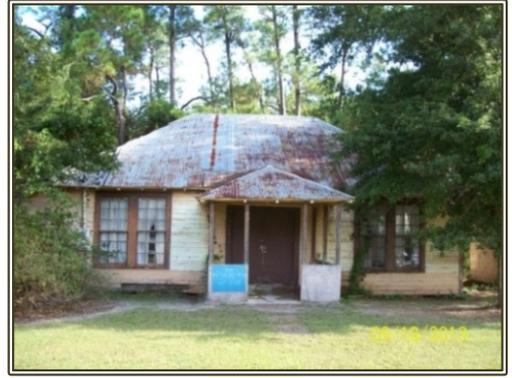


Gautier Historic Schoolhouse & Cultural Museum Project



Honoring the Accomplishments of Educator, Earnestine E. Fountain

The City of Gautier's Historic Preservation Commission, Gautier Pride, and the Mississippi Department of Archives and History are working together to save a little piece of history in our community. The former one room schoolhouse located at the entrance of Gautier City Park was built in the early 1920's for local African-American children and was known at that time as the Gautier Colored School.



In 1921, Jackson County purchased land at the northeast corner of De La Pointe Drive and Point Bayou Road and appropriated \$200 for construction of a school for African-American children. Patrons of the school raised an additional \$500 and furnished the labor for construction of the West Indies style building which featured many eighteen-paned glass windows. A local sawmill provided heart pine wood from virgin timber. A pot-belly coal-burning stove located in the middle of the room provided the only heat. As many as 22 children from the ages of six to sixteen years of age would crowd into the small building. Since there were no chalkboards, the children wrote with broken oyster shells on pieces of roofing slate.

Many influential people have passed through the schoolhouse doors as teachers, students, and community members. This includes Earnestine Ellis Fountain who taught there until 1946 when the school closed. She was a native of Moss Point and rode the Greyhound bus every day to school and then cleaned houses for extra money until she rode the bus home at night. During the winter, in order to heat the classroom, she walked with the children to the railroad depot and picked up the loose coal that had spilled from the steam engines. She often cooked oatmeal on an oil stove for the children who had no lunch.



(1912-2002)

Mrs. Fountain earned her bachelor's degree at age forty from Jackson State and then earned a master's degree from the Tuskegee Institute. She served as Principal of Fair Elementary School in Pascagoula for twenty-two years. She was the first African-American Principal in the Pascagoula School System. She is remembered by many for her love of history and her many contributions to the community as well as a forty year career in education.

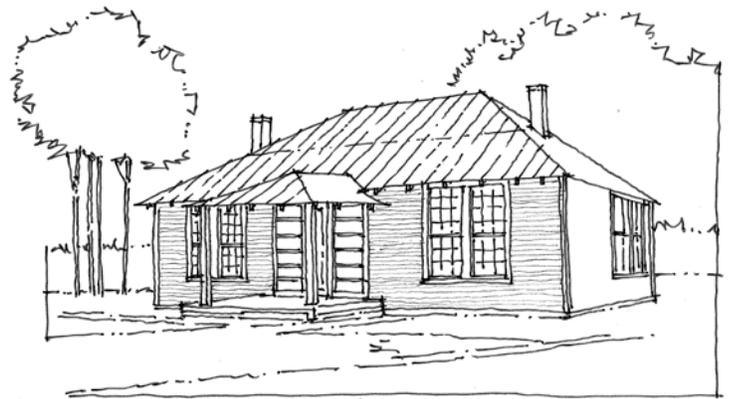


After 1946, the schoolhouse was used as a Community Center; Senior Citizens' Center; a polling place; and as a meeting room for area Boy Scouts, the Gautier Jaycees, the Lions Club, and the Gautier Men's Club. Over time, the building became too dilapidated for public use. In 2013 the schoolhouse was listed by the Mississippi Heritage Trust as one of the *10 Most Endangered Historic Places in Mississippi*.

The little schoolhouse still has many stories to tell. The restoration of the Gautier Historic Schoolhouse & Cultural Center Museum will help preserve these stories for future generations.

Gautier Historic Schoolhouse & Cultural Museum Sponsorship Opportunities

The City of Gautier, along with grant funding from the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, is in the process of restoring the former Gautier Colored School so that it can serve as a Historic Schoolhouse & Cultural Museum. The restored building, exhibits and artifacts will tell the story of the little one-room schoolhouse and the many people who have gathered there over the past nearly 100 years.



SPONSORSHIP LEVELS:	
PLATINUM	\$5,000 AND UP
GOLD	\$3,000 TO \$4,999
SILVER	\$2,000 TO \$2,999
BRONZE	\$1,000 TO \$1,999
PATRONS	\$500 TO \$999
FRIENDS	\$100 TO \$499

Preserving Our Heritage

Your contribution toward the required grant match will help restore this building and make it once again an important gathering spot that preserves and showcases our community's history. Donations of \$100 or more will be acknowledged on permanent plaques hung at the new Museum. Please consider a tax-deductible donation to Gautier Pride to help keep our stories alive for generations to come.



Name: _____

Organization Name (if applic.): _____

Phone #: _____

E-mail: _____

Address: _____

Fill in Donation Amount Below:

Platinum: \$5,000 and up _____ Gold: \$3,000 - \$4,999 _____ Silver: \$2,000 - \$2,999 _____

Bronze: \$1,000 - \$1,999 _____ Patrons: \$500 - \$999 _____ Friends: \$100 - \$499 _____

Other: _____

Please make checks payable to: **Gautier Pride (reference: Gautier Schoolhouse Museum Project)**

P.O. Box 598 Gautier, MS 39553

Or for more information call Bill Bray (Historic Preservation Commission Chair) 228.522.6268