

Phillips High School  
Battleboro, North Carolina 27801

Phillips High School, one of four high schools in Edgecombe County for Negro children, was constructed in 1949 for grades 8-12. Prior to the construction of Phillips High School, many students in Halifax, Nash, and Edgecombe Counties attended Bricks High School in the Bricks Community. Unfortunately, when Bricks High School was destroyed by fire, students were scattered among several sites until a permanent building could be constructed to accommodate them. Mr. C. M. Carraway, was appointed as the first principal of Phillips School and he served faithfully until 1959. Mr. E. D. Johnson was the superintendent of Edgecombe County Schools and Mr. John Savage was superintendent of Buildings and Grounds.

Phillips High School chose the bulldog as its mascot and emblem, and, "B-Somebody," as its motto. The school colors were maroon and gray. The first high school graduating class was the class of 1950 and Mrs. C. D. B. Hammons was class advisor. Some of the first teachers were; Mr. F. C. Morton, Mrs. B.W. Harris, Mrs. M.H. Carraway, Mrs. E. T. Harris, Mrs. I. W. Knight, Mrs. L. T. Manning, Mr. M.C. Miller, Mr. James Rogers, Mr. I. C. Rogers, Mr. C. D. Wooten, and Mrs. F. Foreman.

Phillips High School received students from several feeder schools. Among the schools were Willow Grove, Whitakers, Inborden, Coker, Wimberly, Battleboro, Marks Chapel, Greene, and several others. During the 1952-53 school year, Phillips High School suffered a great loss, not only in enrollment, but the closeness of young people from the tri-county area. The students residing in Nash County and Halifax County were transferred to schools in their respective counties. The freshman class that originally began with an enrollment of one hundred forty-six, had an enrollment of only eighty as a graduating class.

In 1959, Mr. J. E. Batts, assumed the leadership role as the second principal of Phillips School. He served untiringly until 1971. Other principals include; Mr. D. Smoot, Mr. L. Thompson, Dr. E. Johnson, Mrs. P. Lyons, and Mr. W. Etheridge.

Integration, change in attendance zones, grade level transfers, and other administrative decisions resulted in major changes at Phillips High School. The K-5 students were transferred to Cooker-Wimberly, the students in grades 9-12 transferred to North Edgecombe High School, and Phillips was designated as a magnet school. Presently, Phillips is a middle school, still continuing the legacy of stressing to the student body, "You can B-Somebody," regardless of present status, family history, or other underlining factors. With perseverance, determination, and the will to succeed, you too can achieve the American Dream.

Alumni members who had a deep sense of pride and loyalty to their educational roots brainstormed ways and means to keep the rich heritage alive for future generations. As a result of careful planning and executing those plans, George Birth and other alumni members began to meet periodically for future planning. After twenty-seven years of annual reunion activities, the Phillips/Bricks Alumni Association, is a viable entity in the community and the nation. Helen Hines Hunter has served as president of the association for ten years. The annual reunion activities are held at the Franklinton Center (formerly Bricks School), and hotels in the Rocky Mount area. The three day event include a Friday business meeting and fish fry/pig picking, a Saturday Awards Banquet when scholarships are presented to a deserving high school student, and a deserving eighth grade student at Phillips School, and Sunday morning worship service at a local church.

Long live the life and legacy of Phillips High School, an educational institution with such a rich heritage.