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No. 85

Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

Forgotten Souls:

The Story Huntsville Doesn't Want to Talk About

Rumors of a long-forgotten cemetery have floated around Huntsville for years. Some claim it was an old Indian burial ground, while others said it was a slave cemetery. Did it ever exist? Who was buried there? What happened to it?

Careful research has provided answers to many of these questions... but it may raise more than a few eyebrows!

Also in This Issue: **The John Hunt Story**

Forgotten Souls

The story no one in Huntsville wants to talk about

by Leslie Jeffreys

Some suggested it was under the parking garage. Those who remember still get angry about it. Others speculated that it was an ancient Indian burial ground. The truth is that Huntsville Hospital was built over a cemetery still used for funerals as late as the early 1900s.

1819 brought statehood to Alabama, but Huntsville was already a thriving community. Alabama's first Constitutional Convention was held in Walker Allen's cabinet shop, the largest vacant building in the city. Prominent citizens whose names became synonymous with forging the fledgling city were acquiring vast amounts of property and building mansions that have withstood nearly 200 years of war, weather and urban renewal. One of the many land transactions, as recorded in Deed Book G, page 183 in the Madison County Courthouse, shows that on September 3, 1818, LeRoy Pope and his wife, Judith, sold property to the city of Huntsville for $75. The surveyor's report describes it as being on the west side of the Meridian Road leading to Ditto's Landing and on David Moore's north boundary. Described as "two acres more or less," it was sold, "for the express purpose of a Grave Yard for the Town aforesaid."

Most historians agree that the wording of the deed, "for the Town aforesaid," suggests it was purchased for use as a white cemetery. Additionally, historians point out that the city would not have purchased a "black" cemetery without first acquiring a "white" cemetery.

Writers of Huntsville's history have wrongly stated that this transaction marked the beginning of present-day Maple Hill Cemetery. Part of the confusion evidently came from the "historic marker" at Maple Hill Cemetery which incorrectly lists its founding as 1818. However, a careful check of records would have revealed the transaction was actually for the cemetery that came to be known as "Georgia," located near present-day Governors Drive and Madison Street.

The specific reason for the name "Georgia Cemetery" is unknown, although it has been suggested that it was because many

Old Huntsville

Published By
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Old Photographs of Madison County

Old Huntsville is seeking early photographs of Huntsville and Madison County from the period of the Civil War up until 1950 to be used in a photograph book. If your pictures are selected to be published in the book you will receive a free subscription to *Old Huntsville Magazine* and be credited when it is printed.

We need all types of photographs of Huntsville and Madison County.

1938 Madison County High School (Gurley) basketball team. Standing left to right: Coach W.O. Wooley, Paul Jacobs, Merle Powers, Howard Tipton, Bill Sanders, C.M. Buford, Henry Ellett, Cecil Tipton and manager Thomas Jacobs. Kneeling left to right: Robert Smith, Malcolm Taylor, John O'Neal. Photo courtesy of Cecil Tipton.

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of the area's first settlers came here from Georgia. Although it was originally established as a white city cemetery, black people also were buried there even at an early date. The custom of the time, as evidenced by countless cemeteries throughout the South, dictated that both whites and blacks were often buried in the same grounds. Harsh as slavery was, the white masters often felt a paternal instinct toward their slaves, even in death.

The site of the new city cemetery, however, proved to be an unfortunate one. Early accounts show the area was prone to flooding and was a virtual swamp for much of the time. After only four years, Georgia Cemetery was deemed unsuitable for burial and LeRoy Pope sold the city another tract of land, later to become known as Maple Hill Cemetery.

