

NOTICE OF FIRST SCHOOL MEETING.

Bishop

A special meeting of School District No. 49

Township No. 142 N. Range No. 11412 W. & M., County
of Comanche, Territory of Oklahoma,

will be held at St. Joseph's - No. 49 the 22^d day
of Sept. 12 - 22^d 12^{mid} A. D. 1902 at 2⁰⁰ o'clock P M.

Dated this 10th day of Sept. 1902

Signed L. H. McBrian
County Superintendent.

Posted this 10th day of September 1902

Object election of officers & decid. upon building & location of school house.

NOTE.—This notice must be posted by the County Superintendent in Three Public Places in the District, at least 10 days previous to the time fixed for the meeting.

Bishop School

Lawton, Oklahoma



*Leo A. McBrian
1st County Superintendent
Comanche County*



*Mrs. Jeanette Crosby
1st Female Superintendent of Schools
Comanche County*

INTRODUCTION

The Unique History of Bishop Elementary School was researched and written for the express purpose to give a brief history for presentation at the dedication of our school gymnasium. This dedication was in 1975 at Lawton, Oklahoma.

The title, The Unique History of Bishop Elementary School, was chosen because of the many "firsts" established in the state and county.

This introduction was written to share this bit of history with our governor, The Honorable George Nigh and his team of "Hidden Treasures".

The Unique History of Bishop Elementary School

The first school meeting was held September 22, 1902, at Mrs. Bishop's home. It is believed the name of the school came from this meeting. The history of Bishop School has been a record of uniqueness. The school's classes have been held in tents, homes, a horse barn, and in later years the garage for the buses. Bishop's buildings have been destroyed or damaged by natural disasters such as fire, lightning, and tornadoes. Bishop's uniqueness has also been in its innovations in education. Such innovations have been the first integrated staff, the first county rural school with separate rooms for each grade, the first kindergarten in Comanche County schools, the first to have library expansion and a full-time librarian, among the first rural schools to have a hot lunch program from the early days to the present, and at the present time the first school to add the breakfast program. All these improvements have built Bishop School which in 1968 was the only school of its type and educational programs in the state of Oklahoma.

The impressive accomplishments of Bishop School had their beginnings with the founding of the school in 1902. The original frame building was erected under the leadership of David J. Britt, Harry (B.?) Harrison, and E. E. Sheppard. The first building was probably sold and torn down. The structure was then replaced by a yellow brick building in 1924-25 which was struck by lightning the following year. The building was repaired and then condemned. The remainder of that school year's classes were held in the school horse barn. A second brick building was then constructed. It, too met with disaster when it was hit by a tornado which damaged the southwest corner.

The present structure began in 1958 when five rooms were constructed which are now the music room, kindergarten, library and teachers' lounge. In 1963 four classrooms and a new kitchen were built as an addition to the existing building. Three years later two portable classrooms were purchased for thirty thousand dollars. In 1967 to 1969 seven classrooms were constructed through a federal grant of seventy-eight thousand dollars. The

following year the cafeteria was fabricated by the joining of two portable classrooms to the newly constructed kitchen and three more portable classrooms were purchased. The most recent addition to the Bishop School structure is the gymnasium, which was built for ninety-two thousand dollars. Most, if not all, of these additions to the school were made under the leadership of the present school board.¹

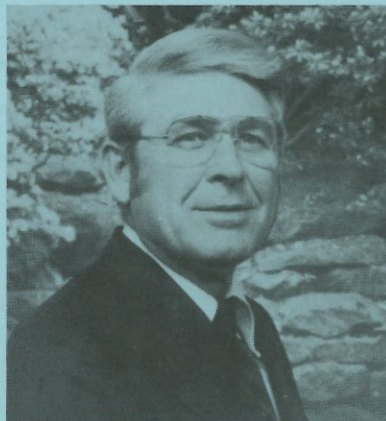
Just as the buildings of Bishop School have grown and expanded so have the education and abilities of its teachers grown and developed. Bishop School began with one teacher in a one room school for all eighth grades and at one time had twenty-two teachers with only kindergarten through sixth grades. These teachers included a curriculum coordinator, speech therapist, and special education teacher. Early teachers were probably trained in Lawton institutes for teachers. Teacher education was improved through Cameron College and some teachers trained by this program were employed from the mid 1900's to the present.

Today's teachers are very well trained. There are special areas and skills in which some are educated. Bishop School contributed to the training of its teachers by hosting a summer institute for teacher training in modern education innovations in 1971. Not only the Bishop personnel, but also teachers from other Comanche County schools attended the seminar.

The Bishop School district has expanded and diminished throughout its history. The school site is located on part of what was once the eighty acre homestead of Thomas T. Burk. When he died, the heirs found that no deed had ever been given to the school, and on January 13, 1961, a hearing was held for a suit to quiet title and a judgment by default for the one acre the school has occupied since its founding in September, 1902. The four acres used for playground is permanently leased from the Lawton Municipal Airport.²

¹ Dr. Charles Kelsey, Rudy Hanza, and Oliver Pinc.

² **The Tree Tracers**, Southwest Oklahoma Genealogical Society, Inc., Lawton, Oklahoma, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 26-27.



Don Duggins
County Superintendent



Carl Fred Bishop
Bishop Elementary Principal

BOARD MEMBERS

- Oliver Pinc 1962 - 1982
- Rudy Hanza 1963 - 1982
- Dr. Charles Kelsey 1963 - 1982

About the author of "The Unique History of Bishop Elementary School".

Viola Porter Gibson, a native of Lawton received all her formal education in the state of Oklahoma. She began a teaching career in the county schools in 1946, at the end of World War II. She has varied teaching experiences in Fort Ord, California, Vicenza and Verona Italy, with the Department of the Army. Mrs. Gibson returned to Comanche County Schools in 1968.

She was selected as an Outstanding Elementary Teacher of America in 1974 in recognition of contributions to the advancement of elementary education and service to the community.

Mrs. Gibson received a Bachelor of Science degree from Oklahoma College for Women, in Chickasha, Oklahoma, in 1958, and has completed numerous graduate hours.

Her numerous affiliations include the OCW Alumni Association, Pi Gamma Mu, Teachers Placement Bureau of Oklahoma College of Liberal Arts, and Charter Member of Southwest Oklahoma Genealogical Society.