

Broward County Schools: Some Places of Instruction

By Denyse Cunningham



Braithwaite School. Broward County Historical Commission.

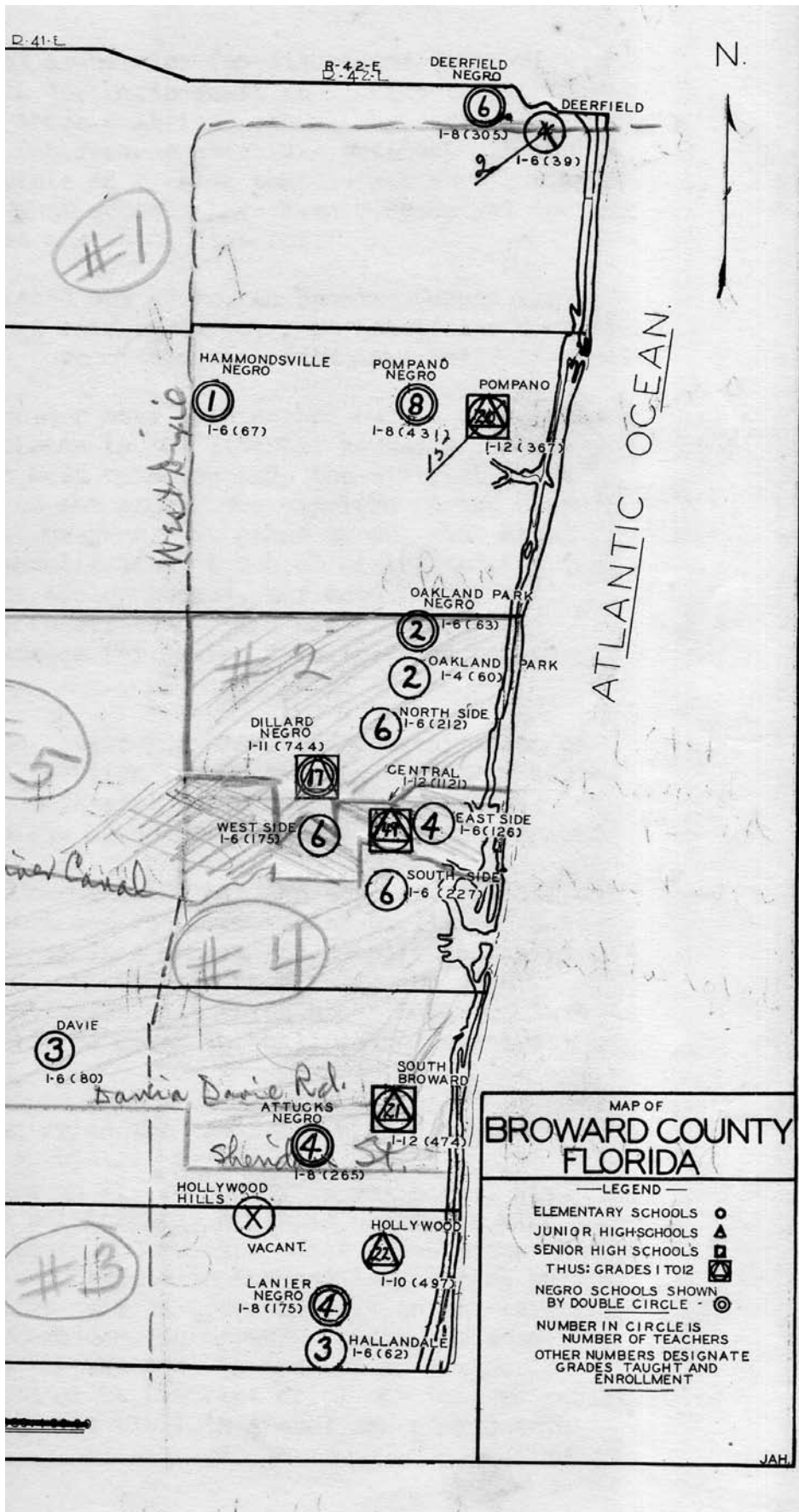
Denyse Cunningham was the curator at Bonnet House Museum and Gardens in Fort Lauderdale and has been the curator for the Broward County Historical Commission since 2002. She earned a Master's Degree in American and New England Studies from the University of Southern Maine. For the past 29 years she has worked for several art and history museums around the country.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN SCHOOLS

In 1903 the first school for African American students in Broward County opened in the town of Deerfield with the Rev. B. F. James as the teacher.¹ It was named Deerfield Colored School. The second school in Deerfield, the Braithwaite School, was built in 1929 as a three-teacher school and cost \$9,000. It was torn down to make way for a senior center.² West

Deerfield Elementary was opened sometime thereafter.