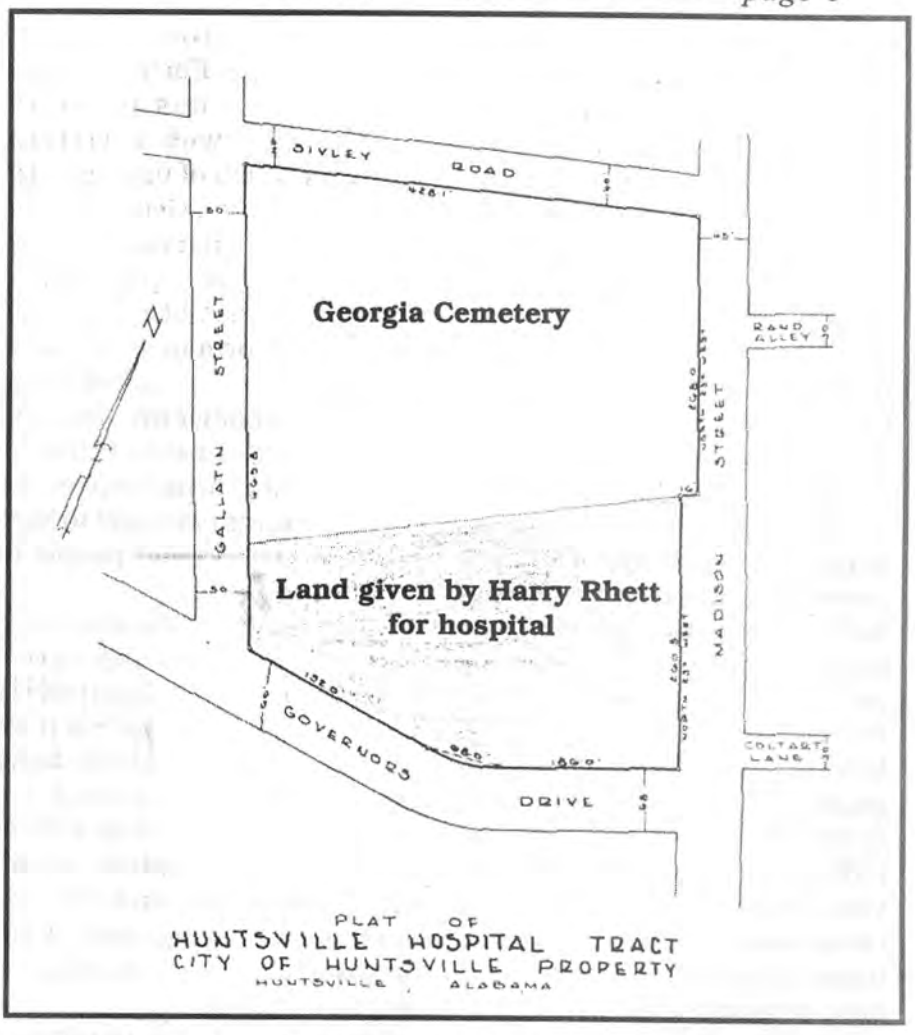
Possibly another incentive for purchasing the new cemetery had to do with the new rules requiring separate burial places for the black and white population. Although "Georgia" was deemed unfit for white burials, city officials continued to use it for burials of blacks.

Georgia Cemetery quickly became a focal point for the black community, possibly because it was the only place in Huntsville they could claim as their own. St. Bartley, the oldest black church in Huntsville, traces its beginnings back to 1820 when slaves met under the dogwood trees in the cemetery to hear God's word

delivered by their first pastor, William Harris. It was originally established under the name Huntsville African Baptist Church, a possible offshoot of a similar church in Savannah, Georgia. Baptisms were held at the nearby Big Spring.

In 1833, a law was enacted that forbade slaves from gathering unless there was a white man present who could prevent slaves from discussing or planning freedom. Sermons were even censored for the same reason. Many of Huntsville's elder black residents remember oral histories that were handed down about slaves meeting in the cemetery late at night preaching in whispers so they would not be overheard. Others remember stories about preachers delivering sermons in a singsong fashion so that the white masters would not be able to understand.

Around this time, a small building was erected in the cemetery for use as a black church, though the presence of a white person was still required before



Below: Huntsville Hospital ca. 1940.

services could be held. The minister. Bartley Harris, shared his surname with the original minister, William Harris, but it is not known if they were related, or slaves on the same plantation. Ironically, while the white community did not trust Bartley Harris to preach sermons on his own accord, many people trusted him to hide their valuables when Union forces occupied Huntsville during the Civil War.

