

43 Years Ago

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In 1974, three Haywood County communities had implemented and were conducting adult literacy programs. The underlying idea for these programs was that in order for community residents to be productive citizens there were certain basic life skills they needed to possess. Ms. Murlee Cliff, pictured below, was community supervisor for the New Hope Community while Ms. Annie Lois Jackson held a similar position at Browns Creek. Cynthia Bond, now Dr. Cynthia Hobson, and Ms. Ozell Cherry were teachers at the program in the Douglass Community.

The New Hope program was teaching community residents to read and write and helping those who could already literate to read better. An art class was also available to teach participants how to express themselves through drawing, painting, and design. School children received help with homework through a tutoring program. In August 1974, the New Hope Community presented a health fair at Bailey School where local people received physical examinations and medical care, including transport to a doctor if needed.

Community residents at Douglass were learning basic rules to use in figuring out how to correctly pronounce words. Some people had rudimentary reading skills but did not know words and/or how to pronounce unfamiliar words. Cynthia Bond was the lead teacher for this program. Ms. Ozell Cherry, a community homemaker and lifelong resident, was teaching girls ages 6 to 13 intermediate sewing. Ms. Cherry conceptualized her class as the step between learning how to make a stitch and piecing a quilt. Some of her girls made dolls.

The program at Browns Creek operated out of the home of Ms. Annie Lois Jackson. Ms. Jackson's home was burned July 20, 1966 when she was running for public office. She and her husband were able to escape the 1 a.m. fire. Subsequent to the fire, volunteers helped rebuild the Jackson home with materials supplied by religious groups aiding the people of Haywood County.