

Additional Research and Update

EDUCATION IN ROUND ROCK

by

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The earliest white settlement in Williamson County was in the Round Rock area. A tall gray granite historical marker on HWY 79, 2.8 miles east of downtown Round Rock tells the story of Kenney Fort. Established in 1838, members of the Kenney family lived there until 1852. Dr. Kenney's daughters attended school in Austin. Apparently no school was established there. ¹

The first record of the establishment of a school was in 1848, when a log cabin school was built on Lake Creek at Moss Spring, 2 miles southwest of Round Rock, called Brushy at that time. Soon after another log cabin school was built north of Brushy Creek by S.L. Makemson. ²

Records are not available for all rural schools in the Round Rock District but many were in operation before 1900 and served the educational needs of the people. Most of these schools taught grades 1 - 8 and students were then allowed to continue in high school in town.

Consolidation of small schools districts with larger schools took place when transportation became easier. This happened from about 1920 on through the 1960s. Pond Springs School District was the last to consolidate with Round Rock in 1969. Names of schools in the district now closed are: Caldwell Heights, Chandlers Branch, Union Hill, Robertson, Cedar Valley, Hyland, Gattis, Jollyville, Pond Springs and a Mexican school or two. ³

Hopewell was a negro school with three teachers and about one hundred pupils. Pictured in 1930. ⁴

Through the years it has been evident that education has been a foremost goal in the thinking of the citizens of Round Rock. ROUND ROCK, TEXAS, U.S.A. a pictorial history of the town shows some very old pictures with hand written inscriptions on two pictures. "Live in Round Rock where it costs less and give your children a college education". "It is only 8 miles from Round Rock to Southwestern University at Georgetown _____ and only 18 to Texas University at Austin". ⁵

Round Rock people are aware of their historic past as evidenced by the many Official Texas Historical Markers in the city. Atleast four of the markers attest to the emphasis that was placed on education through the years. Some were church operated and served well. The markers whose script includes a reference to schools are: PALM VALLEY LUTHERAN CHURCH, PIONEER BUILDERS, OLD BROOM FACTORY, and TRINITY LUTHERAN COLLEGE. ⁶

Not only have school patrons given voice to the promotion of adequate education, they have provided funds for the building and maintaining of modern, well equipped facilities. They have promoted their goal of 'quality in education'. Through their leaders they have anticipated the excessive growth of development in the area and have voted the bonds to handle the load.

Noel Grisham was superintendent of Round Rock Schools from 1957 - 1979 (22 years) when the greatest surge of growth took place. Every bond issue presented, during his term of administration, was passed. ⁷

In 1979 after, Dr. Norman Hall became Superintendent, a huge \$17 Million bond issue carried. ⁸

To meet the needs of a rapidly growing School District the Board of Education states, "___ Using money provided by bond elections in 1978 and 1979, we are constructing buildings and acquiring sites for future facilities to meet the growth requirements of our district." ⁹

An interesting feature of this 110 square mile area school is that it lies in two counties. Part of it is in Williamson County and part in Travis County. Three schools are in Travis County.

The new citizens coming in to the Round Rock School District are taking up what the long ago citizens started and the long-time residents carried on----- a supreme effort to provide quality education for their children.

The result of all this planning and work is reflected in the following statistics --- An enrollment of 10,300 pupils guided by about 700 faculty and staff. By August 1981 there will be 2 High Schools, 3 Middle Schools and 11 Elementary Schools. ¹⁰

All schools are fully accredited K - 12 by Texas Education Agency and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Eighteen Special Services offered include two centers for Community Education, one in Round Rock and one in Jollyville. Also offered through use of school facilities are credit courses in Junior College with Austin Community College.

On all brochures and folders handed out by the Administration may be seen this promise, DEDICATED TO QUALITY EDUCATION.¹¹

The patrons of the school are proud of their school and as a group sponsored this application for an Official Texas Historical Marker. The check was written by the treasurer of the Round Rock District Council of Parent-Teachers Association.

ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Norman Hall, Superintendent
Rowena Stone, Division Administrator for Curriculum & Instruction
N. R. Priest, Division Administrator for Administration & Personnel
Dr. Walter Howard, Division Administrator for Development
Dr. Mike Barry, Division Administrator for Operations
Ray Canizales, Director of Secondary Education
Hazel Sylvester, Director of Elementary Education
Gwen Selby, Director of Business Affairs
Betty Zinn, Director of Special Education
Earl Seay, Director of Vocational Education
Nancy Spaulding, Director of Media Services
Bernie Clark, Director of Food Service
Doris Pyle, Supervisor of Gifted
Dr. Charles Sylvester, Supervisor of Special Services
Freddie Leggett, Tax-Assessor-Collector 12,

FOOTNOTES

1. Scarbrough, Clara Stearns; LAND OF GOOD WATER, A Williamson County History, Williamson County Sun Publishing Company, Georgetown, TX 1973p 85
2. Ibid.... p 134
3. Ibid.... p 414 Chapter on Notes On Places In Williamson County
4. Kiwanis Club, ROUND ROCK, TEXAS, U.S.A., Sweet Publishing Company, Round Rock, TX 1972p 44
5. Ibid.....p 286
6. Williamson County Historical Commission, WILLIAMSON COUNTY HISTORICAL MARKERS...unpublished manuscript, 1978 Marker Scripts pages 69, 79, 80, 82
7. Howard, Dr. Walter, INTERVIEW , Round Rock Adm. Bldg. 1311 Round Rock Ave., Round Rock, TX. with M. Matthews, Jan. 23-81
8. Ibid.
9. School Board Folder of announcements for 1980-1981
10. Op. Cit. Howard
11. Round Rock School Administrators announcement and calendar for 1980 - 1981
12. Ibid

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Scarbrough, Clara Stearns, LAND OF GOOD WATER, A Williamson County, Texas History, Williamson County SUN, Publishers, Georgetown, Texas, 1973
2. Kiwanis Club, ROUND ROCK, TEXAS, U.S.A!!!, Sweet Publishing Company, Round Rock, Texas, 1972
3. Williamson County Historical Commission, WILLIAMSON COUNTY HISTORICAL MARKERS, Manuscript unpublished. Copies found in archives of Public Libraries in the county
4. Interview with Dr. Walter Howard, 1311 Round Rock Ave., 1-23-81
5. Brochures and folders from Administration Building