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Celebrating

Our Community Founders



Francis (Frankie) A. McKay Howze

is known as the Mother of Education in Palmetto. During her time as an educator, she was a teacher, a school principal, a librarian and Palmetto's first football coach. Teachers who were revolutionizing methods of education in Chicago trained Frankie when she was a teenager. When her health failed, she traveled to Florida to live with a relative. In 1889, following the yellow fever epidemic, there was a need for teachers in Palmetto. Miss Frankie answered that call. She ordered textbooks from Chicago and paid for them with her own money. She divided students into grades and became the school principal. As a vivacious young woman, she soon attracted and married Captain James A. Howze whose wife died of yellow fever. Frankie birthed three sons, but was widowed when the youngest was 9 years old. She taught school for 67 years, put her children through college and took classes at Columbia University during the summer. Palmetto Elementary was named after her at one point, but after a restoration, the dedication was forgotten. (PHC).