CARY’S ACADEMY STREET SCHOOL CAMPUS

TIMELINE

1869 – Property set aside by Frank Page for “school lot” at a prominent location

1870 – Cary Academy (a private boarding school) constructed. It is a wooden two-story four-room structure. Lumber came from Frank Page’s sawmill.

1873 – Frank Page sells one-third interest in the academy to Rufus Jones.

1875 – Cary Township divided into two districts – one north of the railroad tracks and one south

1877 - Buck Jones provides land for the creation of an African-American school

1886 - Page sells his remaining interest to two Academy teachers, Sarah and Louie Jones

July 24, 1896 – Local citizen purchase old Cary Academy and officially charter it with the state as “Cary High School.” It continues to serve both local and regional students.

1896 – Edwin Lee Middleton becomes principal (A.F. Sams, serves 1902-03 when Middleton takes a leave to become a salesman)

1900 – Major building program adds 4 music rooms, an auditorium and a dormitory wing.

1903 - Cary High now has 10 grades

Edwin Lee Middleton
Principal 1896 -1908
April 3, 1907 – Cary High School purchased by the Board of Education for $2,750 and converted to public school (considered by many to be the first state-supported high school in North Carolina)

1908 – Middleton resigns and Marcus B. Dry appointed principal

1913 – School becomes one of the first in the state to offer vocational agriculture and home economics courses (a farm life barn from the program still stands at 510 Walnut Street)

1913 – Citizens approve $25,000 in bonds to replace the original wooden school with a “state of the art” brick thirty-three room structure. The state has 200 high schools, with Cary being the largest.

1914 – Name of school changed to Cary Public High School and Farm Life School

1916 – The Frank Page dormitory for girls erected at a cost of $11,000 taking the place of a wooden structure, which burned that year. The new dorm has electricity and steam heat.

1918 – As World War I ends the Spanish Influenza epidemic strikes the region. Students are warned to stay out of flu-plagued Raleigh. As Raleigh death toll rises school is suspended.

1918 – For the second time within two years, the Boys’ dormitory burns down

1920 – New Boys’ dormitory completed - accommodates 200 boarding students annually

1921 – Enrollment reaches 537 (235 elementary and 302 high school students including 219 boarders from 19 counties)
1922 – Walter Hines Page Building for vocational education completed - campus now includes 3 brick buildings, teacherages, janitor’s’ home, shop, farm cottage and barn

1925 - J.M. Templeton Physical Education building erected which permits the basketball team to play on hardwood floor and provides seating for 500.

1925 NC Department of Education standardizes elementary education

1927 - First school buses allow consolidation of other Wake County schools into Cary Schools. The Marcus Baxter Dry Building is constructed providing 12 additional classrooms.

1928 - 4 diploma programs offered at CHS: academic, agriculture, home economics and teacher training

1933 – Due to school consolidation and bus transportation, the school ends its boarding program with dorms being converted into living quarters for teachers. The General Assembly assumes responsibility for public schools and ends local district taxing authority.

1934 - Enrollment is 821, 520 are in grades 8-11 (High School) graduating class of 43

1935 – Cary Colored School burns down - arson suspected but never confirmed

1936 to 1940 - During the Great Depression, about 250 Cary citizens used the school’s cannery to help put up food for their families. The school limits a variety of activities during the lean years including suspends the yearbook and simplifies graduation exercises.
1938 - R.O. Heater and about a dozen other men organize the Cary Athletic Association to support the school's sports programs.

1938 – School's 1913 main building torn down to make way for a new Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) expanded school building, which will cost $132,000. Classes continued in the remaining campus buildings.

1940 - New main school building dedicated by NC Governor Clyde Hoey. Governor proclaims it "a beacon of hope and inspiration to other communities of the state." This building still exists today.

1941 to 1944 World War II: many students and teachers leave to join the armed forces and other positions of service. High School girls knitted socks, rolled bandages for soldiers.

1942 – Marcus Baxter Dry retires as school principal after 34 years of service. Dry returns as a summer school and algebra teacher.

1945 – Classes begin three weeks late due to Polio Epidemic

1946 – No graduating class due effect from World War II (expansion from 11 to 12 grades and teacher shortage)

1946 – Earl R. Franklin becomes principal serves two years
1947 - The first class graduates that completes 12 years of school. Gov. Broughton speaks at graduation. A memorial service for Principal Dry is held during commencement.

1948 - Paul W. Cooper is named principal. Under the leadership of Mr. Cooper a new primary building, gymnasium and cafeteria are added to the campus.

1952 - The new gym aids in the development of the athletics program.

1954 – CHS basketball team wins State Class A championship. Starters in the finals were forwards Bill Mooneyham and Guy Mendenhall, center C.W. Jones, and guards Charlie Adams and Don Taylor.

1954 - Cary High School becomes the first Wake County school accredited by the Southern Association of Secondary Schools and colleges, whose membership includes the best schools in the South.

1955 - Cary High’s football team wins state title

1956 - New primary and cafeteria buildings completed

1957 - With enrollment increasing, talk of new campus begins

1958 - First Cary Band Day - while there were bands as early as 1921, this is the first year for the parade and field show competition

1960 - 108 high school seniors form the last class to graduate from the Academy Street campus

1961 - New Cary High School opens on Walnut Street. The Academy Street campus becomes Cary Junior High and
**Elementary School**

**1963** – Desegregation begins in Cary schools with first transfers of African-American students authorized under “freedom of choice” policy

**1969** – All Cary schools are now desegregated

**1974** - Town of Cary expresses interest in purchasing Academy Street campus. Wake County Board of Education faced with increasing enrollment renovates facility to meet needs of Cary Elementary.

**1992** - At the Academy Street campus, the old Marcus Dry Building is demolished.

**1998** – Cary Elementary School moves into new building adjacent to old building (present location)

**2003** - The Town purchases the Old Cary Elementary School Building from Wake County Public Schools with an eye to creating an arts district downtown

**2010** – Town of Cary breaks ground for the renovation of the “old” Cary Elementary as Cary’s newest arts center