Bartley Harris must have felt a dilemma in his own mind. Some white ministers of the time preached that black people did not possess a soul, therefore justifying in their own minds the practice of slavery. Not only was Rev. Harris charged with the difficult task of uplifting his congregation with the same words used by the white masters, but he also risked his own life by saving their valuables during the war. He could easily have somehow sold those valuables to buy his freedom or finance his escape North, but Bartley Harris chose to remain with his small congregation.

The war dealt a heavy blow to the black congregation when the church was burned by Union soldiers during Huntsville's occupation. After the war, President Ulysses Grant appropriated money for rebuilding the church, which was rededicated in 1872 in a nearby location. At this time, the name was changed from Huntsville African Baptist Church to St. Bartley Primitive Baptist Church in respect for their pastor who was said to have baptized some 3,000 people in his lifetime.

After the war, the area, also known as Georgia, became a thriving community. Many of the newly freed slaves made it their home and opened small businesses. The church, and the cemetery, played a large role in the community's religious and social life, a fact that the city must have realized when it appropriated money to build gates for the cemetery.

In 1870, the city purchased land for another black cemetery,

When a popular madam, Mollie Teal, died in 1898 she left her home/bordello to the city to be used as a city hospital. The hospital remained there until 1925 when new facilities were built at the present location.

that would become known as Glenwood. Though many people have speculated as to the reason the city purchased another cemetery, the answer is quite obvious when one considers the relatively small size of Georgia Cemetery, the average black population in Huntsville and the prevailing death rate. Georgia Cemetery, with almost 2000 graves, if not full, was close to it. Another possible reason, advanced by members of the black community, is that many of the emancipated blacks had no desire to be buried in what was known as a "slave cemetery."

Even with the purchase of Glenwood, evidence and oral histories suggest that burials continued to take place in Georgia. Construction work at the site in recent years has unearthed graves containing clothing and casket styles that clearly indicate Georgia Cemetery was used for burials after 1900. Other evidence can be found in the Madison County Deed Book 92, page 275 which contains the description of land known as "Longwood Plantation" that came into the sole ownership of Harry M. Rhett on November 7, 1903. This land adjoined Georgia Cemetery and in the surveyor's report it is referred to as being on "the south boundary of the African Cemetery." The cemetery is also pictured in the original 1902 Quigley map of Huntsville. The fragile book, which contains this map, clearly shows the Georgia Cemetery identified simply as "Colored Cemetery." In addition, elderly members of the black community recall stories handed down to them about ancestors who were buried there as late as 1910.

The demise and destruction of the Georgia Cemetery started early in this century. Local legend says that a black man brutally assaulted a white person, causing anger and outrage in the white community. An incensed mob of white people took their vengeance on the black community by knocking down headstones and causing destruction in the cemetery and the surrounding fence.

Whether the story is true or not, the graveyard began a gradual decay. Tombstones were no longer replaced and it became overgrown with the city seemingly taking no interest in maintaining it. Local accounts claim that Harry Rhett, who owned the adjacent land, took a personal interest in the cemetery, often sending his employees to cut weeds and maintain the grounds.

Rhett was also instrumental in the movement to build a new hospital. The original hospital was located in a house on Gallatin Street that had originally been an infamous bordello. Its madame, Mollie Teal, had bequeathed the house to the city in her will with the stipulation that it be used as a hospital. No

doubt the hospital officials, besides needing larger facilities, were also anxious to rid themselves of the house's reputation.

On June 30, 1925, Harry and Louise Rhett deeded a tract of land bordering the cemetery to the city for the construction of Huntsville Hospital. Probably fearing for the future of the cemetery, Rhett stipulated in the deed that the gift was contingent upon the hospital acquiring the cemetery next to it and maintaining it.

Rhett, realizing that good intentions often have short memories, also stipulated in the deed that if the parties failed to live up to the agreement, the land would revert back to him or his heirs.