African-American schools were operated on a split term, with no classes during the winter harvest season so that children could work in the fields. This meant that black schools could not be accredited and that their graduates would have difficulty entering accredited colleges. The NAACP took the matter to court which ruled in their favor to keep the schools open in 1946.³



Though most of the earliest African-American public schools were housed in privately owned buildings, teachers and administrators were provided by the Board of Public Instruction.

With a donated building from Fort Lauderdale pioneer Tom Bryan, Colored School No. 11, a one-room wooden building on Northwest Third Avenue and Second Street, opened in 1906.⁴ Four years later, classes moved to the Knights of Pythias Lodge Hall on the corner of Northwest Fourth Street and Fourth Ave. Later schools included Sunland Park Elementary, at 919 N.W. 13 Ave., and Lincoln Park Elementary, at 600 N.W. 19 Ave. Lincoln Park, a neighborhood facility, is located on the site of the former school.⁵

In Pompano, the first school for African-American students opened in the early 1920s in a two-room wooden building located in the 400 block of Hammondville Road. When it was destroyed in the 1926 hurricane, classes were held nearby in Psalters Temple A.M.E. Church. The Broward Board of Public Instruction provided a new location in 1927-28 with the Pompano Colored School, located at 718 N.W. Sixth St. In 1954, it was renamed Coleman Elementary School, in honor of the Rev. James Emanuel Coleman, pastor of Mount Calvary Baptist Church. With the opening of Blanche Ely High School in 1952, Pompano's black high school students no longer had to go out of town to graduate. Following the early 1940s opening of the Pompano Migratory Labor Camp on Hammondville Road, a one-room school was established off State Road 7, south of today's Coconut Creek Parkway. The 1960s saw Charles Drew Elementary established to serve the Pompano subdivision of Collier City. Later, Sanders Park Elementary, the Pompano Project Elementary and Markham Park Elementary were added.⁶

1938 Map of Broward County Schools, from a report of Florida State Department of Public Instruction. Broward County Historical Commission.



Pompano Colored School, later known as Coleman. Courtesy of the Pompano Beach Historical Society.



Math teacher at Attucks. Courtesy of the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society, photograph by Gene Hyde.



Carver Ranches Elementary School today. Broward County Historical Commission.

ROSENWALD SCHOOLS

According to the website of the National Trust for Historic Preservation the Rosenwald School Building Program has been called the “most influential philanthropic force that came to the aid of Negroes at that time.” It began in 1912 and eventually provided seed grants for the construction of more than 5,300 buildings in 15 states, including schools, shops and teachers’ houses, all of which were built by and for African Americans. The Rosenwald rural school building program was a major effort to improve the quality of public education for African Americans in the early 20th century in the South.

In 1912, Julius Rosenwald gave Booker T. Washington permission to use some of the money he had donated to Tuskegee Institute for

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the construction of six small schools in rural Alabama, which were constructed and opened in 1913 and 1914. Pleased with the results, Rosenwald then agreed to fund a larger program for schoolhouse construction based at Tuskegee. In 1917 he set up the Julius Rosenwald Fund, a Chicago-based philanthropic foundation, and in 1920 the Rosenwald Fund established an independent office for the school building program in Nashville, Tennessee. By 1928, one in every five rural schools for black students in the South was a Rosenwald school, and these schools housed one third of the region’s rural black schoolchildren and teachers. At the program’s conclusion in 1932, it had produced 4,977 new schools, 217 teachers’ homes and 163 shop buildings, constructed at a total cost of \$28,408,520 to serve 663,615 students in 883 counties of 15 states.⁷

Broward County had four Rosenwald schools: Braithwaite in Deerfield, Liberia, Hallandale and Pompano. None of the structures that housed the four schools exists today.⁸ Pompano Colored School, located at 728 N.W. Sixth St. in Pompano Beach, was built in 1928 as a six-teacher school that cost \$30,985.⁹

In 1929, with funds from the Rosenwald School Building Program, the Hallandale School was built. The Liberia School, also known as Attucks, was located at 3600 N. 22 Ave. in Hollywood. It was built as a four-teacher school that cost \$12,200.¹⁰ In 1924, a school designed by John Morris Peterman opened in Fort Lauderdale as Colored School No. 11, later known as Dillard School, with grades from elementary through high school.

