

Student Gertrude Evans Née Ashton

I attended LCPS schools between 1954 and 1966. I attended Douglass Elementary and graduated from Douglass High. I lived in Leesburg at the time and could also walk the mile or so to the schools if I missed the bus. There were two or three bus stops in my neighborhood and mine was the last one before we were all dropped at the school. By the time I boarded the bus, it was pretty full. Our bus driver was Mr. Luther Smith and he drove the # 36 bus. He was also the janitor at Douglass High. Mr. Smith maintained discipline on the bus, there was little to no 'horse play' on his bus. He kept the bus at his home on Watson Mountain and would have already been 30 minutes or so into his route when he picked me up. His route was over both paved and dirt roads. We would arrive in time for the start of school at 9:00 AM. This was not the case for buses serving the more remote areas of the county. Buses serving those remote areas could be late in inclement weather. Some of those narrow, twisting, dirt roads could be dangerous. Some of the buses were older and some newer. Mr. Smith's bus was always clean, in good condition and I never experienced any engine failures. The #36 bus carried both elementary and high school students. Because, I boarded the bus within Leesburg, the route to school was all on paved roads, so I was never stuck in mud or snow. Occasionally, Mr. Smith's daughter would sub for him. She was a high school student and school bus driver at the time¹.

¹ From July 28, 2020 interview with former LCPS Student Gert Evans Née Ashton conducted by Nathan Bailey