

## Minutes of the KCRSPA General Meeting on June 1, 2017

At 11:30 am Vice President Jean Wright called the meeting to order in the Chesapeake Room of the Granary and we said the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ruth Wilson read two memorial poems in memory of Art Engle and Clarence Hawkins. We will be remembering Betty Cooper and Miriam Cronshaw in a future meeting.

Jean Wright distributed a summary of the accomplishments of KCRSPA this year. That summary will appear in the newsletter.

### Program:

In 2016, KCRSPA members Kathy Clark and Nancy Harrington started working on the project of writing and presenting the history of schools, especially the small, one-room schools, that have existed in Kent County. In previous meetings Nancy and Kathy have presented their interesting tri-fold display which maps the location of all of these schools in Kent County. On another tri-fold display are both vintage and current photos of these schools. These tri-folds have been displayed at all of our meetings since June 2016 and have been used in various activities and games at the meetings. In addition, the trifolds have been on display at Cliffs School open houses. Cliffs School is a restored one room school house near Cliffs City in Kent County. KCRSPA has been actively involved in the school's restoration since the 1980's and our members have served as docents from that time until the present. The tri-fold displays have added an additional interesting element for Cliffs School visitors. These have also been used by students at Radcliff School for their project on one-room school houses in Kent County. During the year, one of our programs covered the schools themselves. Another program included recollections by teachers in the old schools. At this program, Kathy and Nancy distributed a book of the recollections of Kent County teachers from 1900 to 1976.

During our June 1, 2017 KCRSPA meeting, our members were treated to in-person recollections from former students in the schools of the past in Kent County. First, James "Goop" Saunders and Olythea Hunley spoke about attending Coleman School near Still Pond Neck. Both James Saunders and Lea Hunley started attending Coleman School in the early 1950's. They both fondly remembered their teachers who were Emmaline Walley in first and second grades, Florence Dorsey in third and fourth grades and Irving Hamilton in 5<sup>th</sup> and sixth grades. Mr. Hamilton was also the principal. These teachers were credited with giving their students the academic skills and moral guidance on which they would draw for the rest of their lives. James and Lea spoke of how the school and community, including the church, worked together to participate in the education of their children which included not only the three R's but also music and drama and the celebration of holidays. At the time, corporal punishment was used and was supported and reinforced by parents for infractions of the behavioral codes. They recalled that Gwen Swinson also taught at Coleman School and also cooked lunch.

Members Jean Foreman and Ruth Wilson recounted their tales of attending Rock Hall Elementary School. Jean attended the school from 1943 until 1949 and Ruth began attending in 1945. At this school there were six grades and five classrooms. They recalled that Hilda Hill, who had a reputation for running a tight ship right up until her retirement in the late 1960's, was the principal. Jean remembered air raid drills during the WWII years when student had to go run and hide in the woods. Siblings were required to look after each other during these drills and students were sometimes required to lie flat on the ground. Teachers that were remembered were Louise Kendall, Maude Middleton, Minnie Kelly, Nannie Strong, Eden Bryden, Emily Bryden, Catherine Barnes and Lois Crouch. Reading was taught by sight using the *Dick and Jane* reading books. Lunch was prepared each day by a woman who lived across the street from the school. Jean and Ruth both remember being in drama productions such as *Rip Van Winkle* (Jean played an elderly Mrs. Van Winkle), *Pandora's Box*, *A Christmas Carol* (Jean played Mrs. Cratchit) and *Snow White* (Ruth played the witch). Recess games were the traditional ones of catch, hopscotch, and jump rope. After Piney Neck and Skinners Neck Schools closed, those students came to Rock Hall Elementary, but some students were not picked up at their houses because the bus would not go where there were not paved roads. Once a year, Rock Hall Elementary students traveled to Chestertown for a field day and competitive games. Ruth remembered a time that one of the teachers took the students to Chestertown to go to the movies and then took them to Bud Hubbard's restaurant for lunch. Both Jean and Ruth praised their teachers for providing them with such a good foundation through so many experiences and lessons.