The original 1924 building was later renamed Walker Elementary School and is now the Old Dillard Museum. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. A new and separate Dillard High School was built in 1950. A new Dillard Elementary School was built near Dillard High School in 1959 in Washington Park.¹¹

Oakland Park Negro School, later known as the Carter G. Woodson Elementary School, was built at 3721 N.E. Fifth Ave.¹² The school building is no longer there. A park on the land still bears the name of the African-American historian Carter G. Woodson.

The Davie Negro School, located between the Florida Turnpike and the Davie Road Extension, was built for a small group of students, like many early rural schools.¹³

Dania's first school for African-American students was opened in 1905, and by 1917 another school was built on land donated by Dania pioneer M. C. Frost.¹⁴ Later, the Collins Elementary School was constructed at 1050 N.W. Second St.

Bethune Elementary at 2400 Meade St., was a local school in Hollywood.¹⁵

Carver Ranches Elementary School was built at 2201 S.W. 44 Ave. in West Hollywood, now the City of West Park.¹⁶

Schools in Hallandale included Lanier Elementary, located at First Avenue and Ninth Street; Chester A. Moore Elementary School, at 912 Pembroke Road; and Lanier Junior High School, also on Pembroke Road. Beginning in 1916, this unique wood frame and stucco school was the first school building used by the African-American children of northwest Hallandale. It remained in use until 1970, when court-ordered desegregation meant that white students would be attending. The structure was later used as a private home. It became dilapidated and was torn down in the 1980s to make way for a community center.¹⁷



*Edna Thornley Herriott (1892-1974).
Courtesy of Helen Herriott Landers.*



Fern Hall School. Courtesy of Helen Herriott Landers.

EARLY PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Many private schools existed in Broward County in the early years. Some of the most notable included Fern Hall and Pine Crest in Fort Lauderdale, the Outdoor School in Hollywood, and the Lake Placid School for Boys in Hillsboro Beach.

Edna Thornley Herriott founded Fern Hall School. The school was first located at the Bivans Hotel at 205 S.W. First Ave., in Fort Lauderdale. In 1935, it moved to the former county courthouse at 509 S. Andrews Ave. Due to increased enrollment in 1936, the school moved to the Maxwell Arcade at 300 S.E. Andrews Ave. Later Mrs. Herriott purchased land at 315 S.E. Ninth St. Architect Courtney Stewart was commissioned to design the new school building. Fern Hall closed in 1971. Hundreds of students from

kindergarten through twelfth grade fondly remember the school.¹⁸

Mrs. Herriott came to Fort Lauderdale from Illinois shortly after the 1926 hurricane. She taught in public schools for a time before founding Fern Hall. She was a member of the civic-minded fraternal organizations, the Eastern Star and the Royal Neighbors of America, and an active member of Park Temple Methodist Church.¹⁹

The Outdoor School, or Outdoor Private School, located at 2301-2307 Polk St. in Hollywood, was founded in 1938 by Lamora Mickelson as a dancing school for nursery-age children, and immediately became popular since the public school did not accept children before the age of six. Next, the school expanded to a full curriculum for elementary and middle school

grades, and the school became accredited by the State of Florida. High school was taught mostly on a tutorial basis. Head Mistress Mickelson taught French to all children. Extracurricular classes in dance and horseback riding were available. During its peak years, the school had as many as 100 pupils and a dozen teachers. The Mickelsons retired and closed the school in the mid-1970s. The school was known for its structure, a row of classrooms enclosed on three sides and no wall on the south side. Open windows on the north allowed for cool breezes and ventilation in an era before air-conditioning. Both the north and south sides could be enclosed on the rare chilly, rainy day.

Lamora Gleason Mickelson had degrees from Radcliffe College of Harvard University and the University of Miami. Mrs. Mickelson and her husband, Tony, were Hollywood pioneers, both having worked for Hollywood's founder,



Mae Horn McMillan. Broward County Historical Commission, Broward County Women's History Coalition Collection.

Joseph Young, in the early 1920s. She helped found the Hollywood Historical Society in 1974, and was active in the Art and Culture Center, the Museum of Archeology, the American Association of Uni-
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Mrs. Mickelson at the Outdoor School. Courtesy of Joan Mickelson, PhD.

