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Little Red Schoolhouse, brochure

Holly Grove Community Development Corporation

William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation

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Fundraising

We have t-shirts and tote bags for sale to raise matching funds for a grant to include wiring and air-conditioning in the first restoration phase. We have an estimated \$650 toward the \$33,000 goal. Other ideas to support the next phases of the project include:

- * Direct mail campaign
- * Brochure
- * Web Link:
www.drewrosenwaldschool.org
- * Groundbreaking Ceremony/
Media Campaign (November 2003)
- * Form a Society of "Lil' Red"
- * Host a fundraising banquet with special guest Governor William Winter



"We Finished to Begin"

In 1949, the graduating seniors chose "We Finished to Begin" as their slogan. In the spirit of that motto, which honors preparation and education as a foundation to success, we invite you to continue that dream. Help us "Save Lil' Red" for future generations.

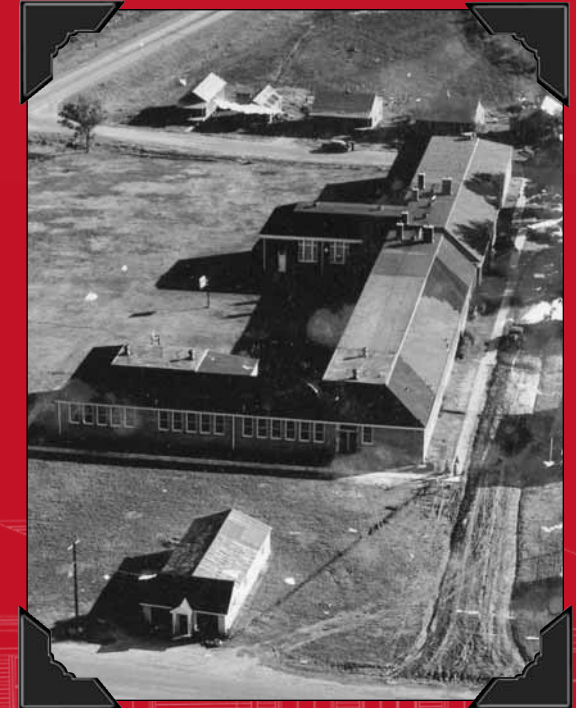


Courtesy of the Phay Collection, University of Mississippi.

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The Little Red Schoolhouse



PREPARED BY:
THE HOLLY GROVE COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

History

Julius Rosenwald (1862-1932) was the President and CEO of the Sears, Roebuck and Company in the early part of the 20th century. He was one of a circle of wealthy white Americans who were strongly influenced by Booker T. Washington, and who sought to improve educational opportunities for African Americans in the rural South. He founded the Rosenwald Fund in 1913, initiating the largest single program benefitting public schools for African Americans in the South since Reconstruction. The Fund provided money for the construction of schools, teachers' homes, and shop buildings on a cost-sharing basis, requiring that local communities contribute to school constructions financially and through labor and materials. While the larger portion of local support came from the black community, many projects also enlisted white support as well. Thus, in the era of Jim Crow, the Rosenwald Fund galvanized rural communities to build better schools and provided a pattern for interracial cooperation in the dark days before the civil rights movement.

Rosenwald's support led eventually to the construction of over 5,300 buildings, including almost 5,000 individuals schools across fifteen southern states. Mississippi was second only to North Carolina in building construction, with



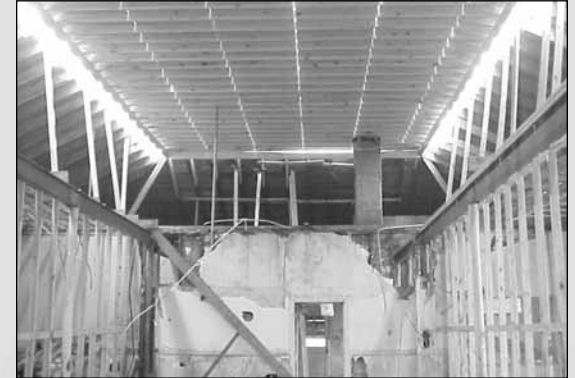
Courtesy of the Phay Collection, University of Mississippi. Students enjoying lunch in the Little Red Schoolhouse.

633 buildings. Today, only eleven of these significant structures remain standing in our state.

Supplementing its historical significance, the Rosenwald School in Drew is built of red brick. Originally called the Drew Colored School, a frame structure built in 1923, burned in 1928. It was replaced by the brick structure, affectionately known as "Little Red," in 1929, according to Rosenwald's high construction standards. The construction costs totaled \$23,500, including the Rosenwald grant of \$1,700. The original school building included five classrooms and an auditorium. Subsequent additions, apparently beginning in 1953, increased classroom space and added other rooms, including bathrooms, a cafeteria and kitchen, and storage spaces. All of the rooms, including those in the original structure, are spacious, have high ceilings, and a number of windows. The school itself is artfully designed, and appealing in form.

Until desegregation in 1969, the building served as the only school for African Americans in Drew. Thereafter, the Drew school system used the structure as a middle elementary school until the 1980s, when declining enrollment forced the closure of the building. The Holly Grove CDC purchased the property in 1996 with plans to restore the building and convert its space for public use. The building is in disrepair, having undergone tornado and rain damage, and suffered from vandalism. And yet, much as it did during its initial construction, this new project is bringing the beleaguered Delta community together to save the building and to bring new life to the town and its neighbors through the creation of a community center and meeting place.

Known as the homeplace of football star Archie Manning and civil rights hero Mae Bertha Carter, Drew, Mississippi, is a community rich in history, replete with metaphors of struggle for education and excellence. This restoration project, grounded in interracial cooperation and public outreach, will preserve one of the final remnants of Julius Rosenwald's



important legacy and generate a sense of purpose and newly-restored pride in the Drew community and throughout the surrounding area.

In 2001, we received a \$400,000 grant from the Mississippi Department of Archives and History to begin restoration of the 1928 structure. This past February, we received another grant for \$50,000 from the Mississippi Arts Commission. It requires a matching donation of \$33,000. We need your support to continue this important process. One day, the children of Drew will be able to use Little Red to expand their education and development. Will you help us achieve that vision?

