

**Memories of Pleasant View School at Winterpock, Chesterfield County, VA,  
September 2022.  
by Florence Malone Smith (born June 3, 2023)**



My first year of school was 1929 in classes taught at the home of Mary Crawley Brown, teacher and principal at Pleasant View. She taught classes there while the new Pleasant View School was being built.

The original school was located in front of and to the right of the current building, as viewed from River Road. In 1924, Chesterfield County purchased the land (2 acres) for the new school from Mr. Peter J. Lee and his wife Linnie. African American families in the area supported the effort by holding fundraisers.

My Grandmother, Cecelia Lee Harris led the first fundraising effort, called a “peanut grab.” She purchased a large bag of peanuts at Willie Gift’s Store – the Winterpock Grocery which still stands at the corner of Coalboro and Winterpock Roads. For a donation of 25 cents, individuals would reach into the bag and grab as many peanuts as possible with one hand. The person with the largest number of peanuts would win a whole coconut pie. The Pleasant View Community Association gave the county a check for \$200.00.

The new school building was completed in the spring of 1930 and opened in September of that year. Mr. Tony Hembrick, his son Arthur Hembrick and Mr. Andrew Finn, Sr. worked for the contractor who built the school.

I began second grade in the new school in September 1930.

To attend Pleasant View, I walked about one and one quarter mile along Gilliam (now Cedar Creek) Road to River Road. The school day began at 8:30 a.m. Students would sometimes unlock the building using the key which was kept under a mat at the door.

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They would also make a fire in the iron stove. Before a well was dug on the property, students brought water from one of two different homes in the neighborhood: the Tyler's or the Crawley's.

We began the school day with prayers and greeted the teacher with the song

*“Good morning, to you  
Good morning, to you.  
Good morning, dear teacher,  
Good morning, to you.”*

We studied health and hygiene, reading, writing, arithmetic, history and geography.

Lunchtime

I brought lunch from home each day except on Wednesdays. My lunch bag usually contained a biscuit with homemade preserves or bologna, a Winesap apple and a sugar cookie.

On Wednesday mornings, at the 10 o'clock break, we had hot chocolate; and for lunch we had hot soup. The teacher and students prepared the soup with ingredients brought from the various homes: tomatoes, potatoes, salt pork and butterbeans, for example. We would bring bread from home.

Classmates

Some of my classmates were:

Thomas Harris	Linzy Johnson	Inez Hembrick	Wilson Tabb
Lewis Branch	Dorothy Jackson	Rosetta Woolridge	Thomas Epps

Teachers at Pleasant View

Mary Crawley Brown	Alva Mae Patron	Nannie Purney Studevart
Georgia Butler	Indiana Rudd	Gertrude Mason Finn
Lucille Archer		

No access to a high school education

At the completion of grade seven our public schooling ended because Chesterfield County did not provide transportation to Hickory Hill High School. Students had to arrange their own rides or live with a family near Hickory Hill. I began to work and earned my GED at Maggie Walker High.

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At some point, my father, Thomas Malone, Grover Crawley and R. F. Jones convinced the School Board to provide bus service to Hickory Hill High. The first driver was Mr. George Owens.

Community Center

After closing in 1947, Pleasant View was used as a community center for many years. The building was used as a meeting place for the B & B Hunt Club, the Chesterfield Braves Baseball Club, 4-H Club, Home Demonstration Club and the Imperial Order of King David Lodge No. 64, which paid to install electric lights in the 1950s.

Several churches met in the building over the years. These included the Redeemed Holiness Church and Mother Moore's Ministry. In the 1930s, a Rev. Matthews taught afternoon bible studies on Sundays when the nearby Tabernacle Baptist Church did not have services.