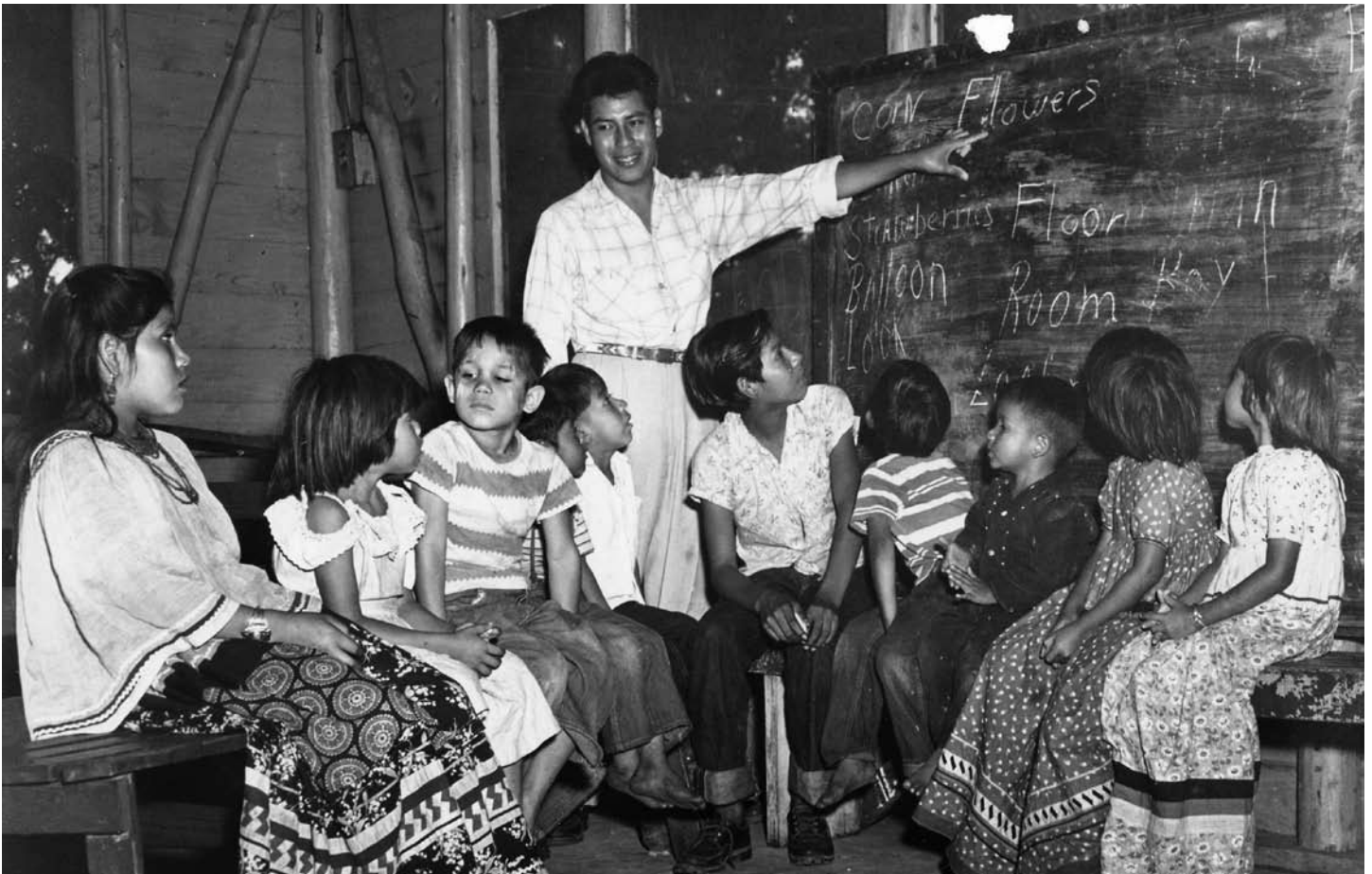
versity Women, the American Association of French Teachers and Harvard alumni activities. She and Tony donated important memorabilia to the Hollywood Historical Society, including photos from Virginia Elliott TenEick's collection.²⁰

In 1939, Mae Horn McMillan leased the Pine Crest Sanitarium on 1515 E. Broward Blvd. in Fort Lauderdale and started McMillan-Pine Crest School. She operated the school at that location until it was moved to its current location

in 1965. Pine Crest remains open today.²¹

The Seminole Indian Day School in Dania was started in the late 1920s and closed in 1936 for lack of community interest. As Betty Mae Tiger Jumper noted, "We kids wouldn't go to school regularly, and our parents wouldn't make us go, so it closed because it was so expensive for the government to maintain."²²

First used as a private school from 1922 to 1925, it was the winter



The Seminole Indian Day School. Broward County Historical Commission, Abby-Sheldon Collection.