Less than three weeks later on July 19, 1925, the city of Huntsville deeded the cemetery to the Huntsville Hospital. Strangely, and for reasons unknown, the deed omitted all mention of a cemetery, and even contained the sentence, "...it is seized in fee thereof and that the same are free from encumbrances."

The new hospital was erected adjacent to the Georgia Cemetery, and for some period of time, the cemetery was largely ignored, though the grass was cut and the bushes trimmed on a regular basis. Remaining headstones gradually disappeared or were moved off and Georgia Cemetery began to take on the appearance of just another vacant field. In 1949, Harry Rhett died, and apparently all memories of the promise to maintain the cemetery were forgotten. By the early '50s, people began parking their cars over it, and urban sprawl began to change the character of the neighborhood. The swampy nature of the area was corrected in the 1950s, when proper drainage was installed, making the land attractive to investors.

Sketch of Bartley Harris by Howard Weeden

An addition for the hospital was built on part of the cemetery and the rest of it disappeared under slabs of concrete as the city tried to keep up with its growing medical needs. For all intents and purposes, it was as if Georgia Cemetery never existed.

St. Bartley Church was another casualty of Huntsville's growth. Property in the area was condemned as part of the urban renewal program and St. Bartley moved to its present location on Belafonte Avenue. People who had lived in the neighborhood for years, and had family buried there, were uprooted and forced to move, taking with them the memories of Georgia Cemetery.

Rumors about the cemetery still abounded however. Several times, according to a longtime employee of the hospital, the deed was checked in an attempt to verify, or deny, the rumors. When the deed from the city was examined and no mention of a cemetery found, it seemed to put an end to the stories as far as most people were concerned. The few legends that persisted were discounted by many histo-

rians as being "unfounded rumors of an old Indian burial ground."

Georgia Cemetery now exists only in the memories of a few elderly citizens who still recall the final resting place of their ancestors with an extreme sense of sorrow.

"We have had many visitors asking to see the graves of their families," said Reverend Gladys, the present pastor of St. Bartley Church, "but we have nothing to show them."

Were the bodies moved? We know they were still there on June 30, 1925 or Harry Rhett would have had no reason to be concerned about the upkeep of the cemetery. Since the city made no mention of the cemetery in the deed transferal three weeks later, July 19, 1925, one can only assume the cemetery had ceased to exist. A careful search of the records shows no mention of any removals. It is entirely possible that bodies may have been moved at a later date, but again, no documentation has been found.

So who should be held accountable for the eradication of Georgia Cemetery? Certainly not Harry Rhett who, in his benevolence, clearly specified his wish that it be maintained. Did Huntsville Hospital know about the cemetery or Harry Rhett's 1925 deed conditions? In all probability, no. Hospital authorities had checked the title, but all mention about the existence of the cemetery was conspicuously omitted from the deed the city gave them. Hospital officials in later years would not have remembered it as anything but a vacant lot.

In all likelihood, city officials, in 1925, simply decided that public needs clearly outweighed a cemetery that had not been used for fifteen or twenty years. Public sensibilities were different at the time and countless cemeteries everywhere, both black and white, were destroyed often for no more reason than to plant additional cotton. It could also be argued that over a period of time, the decomposition of bodies would have left nothing to reinter, so any effort to move them might have been an exercise in frustration. In the end, this may be one of those stories for which there is no answer. ... Rest In Peace, Georgia Cemetery.

Shortly before we went to press, City Councilman Richard Showers announced plans to form a committee to commemorate Georgia Cemetery and the history it shared with St. Bartley Church. "To ignore history's wrongs," he said, "is to encourage history to repeat itself."

The Meanest Man In The World

from 1904 newspaper

"The meanest man I ever knew," said the short passenger, "was a fellow who got a football and painted it to look like a watermelon. Then during the summer months he kept it conspicuously displayed in his backyard and amused himself setting a savage bulldog on hungry people who happened to take a fancy to the bogus melon."

"He certainly had his mean points," said the tall passenger, "but I know a fellow who could give him a discount and then beat him at his own game. I was in a restaurant once where this fellow was getting his dinner. After he had finished he called the waiter who had served him and asked:

"How much do you get for a tip as a rule?"

