

north into the Chelsea area, and on into Craig County. The time came when the small town businesses could not compete with those at Claremore and Chelsea, twenty minutes by car to either place. Now most of the houses are gone or have been abandoned, one little roadside store struggles to hold on, and the large school stands vacant. Gone also is the postoffice which existed from about 1898 until 1955. She recalls that Bill Hale was the first postmaster at Bushyhead. Although Chief Dennis Bushyhead (1879 - 1887) never lived in the area, he was honored by having the town named for him.

Of the prominent Cherokee families who lived in the area before statehood, she mentions these few: Glass, England, Ward, Vann, Beck, Wood, Robinson, Ragsdale, Walkingstick, and Fox. These families all lived by farming and ranching. Merchants and businessmen of early day Bushyhead included Bard, Goodman, Webb, Culley, Brown, and Stewart.

Stewart and Dennis were partners who had bought up some of the original townsite and laid off lots and streets. They were fast promoters but hit a snag when they tried to get the name of the town changed to Dennison.

Little remembered was the John Glass School on the east edge of Bushyhead, which was also one of the first schools, but was attended only by Indian children. It was short lived and closed up to consolidate with the new Bushyhead public school which was constructed.

One of the first church buildings to be built in the area was at Good Hope, a few miles south of Bushyhead. Later then there was a church built in town. The Good Hope church is still in use and serves a wide area including the Dog Creek community and Washington community, where many Indians still live.

She recalls when she first started teaching, anyone who could pass the requirements for a third grade certificate could teach. The certificates were good for two years, and had to be renewed. Then by going to school in the summer they could acquire certificates for higher teaching responsibility and higher salary, until eventually they could get a lifetime certificate.

A few miles south of Bushyhead is the community of Washington on the north side of Dog Creek. In early days this was thickly settled by Cherokees, and many still live here. It was named for Josephus Washington, an early day Cherokee pioneer and farmer. Some of the other Indian families who lived here were the Downings, Ticketers, Fallins, Eagles, Mossasins, and Whiteheads. One of the oldest cemeteries in the country is located at the center of this community. Nearby was a large stone church. Also Bud Downing operated a store here for many years, and remains of the old log structure are still standing.

Mrs. Robinson was born on the hill just west of Bushyhead, and recalls when a child the country was thinly settled. Some of their neighbors were the Tuckers, Stokes, Earlys, Beck, McSpaddens, and Dennenburgs, and some of them were five or six miles away.