Lake Placid School for Boys now the Hillsboro Club, 901 A1A, Hillsboro Beach, 1922-1925. Broward County Historical Commission.



The Riverside Military Academy. Broward County Historical Commission.

headquarters for the Lake Placid School for Boys (based in the Adirondacks) and was known for small classes and high tuition. Many of the students were from society families, with names such as Rockefeller and Pirie.²³ The millionaire owner of Bonnet House in Fort Lauderdale sent his son, Clay, to the school. Several wood-frame structures just north of the lighthouse that once comprised the school are now part of the exclusive Hillsboro Club complex.

In 1932, the Riverside Military Academy of Gainesville, Georgia, bought Hollywood Hills Inn, which was designed by Rubush & Hunter in 1924. It was located where Hollywood Boulevard ended at the traffic circle west of I-95. The Spanish/Moorish style building had never been successful as a hotel. Cadets spent the winter season there, entertaining Hollywood locals with their Sunday parades. A number of local boys went there. The gym, Blanton Hall, was designed by Bayard Lukens in the 1930s. The building was demolished and replaced by the startlingly modern, blue-lit, glass Presidential Building.

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GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN: SCHOOL NAMESAKES

Fifty-one schools in Broward County were named after people. Some namesakes are national historic figures like Charles Drew and Crispus Attucks; others are local pioneers like Leola Collins from Dania and Ivy Stranahan from Fort Lauderdale. Some schools are named for politicians and judges.

Whether a school is named for a school superintendent or teacher or named out of gratitude for a land donation, the significance of the naming of schools remains a noble exercise in recognition of past accomplishments.

The Broward County School Board involves parent and teacher participation in naming schools by voting on the name. Today the School Board requires the schools use their namesake's first and last name and not be named for a living person.

Today, new schools are no longer named after municipalities.

Katherine C. Wright Administration Building, Fort Lauderdale:

In 1974 Kathleen Cooper Wright was the first black woman elected to the Broward County School Board, making her the first African-American elected to county-wide office. She was a distinguished educator, teacher and mentor who actively supported professional groups as



Kathleen Cooper Wright (1935-1985). Broward County Historical Commission, Broward County Women's History Coalition Collection.

well as many civic, church and community organizations. She was tragically killed in a plane crash in 1985, at the age of 49. The Broward County School Board's Administration Building in Fort Lauderdale is named in her honor.

Stranahan High School, Fort Lauderdale: Ivy Stranahan started teaching children in 1899. She later served as president of the Florida Equal Suffrage Association and was active in the Fort Lauderdale Woman's Club.



*Ivy Cromartie Stranahan (1881-1971).
Broward County Historical Commission,
Abby Collection.*



Blanche Forman (1884-1959). Courtesy of Austin Forman.

Nova Blanche Forman Elementary, Davie: Blanche Forman was an elementary school teacher and principal from Illinois. She and her husband Hamilton came to Broward County in 1910 and lived in a tent in the Everglades in what is now the town of Davie. In 1912 they became the first lock tenders on the New River canal operating the locks for the boats traveling

from coastal settlements and Lake Okeechobee. Blanche earned and retained the respect of the rough tough men who passed through the locks. Among those who went through the lock were members of Florida's outlaw bank-robbing Ashley gang. Because there was no corner grocery store accessible she had to raise her own chickens for eggs and meat. The surplus was sold. Blanche became an excellent shot



Leola C. Collins. Courtesy of Marcellus Sterling Collins.

with both rifle and shotgun to keep the alligators and other wild animals away from her chickens. In later years, Blanche engaged in activities associated with the Daughters of the American Revolution and the P.E.O., a women's service organization.

Collins Elementary, Dania Beach: Known as the "Mother of the Black West Side," Leola C. Collins opened a grocery store in Dania in 1910 but spent most of her time feeding the hungry and tending to the sick. She sought donations all over the county for Provident Hospital, the first hospital to serve African-Americans in Broward County.