Member Charlotte Potts started school at age five at the Sandfield School near Millington. She had a photo of the school, the bell that was used to announce opening and closing, as well as one of her report cards, all of which she shared with us. When she attended Sandfield School, there were 36 students who were taught by Amanda Gould, Eva Moore, and Mrs. Mitchell. Teachers at Sandfield were required to rent a room in the same community as the school. Annie B. Love was the principal as well as a teacher. Students were required to contribute to the school by oiling the floors, beating the erasers, and washing the blackboards. There were two outhouses, one for boys and one for girls. Students were within walking distance of the school and they walked home for lunch. A pot-bellied stove provided heat in the winter and community men stoked the stove and banked the fire in the evening so that the school would be warm in the morning. Charlotte remembered that she and another student with good handwriting would copy handouts for the younger students since there were no copy machines. The reading books used were the *Alice and Jerry* series and although Sandfield was an African American school, the illustrations in the reading series were of children with white complexions. At recess the students ran relays, and played dodgeball and softball. Charlotte credited her teachers for really caring about their students and helping her achieve success in life. She said that in the one room school house, children often learned from each other.

At the conclusion of the memories of these former students of schools in Kent County, we were served a delicious lunch in the Chesapeake Room overlooking the beautiful Sassafras River.

#### Membership:

Nancy Harrington and Sue Crooks reported that there are eleven retirees this year so far. They are: Larry Adams, Susan Bedwell, Paul Blumberh, Patricia Gallahan, George Dudek, Bunny Grussing, Joan Kelley, Linda Porter, Nina Newlin, Dianne Reynolds and Debbie Smith. Nancy encouraged all of our members to contact these retirees as well as any retirees we know to join KCRSPA and MRSPA. These organizations are a positive force in our community and the dues are very inexpensive insurance for our pensions and our health insurance. MRSPA works tirelessly to defend and protect out insurance and to support legislation that helps retirees in Maryland. All retired school personnel should be encouraged to join us. Faye Miller reminded us of our slogan "Each One, Reach One" to encourage us to reach out to potential members.

#### Scholarship:

Billie Lynne Roberts reported that Meaghan Doyle was awarded the \$2000 KCRSPA Scholarship this year. She plans to attend Frostburg. The Lorraine Costella Scholarship of \$800 was awarded to Lily Willis who will be attending Wesley College in Dover, DE.

#### Community Service:

Billie Lynne Roberts reported that Betty Barbe was a Finalist for the MRSPA Community Service Award and that she received a certificate for that honor. She also will be inducted into the Maryland Senior Citizen Hall of Fame. The induction will be at Michaels in Glen Burnie, MD on October 26, 2017.

#### Nominating:

Margie Baker reported that Jean Wright will be President for the next year, Barbara Wheeler will be Vice President, Terri Bostic will be Secretary, and Jean Foreman will be Treasurer. Members of the Scholarship Committee will be Billie Lynne Roberts, Charlotte Potts, Sue Crooks, and Brenda Shorter. Nancy Harrington will be in charge of activities and trips. Carol Lupis and Lea Hunley will be in charge of programs and Carol Lupis will be the chairman of the Nominating Committee.

#### Cliffs School:

Jean Foreman reported that she will be reminding docents of their shifts by phone or e-mail.

#### Legislative:

Betty Barbe reported that the next state legislative meeting will be in August. If a member would like legislative reports by e-mail, please let Betty know and she will see that you receive these.

MRSPA President and KCRSPA member, Fay Miller spoke about her visits to the associations in all of the counties and in Baltimore City. She reminded us to reach out to potential members to encourage them to join.

Trish McGee, President of the Kent County Board of Education spoke to us about the importance of teachers as the foundation of the school system. She praised many of the teachers she had as a student in Kent County, including Mrs. Kieffer, Mrs. Rodney, Lorraine Willimas, Frances Gill, Patsy Reihl, and Terri Bostic. She commended Mrs. Harrington on the excellent teaching she observed in her classroom. Trish hopes that the BOE will be able to concentrate more on what goes on in the classroom in the future. For the last several years, the BOE has been concentrating on budget-related decisions and she hopes that the results of those decisions will be positive.

MRSPA President Fay Miller installed the officers.

Proceeds from the 50/50 raffle were \$43.50 which will be donated to the scholarship fund.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Terri Bostic,

Secretary