"The waiter's eyes sparkled. He rubbed his hands together and replied:

'Well, sah, we generally get at least a quarter, but sometimes nice gentlemen, prosperous men that look like you - gives fifty cents.' "Then what did this fellow do but put on his hat and say:

"Thanks. I merely wanted to know how much I was going to be ahead by not giving you anything."

Please Do Not Ask Operators For Time Of Day

Huntsville, 1919: It has become necessary for us to discontinue the practice of permitting our telephone operators to answer requests for the time of day, the location of fires and other information not a necessary part of telephone service. On and after March 16, 1919, our operators will not give you the time of day.

Our operators are asked for the correct time more than 300 times per day. Every minute given to calls of this kind means so much time taken away from calls of vital importance. We find it necessary to ask you to relieve our lines of this burden. When the operator politely tells you she cannot give you the time of day, it is entirely in the interest of better service.

Absurd News

A wormlike reptile, resembling a lizard, was coughed up by William Pickerson of Chester, Pennsylvania. For some time Mr. Pickerson was troubled by a tickling in his throat and was treated by his physicians for bronchitis. He got little relief. He thinks that he swallowed the reptile last fall while drinking water from a spring.

A parrot, fluent in five languages, has died from the grippe. The parrot, named Mynah, fell ill and died at the Gramercy apartment house in New York City. His value, according to his owner, was $10,000. Besides speaking five languages, the bird could sing in several others, could play the piano with one foot, and could imitate the sound of the banjo in this throat.

The Associated Press announced that James Clarke, age 66 years, and a convict for five years in the Maryland penitentiary, will soon be released. Clarke is probably the most reckless and wholesale polygamist alive. Authorities believe he has married not less than fifty-five times. Clarke has used at least eleven aliases and in 1880 had the boldness to change his name twice and wed successively two young women in the same county, that of Albermarle, Virginia, almost under the shadow of the homes of Jefferson and Madison. This perennial and ever-buoyant bridegroom has conquered female hearts of all varieties. He is very different from the sort of love one would naturally expect such a major-general in matrimonial campaigning to be. People say he has a pleasant address, a gift of language, a familiarity with the world, and – above all – much self-confidence.

In a small village near Zurich, Switzerland, on Christmas Eve, an outdoor religious service was held. All the inhabitants, excepts one old man, attended. He was killed by an avalanche, in which twenty homes were destroyed.

A.B. Whitmore, 84, of Florissant, Colorado, hibernates every winter in a dugout five feet underground and lives entirely on honey until spring.

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Dear Mary

The soldier's life is never an easy one, as he must leave home and family to answer the call of duty in far away places. And during wartime, there are the added fears of lonely death that mark his days. Beside the prospects of being killed or wounded, perhaps no other event was more dreaded than the receipt of a "Dear John" letter, telling the homesick young man that the woman he hoped to return home to had found another Love. This was the case with Corporal Ed Snell (pictured above), who had left his home in Albany (now Decatur) to fight in the trenches of World War I. When he received his "Dear John" Letter from Mary Elizabeth Motherway, he poured out his heart in the following reply.

We know nothing more of Cpl. Snell than is included in these pages. He indicates that he "never will see Albany again as long as I live, and maybe not the States." Perhaps he made good on this promise.

For her part, Mary Motherway became Mrs. Hudson. But some part of her never forgot this soldier boy, and she kept his letter and picture all her life. We would like to thank Pam and Darrell Milligan of Decatur for sharing this letter with our readers. Mary Motherway Hudson was Darrell's aunt.

Germany
Feb. 24, 1919

Miss Mary Motherway
Albany, Alabama

Dear Mary,

I will try to write you a few lines to let you know I just received your letter today. I was glad to hear from you and sorry, too. Glad to know that you don't want me any longer. Well, dear girl, you may be happy and rejoicing over it, but you have made me feel so sad for my heart is very heavy tonight. Just to think the only girl I ever did care for and the one that promised me so faithfully that you cared for no other in this world but me, and I have come all the way to this country to fight that our country might be free.