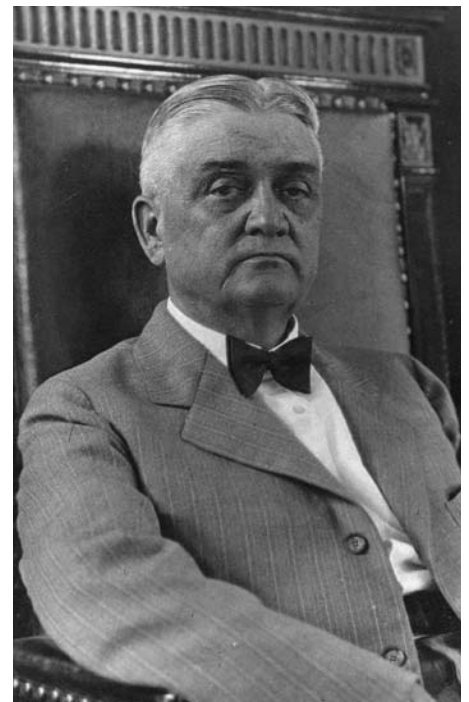
Boyd H. Anderson High, Lauderdale Lakes: Boyd H. Anderson was one of Broward County's first judges, elected to the bench in 1934. He served on the bench for 40 years. He was once described as a genial politician with a homespun philosophy.

Tedder Elementary, Pompano Beach: George Tedder, Sr. was Broward's first appointed circuit court judge in 1929, presiding for almost 30 years until he passed the mantle to his son George. The first four floors of the Broward County courthouse of west-wing are named the Tedder wing. Southeast Sixth Street was named for Tedder.

Blanche Ely High, Pompano Beach: When the school reopened



*Boyd H. Anderson (1902-1968).
Broward County Historical Commission, Easter Lily Gates Collection.*



*Judge George W. Tedder, Sr. (1880-1966).
Broward County Historical Commission.*

after a brief closing in the early 1970s, the first name of the former principal, Blanche Ely, was dropped as a way to also honor her husband. Blanche Ely is best known for fighting to keep the school open during harvest at a time when black children were pulled from the classroom to pick beans. A grass-roots campaign prompted the School Board to restore the original name



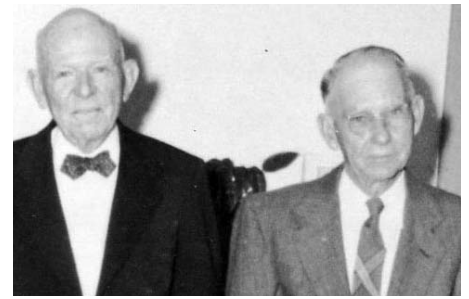
Blanche General Ely (1907-1993). Broward County Historical Commission, Broward County Women's History Coalition.

of Blanche Ely High. Blanche came to Pompano when she was a young adult. She was appointed principal of a two-room schoolhouse on Hammondville Road in Pompano Beach that later became Coleman Elementary School. She and her husband, Professor Joseph Ely, became a dynamic educational leadership team. She was instrumental in providing a school for migrant workers, "The Project School," which served the needs of the mostly Hispanic farm workers who would come to Pompano during the season to harvest the vegetables grown by wealthy farmers. She has been the recipient of many awards including the Broward Community College Woman of Excellence



James S. Rickards (1883-1949). Broward County Historical Commission, Rickards Family Collection.

Award, 100 Black Men of Broward Outstanding Service Award, and the City of Pompano Beach's A Legacy of Courage and Care Award. A road and a low-income housing project are also named for her. **Rickards Middle, Oakland Park:** James S. Rickards served as principal of Fort Lauderdale High, the oldest high school in



William H. "Harry" McNab (1878-1956) and Robert A. "Bob" McNab (1882-1958). This image of the two brothers was taken in 1951. Broward County Historical Commission, T. H. Chapman Collection.

Broward County. He was also the County Superintendent of Schools 1921-1928. He was instrumental in bringing Seminole children to the white schools.

McNab Elementary, Pompano Beach: William McNab arrived in Pompano in 1899. The family, including brothers, William "Harry" and Robert "Bob" were farmers with large land holdings in Pompano Beach. They were involved with many civic and business dealings. McNab School bears the family name. It is located right off McNab Road and was built close to Harry McNab Lake. This was a man-made lake, the U.S. government used sand to construct the highway. When the road was finished, Harry bought the county lake at auction and stocked it with fish for many years. William's wife Dora McNabb was a teacher.



M. A. Hortt (1880-1958). Courtesy of the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society.

Hortt Elementary School, Fort Lauderdale: M. A. Hortt was a real estate salesman and developer. Hortt Elementary School was located at 1700 S.W. 14 Court, on a 9½-acre site donated by the Broward pioneer. The school, built in 1958, was tucked away in the middle of a serene neighborhood



*Frederick C. Peters (1900-1964) and his wife Berenice Peters (1899-1982)
Image from The Story of Frederick C. Peters by August Burghard.*

known as Shady Banks. Due to low attendance the school closed in the mid-1980s.

