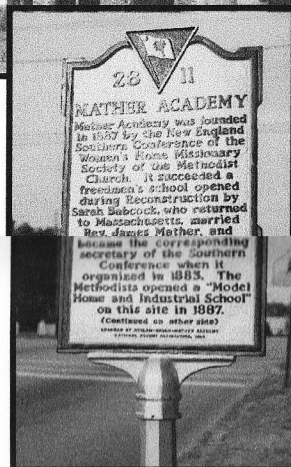


Historical marker dedicated

The Mather story lives on in the form of an official S.C. historical marker dedicated in April 2000 by a group of alumni in Camden. Installed on the shoulder of DeKalb Street in front of the Eckerd's drug store built where Bryan Hall once stood, the sign flows from one side to the other with the following message:

"Mather Academy was founded in 1887 by the New England Southern Conference of the Women's Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Church. It succeeded a freedmen's school opened during Reconstruction by Sarah Babcock, who returned to Massachusetts, married Rev. James Mather, and became the corresponding secretary of the Southern Conference when it was organized in 1883. The Methodists opened a "Model Home and Industrial School" on this site in 1887. Mather Academy educated girls, and later boys, in grades 1-11 until grade 12 was added in 1928. The Southern Assn. of Secondary Schools and Colleges gave it an "A" rating in 1937. A new main building, library, chapel, dormitories and gym were all built between 1900 and 1964. In 1959 Mather merged with the Boylan-Haven School of Jacksonville, Fla., to become Boylan-Haven-Mather Academy. It closed here in 1983; the last building was demolished in 1995."



1st Grand Reunion outside S.C. successful

Alumni vote new slate of officers

Matherites can make anyplace seem like home, and that's exactly what happened during the 1999 Grand Reunion held in Arlington, Virginia, in August 1999.

Alumni from every decade came from the north, south and west to renew old ties and learn the latest news about in the first reunion held outside South Carolina.

They attended and enjoyed a luncheon marked by personal anecdotes of the Mather each generation remembered. Thomasina Franklin Porter was speaker for the banquet, which also included, for the first time, a talent show organized by Gordon Owens ('77).

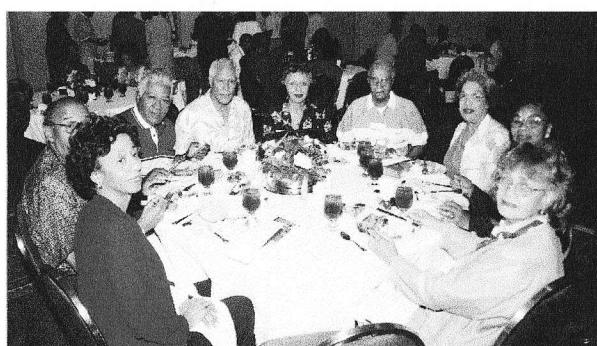
Hansel Boykin ('50), formerly second vice president, was elected president of the National Alumni Association. Other elected officers are Henry Brevard, 1st Vice President; Sylvester Jenkins, 2nd Vice President; Knorphe Byrd ('73), Recording Secretary Roberta Dannelly Durant ('40), and Parliamentarian Madeline Dash Pickett ('53).

(continued on back)



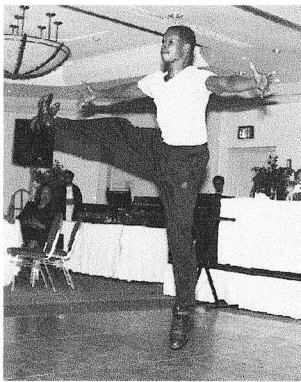
Outgoing NAA President Agnes Thomas Abernethy introduces some of the new NAA officers to the audience following elections at the 1999 Grand Reunion. From left are President Hansel Boykin ('50), Treasurer Knorphe Byrd ('73), Recording Secretary Roberta Dannelly Durant ('40), and Parliamentarian Madeline Dash Pickett ('53).

1999 Reunion Scenes

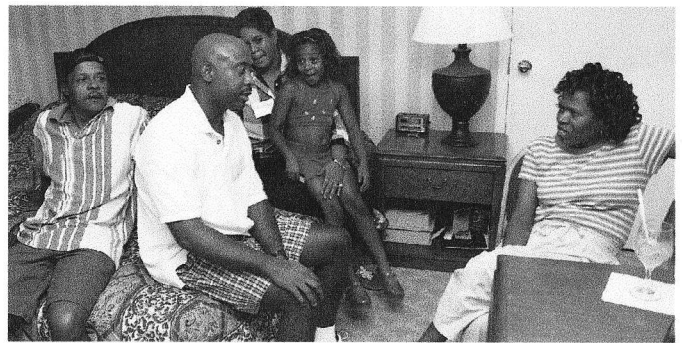


Thomasina Franklin Porter

More Reunion Scenes



TALENT SHOW
Gordon Owens



Alumni chat in the hotel's hospitality room

Grand Reunion, continued

Treasurer; Lynne Thomas ('73), Recording Secretary; Roberta Dannelly Durant ('40), Executive Secretary; Sara Morgan ('41), Corresponding Secretary; Hayes Samuels Jr. ('61), Chaplain; and Madeline Dash-Pickett ('50), Parliamentarian.

Many thanks to the Grand Reunion Committee for a great reunion: Chair Roberta D. Durant, Barbara Bean ('72), Flora Wright Darby ('41) (deceased), Deborah Duren-Boone ('73), Leonard Geddis ('77), Delmarcia Jenkins-Mitchell ('75), Ruby Wright Minton ('52), Gordon Owens ('77), and ex-officio members Agnes T. Abernethy, James McGirt ('52) and Sara Morgan ('41).

Former NAA president Eddie McGirt passes



Eddie McGirt ('40), former NAA president and retired high school and college coach, died December 22, 1999.

Born in Camden, Coach McGirt attended most grade levels at the school, and was a star athlete and student. He later coached teams to championships there, then spent the rest of his career at Johnson C. Smith University, retiring as athletic director. Several of his players became professional football stars, most notably Pettis Norman, formerly of the Dallas Cowboys and now a successful businessman.

Unable to attend the 1999 Reunion due to illness, Coach McGirt was touched when he viewed a videotape of the comments former students made about his years at Mather.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Minnie Dannelly McGirt ('40). They met at Mather, and both are buried in a graveyard near the Mather property.

**Boylan Haven-Mather Academy
National Alumni Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 825
Camden, SC 29020**

Mather included in 'Crisis' story on Black boarding schools

Mather's place in history has been documented in a story about Black boarding schools in the January/February 2000 issue of the NAACP's Crisis magazine (Julian Bond on cover).

In listing some of the schools started by denominations, the article states "The Methodist Episcopal Church founded Mather Academy in Camden, S.C., in 1887."

Mather is also listed in a box with some of the prominent private schools that existed during what the author calls the "golden era" in Black education.

NAA dues are now \$25 per year

Send to: Knorphe Byrd Jr., Treasurer,
115 Honeysuckle Lane, Quinby, SC 29506

ADDRESS CORRECTION

If you did not receive this newsletter by direct mail, or if you know someone who is not receiving mailings, please send the information below to: **Sara Morgan, BHMA NAA Corresponding Secretary, 392 Central Park West #11-B, New York, NY 10025 Telephone (212) 866-3247.**

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____