

HISTORY OF THE JACKSONVILLE COMMUNITY SCHOOL



The focal point of the Jacksonville Community is the historic Jacksonville School, built over 100 years ago and today continuing to undergo needed restoration and repair. It was once a two story school, filled with the voices of the children at their lessons, but it was closed as a school in 1936 when LBC School opened (later named Jefferson Grammar School to honor Rev. Austin Jefferson, Sr.). The second floor of the historic building was used as a meeting place for a men's lodge. We are willing to believe the historic building was constructed by the lodge group. At that time, lodge groups did prepare or share buildings for children to be educated. The second floor was damaged by fire in the early years and was restored to a one story building as it is today. Several local burial society groups used the building after 1936 until it became unusable and unsafe due to a lack of repairs for many years.

In 1991, a few concerned citizens of the Jacksonville Community rescued the old school and volunteers began work on the restoration with period lumber taken from the demolition of the Old Montmorenci Baptist Church building. Although work continues at intervals, old Jacksonville School now serves as a community building. Just across Huber Clay Road, from the school is the Historic Jacksonville Community Park. The park, an integral part of the Jacksonville Community, was established by Marigene Wills Washington and friends in 1970. The 2.1 acres of land for the park was generously leased by J.M. Huber Clay Company on a free lease from 1970-1997.

A letter was written by the Commission to J.M. Huber asking that the land for the park be donated to the Jacksonville Community. In October of 1997 J.M. Huber gave 1.37 acres of land by deed to the Jacksonville Community Commission, Inc. In September 1999, the Jacksonville Community Commission began purchasing an additional 2.59 acres of land from J.M. Huber Clay Company. This land which is adjacent to the park was paid off in June, 2003.

As with growth of the park property, the Jacksonville Community Commission continues to grow as a non-profit community organization. Through fundraising efforts, the commission is able to meet some of the needs of senior citizens, youth, and the community at large. The commission also continues to provide services and serve as a resource for the Midland Valley Area and the CSRA community.