Many days and nights have I

Miss Mary Elizabeth Motherway (right) and companion.

waited and longed to see the day come when I could get to leave this country and to come back to Albany and see my little girl that I though would keep her promise to me. But the War is over now and I am fixing to sail for home so I could get to see you and then I get a letter from the only girl I ever did love saying she cared nothing more for me and your heart has grown cold toward me. My friend, I can't explain in this letter how I feel tonight. I don't see how you could write such a letter to me. It hurt me to get a letter like that from you.

There will be no nights that I can rest in peace for thinking of you, the one that has turned her back on me and learned to love another. But if you love him better than you do me I don't blame you one bit. But, dear girl, always remember if you and him get married that he can never love you as I do. I will always love you no matter what part of the world I am in. You asked me in your letter to come to see you when I return to the States.

Dear girl, how could I have the heart to see you when you have turned your back on me? How could you have the heart to ask me to come around and see you? Just mark this in your Book that if you don't change your mind I never will see Albany again as long as I live, and maybe not the States, for you have ruined my mind and heart as long as I live, for you have wrecked my life for ever, just as the Germans have wrecked many a poor French home over in France.

Dear girl, how in this world can you be so cruel? Have I wrote something or said something that makes you be so cruel to me? My heart is very sad tonight for I am thinking of you so much. But there is no chance for me, no help for me, only grief. Why did you not tell me before now that you did not care for me? Why did you keep me fooled all his time? There are many a poor soldier that has fought for his country that has got a dear girl to return to see and love. But what have I got? Nothing. I have not had anything to do with no other girl or not a letter have I wrote to any other girl, for I knew you would wait for me, for my return to you. But I will have to go now the best I can and love just any girl that will love me.

Dear girl, have mercy on a poor soul. I have seen many a poor boy that feels just as I do tonight. There are many today that feel the same as I. But I never had thought of you doing me this way. That would be the last thing I would think of you doing. But the thing is done now and there is no help for me. Well, I have wrote all I can tonight so please do not, for my sake, let anyone read this letter. When you read it please burn it up. So I will ring off-- so good night to you from a broken hearted Soldier Boy to Miss Mary Motherway. If you never write to me or change your mind toward me, then it is goodbye for ever.

Cpl. Ed Snell

The Funeral of Amy Chapman

During the early 1930s the government hired writers, under the auspices of the Federal Writers Program, to collect oral histories of what they realized was a fast disappearing way of life. One of the subjects interviewed was "Aunt" Amy Chapman who was born a slave on a plantation belonging to Reuben Chapman, a native of Huntsville and the Governor of Alabama from 1847 to 1849. Although Amy Chapman spent most of her life on the plantation in Livingston, Alabama, she was occasionally "brought" to Huntsville to work as a seamstress for the Chapman family.

Nothing is known of the author, Ruby Pickens Tartt, but one can surmise from her writing that she was probably not from the South, as she was unfamiliar with many of its customs. As far as is known, this is the only story she ever wrote. Regardless, the simplicity and beauty of the narrative speaks for itself.

On Tuesday morning of last week, Aunt Amy Chapman, one of our oldest citizens, passed away. Although she had reached the age of ninety-five, Aunt Amy still possessed an extraordinary vigor of both body and mind far beyond her years.

Only a few days before her death she had met me and asked me to drive her home. "I'm tired and my feet hurt," she had said. "I want you to take me home." "Why Aunt Amy," I asked. "What have you been doing here lately?" I bin picking cotton," she replied and as I did not think she was farming this year I expressed surprise. "Oh," she answered, "Tain't my cotton, hit's other folks' cotton. Didn't have nothing else to do, so I thought I might ez well help in de fiel's."

