

MANY MEMORIES LINGER OF 102-YEAR-OLD SCHOOLHOUSE DENNY'S SEMINARY

"It's sad to see the old place go down so," Mrs. Audra Denny said, as she walked up to the collapsed porch of the 102-year-old Denny Seminary and peered for a moment through a gaping hole in the broken door into the dim interior.

"They kept the old school in good shape up until just a couple of years ago, but when they removed the County polling place from here it's really gone down," she remarked. "Now just look at all these weeds – but there used to be flowers here."

She added that since the building is no longer in use, unfeeling persons have broken some of the windows out, torn down the arches around the windows and broken in the door. Furniture inside has been hauled off too, she said.

Mrs. Denny remarked that, while the building may slowly crumble into ruin after surviving for so many years, memories of school there should not fade for many years as "just about everybody in this end of the country went to school there at some time or other."

Although she never attended school there, Mrs. Denny feels a very strong attachment to the old one-room country school. It stands on land belonging to her since the death of her husband Virgil, land belonging to the family for over 100 years.

"I did not go to school here – I came down here as a bride 57 years ago, and the old building had been there a long time then.

"But my mother, Mrs. Matilda Wallace Anderson went to school here as a girl – she lived with her aunt at the time so she could go here."

The school has been a part of the Denny family legend which she learned from her husband.

"Virgil told me that for many years before he married his father, Timothy Denny, was a bachelor. Timothy had two nephews, one who wanted to be a carpenter, and the other who wanted to be a school teacher," Mrs. Denny recalled. "So Grandfather Denny let Silas Denny, the carpenter, gain experience by building the schoolhouse, and Thompson Luther "T. D." "Tobe" Denny gain experience by being the first teacher, then lawyer, and then for many years, a judge.

She said Timothy Denny had felt a need for the school as there was none for miles, so he donated the land, the materials, the money for construction costs – and through the nephews the labor and the first teacher. He named the school Denny Seminary. Timothy Denny reaped a benefit he did not expect at the time he had the school built, she said. "Later on, he got married and they had two children of their own – Virgil and Minnie – so his own children got to use the school he had built for the children of others."

“They used to bring the children in here from Buffalo Valley – there was no school in this whole area,” she remarked.

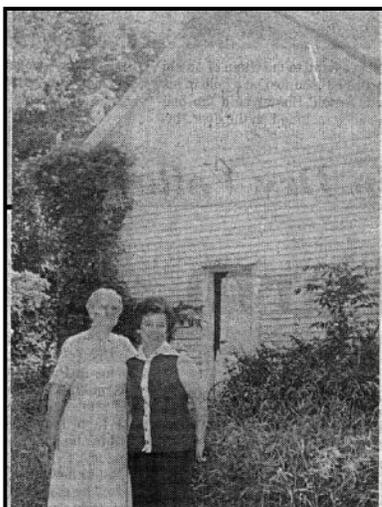
“Just mention a name,” she added. “If he lived down this way, he probably went to school here.”

Notes of Audrey June Denny Lambert, great granddaughter of Timothy Denny:

Denny Seminary was located near Buffalo Valley (N36°08.343' W85°45.962') off Hopewell Rd. on Indian Creek Rd. It was built about 1874 on land owned by Timothy Denny for his two nephews Silas Denny who wanted to be a carpenter and Thompson Luther “T. L.” “Tobe” Denny who wanted to be a teacher. Silas gained experience by building the schoolhouse and T. L. Denny gained teaching experience by being the first teacher here. T. L. went on to become a teacher, then a lawyer and finally a judge for many years, Silas Denny went on to build houses in the community and made furniture.

In the 1973 photo is Mrs. Audra Anderson Denny, wife of Virgil Timothy Denny son of Timothy Denny and Elizabeth Hettie Paul. With Audra Denny is Naomi Carolyn Shanks Huddleston, daughter of Luther Alexander “Luke” Shanks and Dona Florence Boyd was a former teacher of Denny’s Seminary. Dimple Breeding, daughter of Rubin Marley & Cynthia Ann Mills Breeding and Harriet Douglas Nichols, daughter of James Petway & Harriet “Hattie” Lewis Grimes Nichols, were also teachers at Denny’s Seminary.

When the weather was bad Matilda Wallace Anderson, mother of Audra Camilla Anderson Denny, used to stay at William Taylor “Bill” & Martha (Hendley) Maxwell’s log cabin so she could attend school. The school called Denny’s seminary, near Buffalo Valley was for many years the only school in the west end of the county. The school was later used to store hay and caught on fire and was totally destroyed.



remember
its
'glory'

Standing in front of the now deserted Denny Seminary on her land, which her late husband's father had built 102 years ago to serve the educational needs of area children, Mrs. Audra Denny (left) puts her arm around Mrs. Carolyn Huddleston. Mrs. Huddleston attended the school and her mother, Mrs. Luke A. Shanks, is the oldest living former teacher of the school. The school, located near Buffalo Valley, was for many years the only school in the west end of the county.

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Denny's Seminary
One room schoolhouse built ca. 1872.



Virgil Timothy Denny house. Standing in front of the house is the teacher of Denny's Seminary, Dimple Breeding. She is holding Tim Denny, s/o Virgil Timothy & Audra Camilla Anderson Denny.

