

## **MIDWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SCRAPBOOK, 1940-1960**

1 flat box

### **ABSTRACT**

Midwood Elementary School was established around 1934. Originally called the Lawyers Road School, it was located at 1817 Central Avenue in Charlotte. The building underwent several renovations, and eventually Midwood Elementary School closed. It later became an alternative high school, dedicated primarily to helping students who drop out of traditional schools for academic or personal reasons. Today it holds the International House, which provides direct services such as foreign-language conversation hours, cultural events, citizen workshops, and legal services, to Charlotte's growing international population.

This collection contains a scrapbook.

### **ACCESS**

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### **PREFERRED CITATION**

Cite as: Midwood Elementary School Scrapbook, 1940-1960, Robinson-Spangler Carolina Room, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library

### **ACQUISITION**

Processed by Hannah Cox, 2015.

### **HISTORICAL NOTE**

The Plaza/Midwood area, a suburb of Charlotte at the time, began in 1903. Originally named Chatham Estates for local developer Paul Chatham, it was one of the first streetcar suburbs, along with the earlier Dilworth, and later Myers Park areas. Central Avenue, originally known as Lawyers Road, ran through Plaza/Midwood, and it was also home to the Charlotte Golf Club.

The expansion and growth of Plaza/Midwood in the 1930s brought about the need for a school, and Lawyers Road Elementary School was built in 1934. It was built in the Traditional style by local architect M.R. Marsh, and had eight classrooms. The school opened to students in 1935, and eighty children had to be turned away to other schools due to demand. In 1940, it was renamed Midwood Elementary School. As time went by, additions were built onto the school, and in 1941 a fire damaged several classrooms, resulting in repairs and remodeling. Another addition in the late 1940s included three more classrooms and a visual education room. Dr. N.L. Englehardt was the architect and building consultant, and Howard Duval was the supervisory construction engineer.

Midwood Elementary was in its prime during the 1950s, and reached a peak enrollment of 1,000 students. By the early 1980s, the school was in decline, and served fewer than three hundred students, closing in June 1983. After its closure, the building began to deteriorate, and vandals broke many of the windows. It was resurrected in 1985, however, due to an arson fire at Albemarle Elementary School, leaving several hundred students without a nearby school. Over the course of three days, over seventy workers strove to bring Midwood Elementary up to code. They succeeded, and the children returned to school Tuesday morning.

By the early 2000s, Midwood Elementary was an alternative school for students who had dropped out of traditional schools for academic or personal reasons. Another part of the building had a hot lunch program for the elderly, and was home to Teenage Age Parents Services (TAPS), dedicated to keeping pregnant teenagers in school.

Today the former Midwood Elementary School building houses the International House. Founded by the Charlotte Area Clergy Association as the Community College and International Ministry of Charlotte, Inc., in 1981, the organization became changed its name to the International House in 1989. International House moved into the old Midwood School in 2012, and opened a multicultural campus, housing such organizations as the Language Academy, League of Women Voters, and All Ethiopian Community Center, among others. These organizations provide a variety of services, including direct services such as foreign-language conversation hours, cultural events, citizen workshops, and legal services, to Charlotte's growing international population.

## **REFERENCES**

Martin, Tracy A. and Mary Dominick. "Survey and Research Report on the Midwood Elementary School (Formerly Known as the Lawyers Road School)," Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission: 2001 and 2009.

<http://www.cmhpf.org/S&Rs%20Alphabetical%20Order/Surveys&RMidwoodElementarySchool.htm>

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Hanchett, Thomas W. "Plaza-Midwood." Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission. <http://landmarkscommission.org/educationneighhistplazamidwood.htm>

## **RELATED MATERIALS**

Byers, Jeff. *Plaza-Midwood Neighborhood of Charlotte*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia, 2004 (CALL NUMBER: NCR 975.602 C479 B993p)

*Neighborhoods—Plaza Midwood*. (CALL NUMBER: NCR VERTICAL FILES)

Rogers, John R. *Charlotte, Its Historic Neighborhoods*. Dover, NH: Arcadia, 1996. (CALL NUMBER: NCR 975.62 C479 R72c)

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

The Midwood School Scrapbook dates from 1940-1960, and consists of primarily newspaper articles about the school, its teachers and students, and thank you notes. Included in the end are a few group photographs of students and staff members.

## **SERIES LIST**

### **CONTENTS**

Scrapbook, 1940-1960

### **BOX FOLDER**

1