

" Flowers To Whom Flowers Are Due "

Miss Florence Mathis was a resident of Mobile Alabama. At the age of 16 and having completed High School accepted an offer to a position as a second teacher for the Black children living in Mifflin, Alabama in 1939. Mifflin was a small community south of Foley City Limit.

Miss Mathis' dad drove her daily to and from Mobile, Alabama until he became acquainted with Mr, and Mrs. Willie and Rosena Porter asking that his daughter could live with them. She lived there for 29 years.

Although Miss Mathis had only finished High School but obtained a warehouse of information to teach other. She taught generations of Blacks living in Mifflin and also Aaronville Community when the families relocated there. Her teaching was equivalent to a college graduate. In 1940, she was a teacher, principal, truant officer, disciplinarian, and community leader at the same time.

Miss Mathis believed that every child in the school system was entitled by law and by natural right to the best education that could be offered. She also believed that wherever possible, all Children should be a part of the normal school society and that certainly no child should be set apart nor exclude from that normal society solely on the bases of a handicap.

During Miss Mathis early years as a teacher and administrator, there was no cafeteria for students to receive a hot meal. With the help of some older children, she would cook large pots o tomato soup or beans to feed each child because she realized that a child would learn better if not hungry.

Miss Mathis saw the need to help the school survive financially. Because of lack of funds for supplies and other learning tools, she organized an annual "TEA" to bring monies in from the teachers and community. With minimum educational support, the school operated with a full curriculum including; reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, geography, physical education. Miss Mathis included extra curriculum activities such as and not limited to stage plays, dances of other countries, May Day, basketball and Future PTA society.

The Future PTA Society taught children correct ways of Conducting Meetings, Ethics, Etiquette, Speaking and Writing. Participating in these activities, the children learned Self-Worth, Abilities, Potentialities, and Limitations. These extra curriculum activities also prepared the children to make the transition to Baldwin Country Training, the only Black school in Daphne, Alabama accepting children from the above mentioned community.

Miss Mathis didn't take her position lightly. She worked hard but took time to educate herself receiving a BS and Master's degrees in education.

Summary

Miss Mathis Journey began as a young 16 year old teacher in a rural, deprived, depressed one room school house in 1939 to principal in 1940 to 1967' The so long awaited desegregation ruling had come to fruition closing Black schools and forcing integration.

Miss Mathis Legacy will continue to be recognized, and will live on in the Aaronville Community.

Submitted by

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