

Neighbors



Ann Pender Raggins (right) traveled the greatest distance (Cerrito, California) to attend the Dunbar Reunion and is shown with former classmates, Maude Burroughs Jackson (center), and Bessie Kelsey (left) at a reception held at Magnolia Point Golf and Country Club. [Photo submitted]

Dunbar Event is Preview for 20th Reunion in Year 2000

By Elaine Williamson
Feature Writer

Over 70 former graduates of Dunbar High School in Green Cove Springs gathered for a reunion on the weekend of July 10 and 11. Planning also began for the Big One in the year 2000 to mark their 20th reunion.

On July 10, the alumni gathered for a reception at Magnolia Golf and Country Club in Green Cove Springs where everyone renewed friendships and got caught up on what each had been doing since the last reunion.

On Saturday morning some of the grads toured the old Dunbar High School building in Green Cove Springs as well as looking over R. C. Bannerman School which used to be the elementary school.

The banquet was held Saturday night at Magnolia Point where the country club went all out to make it a very special occasion.

Presiding was Lillian Coleman, Class of '67, and the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance was given by Earnestine Burkes, Class of '61. Following the singing of "Lift Every Voice and Sing", Gwendolyn Addison Walker, Class of '62, gave greetings to all.

Coming from the farthest distance was Ann Pender Raggins who came from Cerrito, California (near Los Angeles). Traveling with Ann were her sisters, Mary Pender Augustine, and Martha Pender Baird. Mary lives in Cerrito, and Martha resides in Long

Beach, California.

After dinner Barbara Walker Garney, Class of '58, led the Litany of Preservation and Ethel Wilcox Wright, Class of '61, sang a solo.

Joe W. Love, Class of '57, introduced the speaker, Clarence A. Wilcox, Class of '53, who now lives in Louisiana.

The Alma Mater, led by Bennie Johnson, was sung by all and then was followed by two minute reflections by team sweethearts, homecoming queens, band members, chorus and football players. Several faculty members also spoke, including Thomas Hogans.

Dunbar High School was the only black high school in Clay County and students were transported to Green Cove Springs from all over the county.

The school was well-known in town for its lively band which donned its purple and gold satin uniforms and put on a parade through Green Cove Springs on

the day of their Homecoming football game.

It was a day everyone looked forward to all year and the whole town turned out when the Dunbar parade went by.

The Class of 1967 was the last Dunbar High School graduating class and the school was closed when integration occurred.

For a time it served the city as the Neighborhood Facility Center and now is used by the CCAR, the Food Pantry and a Head Start program.

The gym is used for Police Athletic League events. The auditorium of the school will be renovated and the Dunbar alumni hopes it will be ready in time for some of the 2000 reunion events.

Gwen Walker, one of those planning the 2000 reunion, says that fund-raising events will be held during the next two years so that the Big One will be a proper beginning for the millennium year.

**Oh, dear Dunbar High we love thee ever true.
We'll honor thy name and do our best for you.
We'll strive and we'll fight for all our godly rights.
Our aims and our might will stand for purple and white.
Our heads, hands, and hearts will never let us part.
We'll always stand for faith in God and man.
We'll fight, fight, fight, forever for you.
We love you, yes, we do.**

Dunbar High School Alma Mater



Joe Love, Class of '57, makes a few introductions to fellow classmates. [Photo submitted]