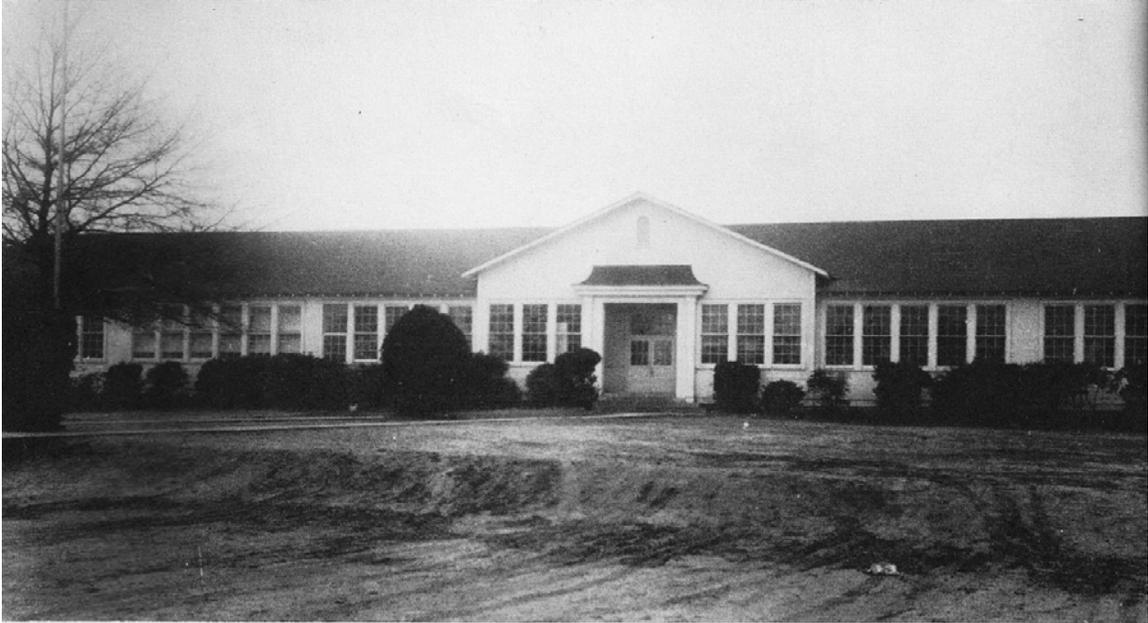
As an update, there is no longer any traces of the school buildings. Bunker Hill Baptist Church now owns the property. For several years they used the old gym, but have now torn it down and built a family life center on the site. I now own the bell that's referred to in the article.

If you decide to post this on your web site, feel free. If not, I hope you enjoy it anyway.

Keep up the good work!

Edie

(Edith Forbes Geiger)



SCHOOL BUILDING



VOCATIONAL BUILDING



GYMNASIUM