

December 19, 2025

Samuel Holmes

In Friday's post for the Daufuskie Island History Museum focuses on a person whose contributions surround us, but who is probably unknown to many of you, a man named Samuel Holmes.

A carpenter and store proprietor, Mr. Holmes was involved in the construction of many of the significant buildings on Daufuskie.

As stated in yesterday's post, black children on Daufuskie in the early part of the 1900's attended school in the Maryfield Praise House and the First Union African Baptist Church. At the outset of the 1930's, the parents of the school children got together and purchased two acres of land. The parents had held parties to raise money where they sold food, homemade ice cream, candy and drinks. They continued to raise money for a school building, and worked out an agreement with the Beaufort County Public Schools whereby they would pay half the cost of the building, and Beaufort the other half, \$400 each. With the money raised for the building materials, labor was paid for by the Roosevelt administration's Work Projects Administration (WPA). In 1934, the newly built Mary Fields school (named for the Maryfield plantation) opened with 108 students for grades 1 through 6 and Frances Elizabeth Jones and Gertrude Bryan as teachers.

Leftover boards from the construction were used to make desks. Outhouses were added and a shallow well with a hand pump provided water.

Samuel Holmes was the lead carpenter on that project. While we don't have a great deal of biographical information on Mr. Holmes, a simple search on the internet yields a list of the homes and other places he built on Daufuskie.

- The Christopher Holmes house at 364 Haig Point Rd, built in 1921
- The Mt. Carmel Baptist Church No. 2, built 1942 (which you now know as the Daufuskie Island History Museum) The church was built from materials recovered after a storm destroyed the first church in 1940.
- The Jane Hamilton School
- The Flossie Washington House at 32 Conroy Rd, built ca 1920
- The Stafford House, 128 Cooper River Landing Rd., built ca 1910

Obviously, as the carpenter/builder of Mt. Carmel Baptist Church No. 2 and the Jane Hamilton School, the Daufuskie Island History Museum owes a great deal to Mr. Holmes.

Mr. Holmes was also the proprietor of one of the last country stores on Daufuskie, located on the Cooper River.

The Daufuskie Island History Museum has an exhibit of several of the tools used by Mr. Holmes in his carpentry work.