Peters Elementary, Plantation: Frederick C. and Berenice Peters donated land for the first school and church in Plantation. At one time they owned a ranch and large



Charles W. Flanagan. Broward County Historical Commission, Hollywood Sun-Tattler Collection.

tracks of land in Plantation.

McFatter Technical High and William T. McFatter Tech Center, Davie: William McFatter was the superintendent of schools from 1980 to 1983.

Charles W. Flanagan High, Pembroke Pines: The city's mayor for 17 years, Flanagan died in office in 1995. He pushed for new schools and led an annexation effort that doubled the city's size.

Virginia Shuman Young Elementary, Fort Lauderdale: Virginia Shuman Young was a dual pioneer – the first female chairman of the Broward County School Board and the first and only woman to be mayor of Fort Lauderdale.

Olsen Middle School, Dania Beach: Named for Mertie Olsen, a long-time teacher in Broward County. She taught at South Broward



*Virginia Shuman Young (1917-1994).
Broward County Historical Commission,
Hollywood Sun-Tattler Collection.*



Mertie Olsen. Courtesy of Olsen Middle School.

High School and lived in Dania.

J. P. Taravella High, Coral Springs: James S. Hunt and J. P. Taravella and James S. Hunt of the development company Coral Ridge Properties founded Coral Springs.
Whiddon-Rogers Education Center, Fort Lauderdale: Gene Aus-



*J. P. Taravella (1919-1978).
Broward County Historical Commission,
Hollywood Sun-Tattler Collection.*

tin Whiddon, president of Causeway Lumber, served as chairman of the Broward County Community College Foundation until his death in 1989. He was named the



*Gene Austin Whiddon (1928-1989). Courtesy
of Broward College, Archives and Special
Collections.*

first recipient of the college's Distinguished Service Award in 1973 and the Seahawk Award in 1978. Whiddon Hall is home to Central Campus business programs. He managed the Broward gubernatorial campaigns of Reubin Askew

and Bob Graham.

Dwight Rogers was a U.S. Congressman from 1945 until his death in 1954. He was always interested in the progress of education. Rogers Junior High was originally named just for Rogers; later, after the closing of the Whiddon Adult Education Center on Federal Highway,



*Dwight Rogers, Sr. (1886-1954).
Broward County Historical Commission.*

the Whiddon name was added.

Annabel C. Perry Elementary, Miramar: The wife of Henry D. Perry, Annabel was very involved with her church and family. The couple gave the land for the Pembroke Road Baptist Church. A little park next to the Annabel Perry Elementary School is named for her as well.

Henry D. Perry Middle School, Miramar: Pioneer dairyman, banker and civic leader, Perry gave the land on which to build the Henry D. Perry Elementary School.

C. Robert Markham Elementary, Pompano Beach: Markham Park, which opened in 1973, was also named after the late C. Robert Markham, who was briefly the county's property appraiser until his death in 1966 (his son, William, became property appraiser in 1968).

Walter C. Young Middle School,

Pembroke Pines: State Representative Walter Young, a retired principal, was a champion for educational issues.



*Henry D. Perry (1901-1972). Broward
County Historical Commission, Perry Family
Collection.*



*Annabel Perry (1904-1972). Broward
County Historical Commission, Perry Family
Collection.*



Representative Walter C. Young (1922-). Broward County Historical Commission, Hollywood Sun-Tattler Collection, Photograph by Pat Farrell.

William Dandy Middle School, Fort Lauderdale: William Dandy was the first African-American deputy school superintendent. He helped lead the school system through one of its most difficult adjustments, desegregation. Dandy retired after 34 years with the school district as a counselor, principal and deputy superintendent.

James S. Hunt Elementary, Coral Springs: James S. Hunt was a developer of the city of Coral Springs.

Bennett Elementary, Fort Lauderdale: Ulric Bennett was Broward County School Superinten-



William Dandy. Broward County Historical Commission, Hollywood Sun-Tattler Collection, Photograph by Frank Alioto.



*James Stone Hunt (1897-1972).
Courtesy of the Coral Springs Historical Society.*

dent from 1932 to 1952. He was popular with female teachers for

his decision that freed the ladies from wearing stockings in the classroom, as had been the rule.

