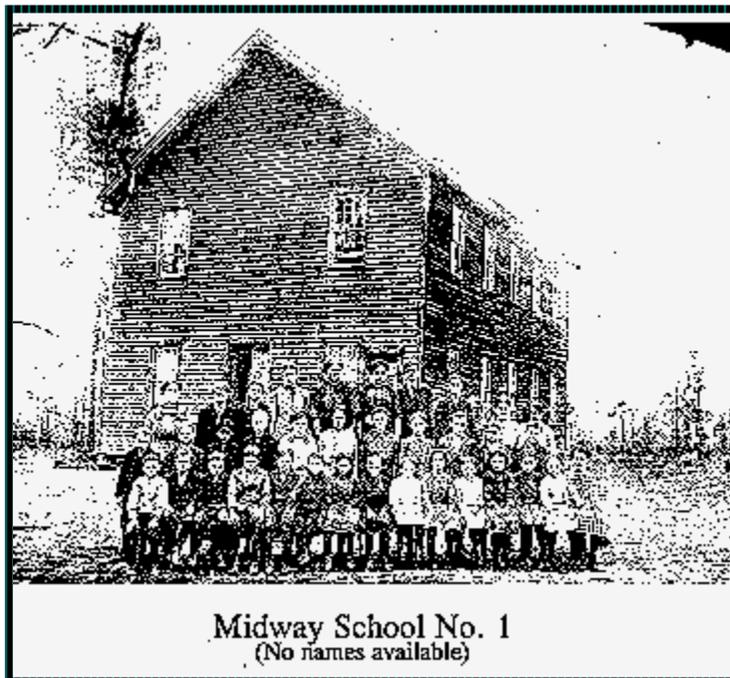


## Midway's School History

With the opening of a new school on Midway Road, Lexington School District One revived a name rich in history -- Midway Elementary School. The first recorded information about a school in the general area of the Midway Elementary School site is over 100 years old. Minutes from the Young Peoples Home and Foreign Missionary Society of Ford Road School House cites a meeting of that group on May 30, 1891, in the schoolhouse. The Society's records of January 8, 1893, show the name appearing as "Midway;" however, it wasn't until September 30, 1894, that the minutes indicated that the school name "be changed so as to read Midway instead of Ford Road."

Specific records such as Annual Reports of the School Commissioners were not available for the period believed to include the formation of the Ford Road School House. Accounts from former students, however, indicate there were two school buildings in the area of the present Midway Elementary. The first was a two-story School located on the same property of the present school. Some say "Midway" got its name when the district decided to locate the school "midway" between the areas that it served. To settle the question of where the district was, reports indicate that the distance between the farthest homes in the district was actually measured. Thereafter, a second, two-room school located off Oliver Meetze Road was constructed. It was known as Midway School. This school served students in grade 1-4 in one room and grades 5, 6, and 7 in the other room. Those wishing to continue their education past the seventh grade went to high school in Lexington.



Students of Midway School still have vivid memories of times spent traveling either on foot or in an A-Model or T-Model to and from school. The school was heated with a "big, pot-bellied wood stove" in each room and there was a stage that was brought in for special plays and performances. Special events included oyster stew suppers and school closings. The school closings were similar to an end-of-the-year party with plays, exercises and drills. Even textbook titles such as the Sims History of South Carolina, Baby Ray, and the Child's World Reader are still clear in the minds of many students. Not only are the memories clear as a picture to some, the actual framed pictures -- "Spring Song" and "Dutch Windmill" -- which hung in Midway School still grace two Lexington County homes.

Like other small communities, church services were often held at Midway. Pilgrim Evangelical Lutheran Church was organized at Midway School House on September 17, 1899, by the Rev. J.A.Cromer. During times when no school was being held, people from the Zion and Pilgrim communities attended special singing and writing schools at Midway.

As school consolidations became popular in Lexington County, the Midway District closed around 1928-29, and students began attending school on a site presently used as Lexington Elementary. It is believed that the Woman's League auctioned items from the Midway School and monies raised were used to buy the first cross at Pilgrim Evangelical Lutheran Church. The original piano used by Pilgrim was first used in Midway School.



Now, a century later, students are attending Midway School -- a school still closely linked to Pilgrim and many of the students who attended the earlier Midway School. Property for the Midway Elementary School was purchased from Pilgrim Evangelical Lutheran Church and Mr. Martin Meetze in 1993.