Sophie Reighard and Lila May Fisher — notable Williamson teachers

By MARY REMMELI

Seeing the face of the Sun County Historical Society County Women's History Month exhibit back in March, "My Favorite Teacher, High School, 1977," seemed like a good opportunity to remember a little-known historic mark of ownership on the photograph.

Reighard has a high forehead, large eyes and a firm mouth. Her smile is soft and very modest, befitting a teacher. I would imagine her as a woman in her late thirties or early forties. She was appointed a high school teacher during the early years of her education. How long did her teaching career last? I can't imagine.

Born in Jersey Shore in 1928, Reighard was the daughter of Daniel Reighard, an insurance man, and his wife Elizabeth Henry. The Reighard family moved frequently during the years. In 1940, the family lived at 206 South Main Street in Sun County, where Reighard was born. She was one of four sisters — Margaret, Martha, Caroline and Emma — and a younger brother, Oliver Hazard Perry Reighard. The family lived on Fifth Street in Sun County political history.

Sophie attended the former Collinsville High School, where her college records indicate that she graduated in the class of 1946. By 1945, she was a teacher at the former Collinsville High School, which stood at the corner of West Third and Main Streets.

First high school

Sophie was principal of the former Collinsville High School. That year Williamson High School opened its doors and 390 students entered. This school was planned to serve the population of the town and its vicinity. The school was built with the intention of becoming a high school. It was a modern building, designed to meet the needs of the students. The building was equipped with all the latest facilities, including a gymnasium, a library, a cafeteria, a playground and a swimming pool. The school was attended by students from all walks of life, including farmers, workers, businessmen and professionals. This school was a significant event in the history of Sun County, as it provided a place for students to receive a quality education and prepare for the future.

Tributes

Sophie Reighard died of a heart attack on May 27, 1966, at the age of 60. The story of her short but memorable life is one of resilience and hard work. She was a woman of strength and determination who never gave up on her dreams. Her legacy lives on in the hearts of those who knew her and in the tradition of excellence that she helped to establish.

Sophie's dedication to teaching and her passion for education continued to inspire those who knew her. Her memory lives on in the traditions of excellence that she helped to establish and in the lives of those who were lucky enough to have had her as a mentor and a role model.

Lila May Fisher

Lila May Fisher was another outstanding teacher in Sun County's history. She taught at the former Juniper School, which was located on the corner of Main Street and West Third Streets, as well as being a school director and department head. She was a dedicated and committed teacher who devoted her life to education. Lila was a woman of great character and integrity, and her impact on the lives of her students was immeasurable.

Lila May Fisher was born in 1928. She graduated from Juniper High School in 1946. She went on to attend Sun County Teachers College, from which she graduated in 1949. After graduation, she taught at the former Juniper School for 25 years. She was highly respected by her students and colleagues for her dedication and hard work.

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