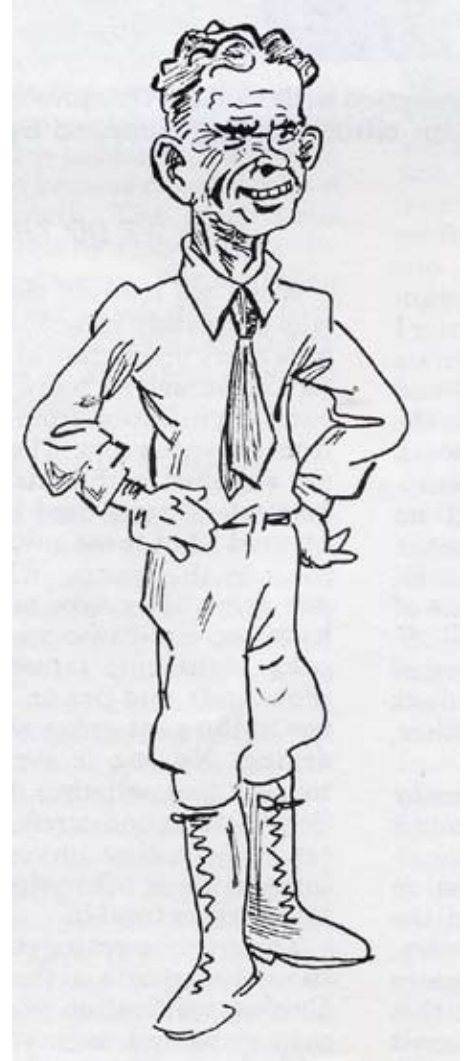
Stirling Elementary, Hollywood: Frank Stirling was one of the founders of Davie, and a prominent horticulturist and civic leader.

Walker Elementary, Fort Lauderdale: Clarence C. Walker presided over Dillard School from 1937 to 1942. When he came to Fort Lauderdale in 1937, he led the fight to bring the school up to accreditation standards and to end the School Board's policy of shutting down classes for African-American students so they could work in the fields and give growers cheap labor.

Colbert Elementary, Hollywood: Paul F. Colbert was a well-liked former principal of Hollywood Central School. Colbert was also principal of West Hollywood, Hallandale and Dania elementary schools, McNicol Junior High and South Broward



Ulric Bennett (1888-1982). Image from Painting at the Bennett Elementary School.



*Frank Stirling (1878-1949).
Broward County Historical Commission,
Stirling Family Collection.*



*Clarence C. Walker (1880-1942).
Courtesy of the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society.*



Paul F. Colbert (1904-1972). Courtesy of the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society.

and Hollywood Hills high schools. Continuing his extraordinary service to the children and teachers of the county, Colbert went on to become assistant superintendent and then associate superintendent for the Broward County School District before retiring in 1970.

Watkins Elementary: Pembroke Park:

Mrs. Pauline Watkins, a teacher in Broward County for 35 years, had this school named in her honor in 1955 for her long service to students. She was a social studies teacher and extensive world traveler. She also led the Camp Fire Girls in Hollywood.



Pauline Watkins (1915-2011). From the South Broward High School Annual, the Browardier, 1960.

Bair Middle School,

Sunrise: Named after teacher, truant officer and textbook coordinator Russell O. Bair. He retired in 1966 after 36 years with Broward County Schools. For years he provided free theater tickets to students with perfect attendance.

Piper High, Sunrise: William Piper, Sr. was an aviation pioneer, inventor and local benefactor. He gave the Broward County public school system the large acreage on which Fort Lauderdale High School was relocated to in 1962. His generosity has been memorialized in the Piper Auditorium at that school. He was the inventor and manufacturer of the Piper Cub aircraft.

Other schools named after prominent people include the following.

Morrow Elementary School, in North Lauderdale, was named for principal and School Board Special Projects Supervisor Carmon Morrow.

McNicol Middle School was named after Fannie McNicol, Hol-



Russell O. Bair (1897-1973). From the Fort Lauderdale High School Annual, Ebb Tide, Courtesy of Christine Lee.

lywood's first junior high teacher, and second teacher, beginning in 1924 and remaining for decades. She began teaching in the Young Company sales pavilion at 19th and Harrison Street, then Hollywood Central when it was built.

Chester A. Moore Elementary School in Hallandale was named for Moore who was principal for many years of the Hallandale school. The school was closed because the number of students attending wasn't enough to merit the school's continuance.

McArthur High School, Hollywood: James Neville McArthur owned the best-known dairy in south Broward County, begun in 1929 with 50 acres. Prior to starting the dairy, McArthur taught for several years in Miami. In 1956 he donated land at 6501 Hollywood Boulevard where McArthur High School opened, initially in portable classrooms. In 1958 he donated another 10 acres and the permanent school was erected. He often went by the name of J. Neville.