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the road on our lunch break with Mr. (Newman) Parker."

Payne's class consisted of about seven students, but she recalled some cases where all of the students, regardless of grade were all taught together.

"Our teacher, Mr. Parker would line us all up, grades 4 through 7 and we were taught math and spelling all together," she said. "We were taught orally. He'd line us all up and whoever could solve that math problem or spell that word would just give the answer.

"Sometimes the fourth graders would shout it out before the seventh graders," she said. "Mr. Parker was just an excellent teacher. There is one teacher who taught here who is still alive, Ima Jean Hughes."

Hughes was invited to the reunion, but was unable to attend because of health reasons.

The event kicked off at 10:30 a.m. with plenty of fellowship and story telling. Many told stories about walking to school, others would catch the bus down on Highway 76.

For those who walked to the end of Bunker Hill Road to catch the bus, surprisingly, they didn't have a long ride home.

Most students had no longer than a 30-minute trip to and from school.



It was back to school for more than 50 people who once attended the Bunker Hill School. The reunion was held at Bunker Hill Baptist Church. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

"I can't speak for those who walked home," Payne said with a laugh. "I lived over on Young Cane so that was too far of a walk for me, but some who lived over on Hicks Gap, would walk home. If it was snowing or raining they would let us wait on the bus down at the store."

Others talked about cattle grazing beside the school and walking home for lunch.

There was no cafeteria or

school lunches so most packed their own lunch or walked home during the one-hour time slot allotted for lunch time.

Water was supplied to the school from a neighbor's house. Students would carry a bucket of water back down to the school and each student would wait with their cup.

When it came dinner time at the reunion, the former classmates moved to the

covered pavilion at the back of the church for a great meal and more fellowship.

"This church was a school during the week," Newman Parker's son, Bill Parker said. "It was a two-room school with two teachers."

A list was posted at the pavilion of all of the former students who had already passed away.

A reminder of the good times that were shared with those who are no longer with us.

During the reunion a collection was taken for the church for use of their facilities and \$208 was raised.

Although it's no surprise that most of the students also attended church in the same building.

"The first year we started here, Preacher Roy Mason was having a revival here," Herbert Parham said. "They would have service and when it was over, they'd turn the benches back around for class."

The reunion originally was an annual event, but will now take place every two years, so the next reunion will be held in 2015.

If you or a family member attended the school, plan on making the next reunion in a little over 700 days.

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his number one objective is to be a positive influence and live by the mantra that "we give kids what they need, not what they want."

"I hope I can continue to make a difference in young people's lives," Rittenhouse said. "I really feel like it's important to be the kind of role model that they need to see, because so many of the kids that I taught, they had no man in their life. I had so many boys and girls come up to me and tell me that 'you were the dad that I never had.' It's a tremendous honor to receive this award and I appreciate it very much. I'm so proud that I have about 15 or 16 of my former students teaching, and the new Band Director at Union County is one of my former students and I am very proud of him."

Next up, Shea introduced Sheriff Mason as the Law Enforcement Officer of the Year.

Shea noted the Law Enforcement officers hold a special place in his heart. His father, his



Allegheny Lodge Worshipful Master Doug Shea presents Union County Sheriff Mack Mason with the Lodge's Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award. Photo/Todd Forrest

uncle, and his son were, or still are, involved in Law Enforcement.

"I think now that Sheriff Mason has overtaken Matt Leonard as the picture most seen in the *North Georgia News*, I feel like I know him like a family member," Shea joked to Sheriff Mason.

Shea gave a brief background on Mason, from his days at Union County High School, to his time in the U.S. Army to his days as a Georgia State trooper, and finally his graduation from Truett-McConnell College.

"He always had things going on," Shea said. "He was never

just sitting, there is no moss on the stone at all."

"I would like to thank you all for this, this is very humbling for me," Sheriff Mason said.

"This man who just gave my testimony (Shea), I just met him a few minutes ago, but I can already tell he's going to be my campaign manager," Sheriff Mason said with a laugh. "But it is an honor, and it's very humbling to serve this community."

Mason praised his employees, whom he said make his job that much easier.

"The key to success is putting good people around you," Sheriff Mason said. "The people that you have the most contact with, those are the people I trust the most."

"My goal has been to try to make a difference in the lives of the people of Union County," he said. "I'm honored, humbled, and thankful that the Lord allows me to hold such a position of trust. I take that position very seriously."