And it was in the cotton field that she suffered the stroke which proved fatal. She never rallied, and four days later "at first light" she passed away peacefully, as if in sleep. Perhaps it was fortunate that death came so swiftly, as a lingering illness with its consequent helplessness and dependence on others would have been unendurable to Aunt Amy. Nothing could have been more abhorrent to her staunchly individualistic old soul than the thought of being constantly under obligations to anyone. She never asked a favor of me, to drive her over on Saturday when she went to buy her weekly provisions, or to take her home

cont. on page 20

Huntsville Coffee Talk

by Aunt Eunice

With pearls of wisdom contributed by the Liar's Table

Well, it looks as if Spring is finally here. I don't know about the rest of you but I am ready for some warm weather!

Mrs. Hattie Montgomery celebrated her 91st birthday on March 21. Joining her were her children, **Jack Montgomery**, **Julian** and **Betty Butler** and **Guy Montgomery**. They all said this was the best birthday place in all of Alabama, and maybe even the U.S.A.!

This has been a wonderful month for many of my dear friends! Many of them celebrated their birthdays with me. Among them were gal pals **Susan Kirkland**, **Cynthia Parsons** and **Toni Lowery**. Also, birthday boy, **Ernie Young**, was treated to a big country ham breakfast by his family.

Other birthdays were **Doris Lumpkin**, **Kathy Isbell** and **Martha Delaney**. Happy birthday to all of you!

City council woman, **Sandra Moon** brought her husband, **John** to breakfast recently. Joining them were **Brigadier General** and **Mrs. Jimmy Flynn** of **Dublin, Ireland**, along with **Keith** and **Betty Schonrock**. **General Flynn**, a member of the **Irish Army**, couldn't get over the biscuits and gravy!

Last month's photo was of **Derek Simpson** and was guessed by **Lori McGough**. She celebrated winning in big style by bringing her husband and another lovely couple to join her while she ate her free "country home breakfast."

Seniors, get ready for the biggest and greatest **Senior Expo** ever brought to you by the **Senior Center** and **Wal-Mart**! It will be a two-day event with **FREE ADMISSION**, **FREE PARKING**, **free health screenings**, **free food**, and **door prizes**! The legendary **Boots Randolph** will be performing both days. Mark your calendar now for **May 26** and **27** from 9 until 4:30 at the ***VBC South Hall***.

Well, wedding bells will be ringing soon for **Tom Glynn** and **Jeanni Sharp**, Huntsville's favorite couple in love. Good luck and Best Wishes!

Pat Colson sure is doing a great job with the **Crime Prevention Academy**, a nine-week course for Seniors. Recently I hosted a breakfast for them and we raised around **$25,000**. Thanks everyone for supporting this worthy cause. Let's keep our Seniors safe!

I can't begin to tell you how proud I was to have **John** and **Faye Willis** come eat with me on their **40th Anniversary**. This was

Photo of The Month

The first person to identify the little girl in the picture below wins a breakfast at Eunice's Country Kitchen. So stop by and tell Aunt Eunice who you think it is!

Hint: She's our little Star!

Last month's photo was Derek Simpson

extra special because they ate with me while they were on their honeymoon! How time flies! I'll expect them again on their **50th**!

Happy Birthday to a very young "96," **Helen Grubbs**. Her daughter, **Eloise Grubbs**, brings her by every year to eat with me and gives me a chance to wish Miss Helen many, many more!

If you need a car, just remember to go see my friend **Janet Dodd** who is working for **Jerry Damson Acura/Honda**. Good Luck, Janet, I know you will do great!

My dear friend, **Loyd Tomlinson** of **Outback Restaurant**, is one smart fellow-- He now offers **Curb-Side Service** for all you folks whose lives are just too hectic to sit and stay awhile.

Way to go Loyd!

I sure am proud of some very special local kids-- the **Grissom High boys basketball team** and the **Butler High girls basketball team**. Both teams won 1st place in the state and I had the honor to invite them to my restaurant and feed them and their coaches. Of course, it goes without saying that our wonderful Mayor, **Ms. Lorretta**, was here for both breakfasts. I don't know how she does everything she does, but thank goodness she does it for Huntsville!

