

Jefferson County Public Schools

The  
History  
of the  
**Trunnell**  
Elementary School  
Community



by **Betty Stokes**  
Principal



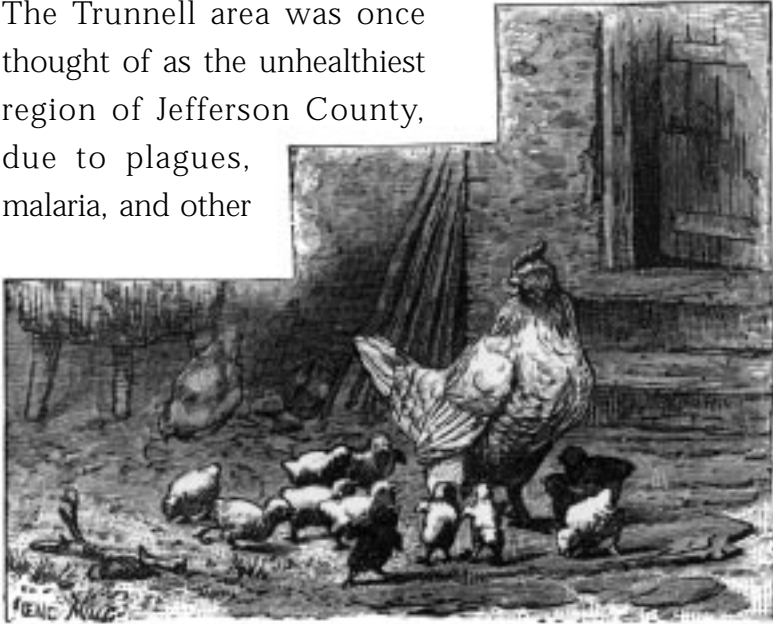


**T**runnell's neighborhood was settled by French and German Catholics who, in 1851, built St. Andrew Church from rough stone that was hand-quarried from the hill where it stood. It was one of the first churches in Jefferson County.

The St. Andrew Church was a haven of worship for French and German settlers for 57 years. In 1908, a dispute arose over whether the church was to be of French or German character. This dispute caused the church to be abandoned. There still remains a parish cemetery where the St. Andrew Church once stood.



The Trunnell area was once thought of as the unhealthiest region of Jefferson County, due to plagues, malaria, and other



diseases. The area contained swamps, peat bogs, and offensive vapors. All of these gradually disappeared, and certain tracts were drained around 1825 to make the ground tillable. Farming on a large scale became a prosperous occupation and was the main employment for nearly everyone.

Before Trunnell, there was a huge farm with a big hill where the school stands today. The farm was first owned by Charles LeHigh (a German immigrant). Mr. LeHigh changed his name to Wiser after settling in Louisville, because he was a “wiser” man. The farm was willed to his



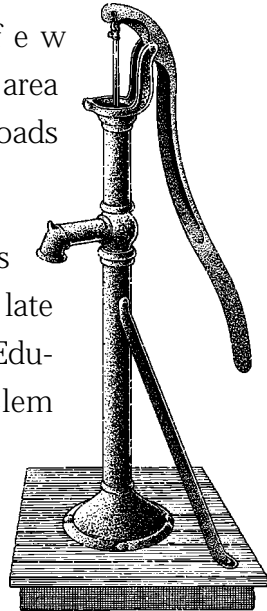


son, Clem Wiser, at Charles's death. The farm remained in the Wiser family for 150 years.

The Wisers raised fruits and vegetables. Every year they harvested baskets and baskets of beans and strawberries. They had a few

horses and a family cow for milk. The area was very rural. There were no major roads nearby.

The farm was so big that many folks called this area Wiser Valley. In the late 1960s, the Jefferson County Board of Education bought the property from Clem Wiser and contracted to have two schools built. The schools constructed on the campus were Doss High School and Trunnell Elementary School.





University of Louisville Photographic Archives

The main road available to farmers and their horses and mules in the mid-19th century was the Louisville & Nashville Turnpike, now known as Dixie Highway. Dixie Highway also was once called Salt River Pike and Valley Pike and for many years was a toll road. Around 1825, the stage line was running on the Pike. Before the railroad, Louisville markets were nearly a day's journey by wagon.



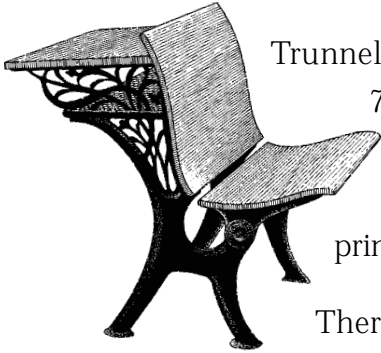


The earliest road in Louisville was River Road, but possibly the second road built in Louisville was Manslick Road.

This road was the connecting link between Louisville and the salt works at Mann's Lick, located near what is now Fairdale. The salt-making business was the earliest industry in Kentucky, and Manslick Road was vital to the health of that industry. Manslick Road, from Palatka Road to Dixie Highway was renamed St. Andrews Church Road in the early 1930s.



## Trunnell's Dedication



Trunnell Elementary School, located at 7609 St. Andrews Church Road, was completed in 1967. It cost \$1,043,773 to build. The first principal was Thomas Frazier.

There was no Kindergarten Program when the school first opened, but there was a sixth grade. School hours the first years were 8:15 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. Lunches cost 30 cents a day. A week's lunch ticket cost \$1.50. Students used lockers in the halls. The student body voted to make the school mascot a tiger because Trunnell started with a *T*.





The Dedication Ceremony took place on October 19, 1967, in the school's all-purpose room. Members of the Board of Education and Superintendent Richard VanHoose attended. The American Legion presented the principal, Mr. Frazier, with a flag.

A PTA was organized immediately. Trunnell's PTA held their first Fall Festival in 1970.

## **Bertha Trunnell**



In the late 1960s, the Jefferson County Board of Education needed to build a new high school and a new elementary school in southern Jefferson County because the student population was increasing. They chose to name the elementary school after Bertha Trunnell to honor her for her years of dedicated service to educate children.

Bertha Trunnell was born in Bullitt County, Kentucky, on February 13, 1897. She attended Bullitt County schools.





In 1916, she graduated from Shepherdsville High School. Miss Trunnell taught in Bullitt County schools from 1917 to 1924. In 1927,

she started teaching at Auburndale Elementary School. She taught during school months and attended Western Kentucky State Normal School in the summers, until she received her Bachelor of Arts degree in 1931. She continued to teach and learn, and in 1949 she received her Master of Education degree from the University of Louisville. In 1945, she was selected to be the principal at Auburndale Elementary School.

Kenwood Elementary School was completed and ready for students in 1955. Miss Trunnell was sent to Kenwood to be their first principal. She stayed at Kenwood until her retirement in 1967. Miss Trunnell was greatly respected and admired. With the naming of the elementary school Trunnell was honored for her lifelong dedication to the education profession. She devoted her entire life to teaching.





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