I sure was pleasantly surprised when my old friend and pen-pal walked in the other day bearing gifts for his favorite sweetheart... Me! It was **David Miller** who lives in Nashville now and works with **Community Health Systems**. David, I sure miss you and am lucky to have you for a friend!

Rumor has it that **Ann Blalock** is being courted by someone. Wonder who it could be? Stay tuned for further developments.

I sure enjoyed dinner the other night when some of us went to **IVY'S**. I saw my old friend, **Peggy**, and the food was great!

Everyone remember that we're having **Homecoming**, **May 2**, at **Twickenham Church of Christ**. Look forward to seeing everyone.

I think I heard that **Miss Roper**, of **Roper's Flowers**, had gone on a cruise. That lady knows how to work hard and still leave a little time to play. I sure am proud she's my friend.

My friend, **Susan Kirkland**, was bragging about **Tommy Brown** and **Bobby Allen**, from the city's Transportation Dept. She says they sure are nice to work with on the upcoming Wal-Mart Senior Expo. It's nice to know the city cares so much for its Seniors.

Looking forward to seeing most of you sometime this Summer. Take care, come see me and remember that I love you!

Janet Seamster

Low Carb and Loving It

Many of you have heard about the Dr. Atkins or Low-Carbohydrate diet. It's basically a high-protein diet with fat that excludes starches, sugars and some fruit juices. Lots have people have lost weight on this diet, kept it off, and believe it or not, experienced lower blood pressure and better cholesterol results. I went on it about 2 months ago and have lost, and kept off, 15 pounds (so far). Here are some of my favorite Lo-Carb recipes, starting with breakfast.

My favorite Coffee topping

1 pint whipping cream
1 capful almond extract
5 packets Equal

Whip up your cream with an electric mixer, when foamy add the extract and equal. Continue to beat on high til the cream is not hard, but creamy and has body. Taste to see if the sweetener is OK for you, if not add a packet or two more of Equal. To a fresh cup of coffee, I add a large tablespoon of the cream, sprinkle on a dab of cinnamon, and I'm in heaven.

Experiment with extracts--to date I've tried Black Walnut, Vanilla, Coconut and Maple (not together!). All of them are equally wonderful.

Cheesy Eggs with Chives

3 eggs
2 T. butter
1/4 t. garlic powder
1/4 c. cream cheese with chives
1 t. real bacon bits (not Bacos)

In a pan, melt your butter and garlic powder til it begins to foam. Mix up your eggs and pour them in, add the cream cheese in chunks over the eggs. When almost done add your bacon bits. Finish with a bit of fresh-ground pepper and serve hot.

Chicken Dijon

3 T. butter
4 chicken breasts, skinned
1/2 c. Chablis
1/4 t. tarragon
pinch of thyme
1 small basil leaf
1/2 t. each salt & pepper
2 egg yolks
2 t. sour cream
3 t. Dijon mustard
1/4 t. cayenne pepper (more if you like it hot!)

Melt your butter in a large frying pan, then add your chicken and cook, turning once, til browned on both sides.

Add the wine, tarragon, thyme, basil, salt & pepper. Bring to a boil and simmer, covered, for 45 minutes. Take out the bay leaf and remove the chicken to a platter, keep warm. With an egg beater, beat the eggs yolks into the liquid, then add sour cream, Dijon mustard and cayenne pep-

per. Heat and stir, but don't boil. Put the chicken back into the sauce, heat for 5 minutes and serve.

Spicy Cheese Ball

3/4 pound aged Cheddar Cheese
2 oz. crumbled blue cheese
4 oz. cream cheese
1/4 t. cayenne
1/4 c. chopped walnuts

Bring cheeses to room temp, beat for 3 minutes at medium speed and roll into a ball. Roll the ball in the chopped nuts, refrigerate and serve in an hour. (Serve with RyeVita or Wasa crackers).

Shrimp Scampi (Dr. Atkins recipe)

1 lb. shrimp, cleaned & deveined
1 t. vinegar
1/2 c. melted butter
4 cloves of garlic put through a crusher
1/8 t. minced chives
2 T. grated Parmesan cheese
lemon slices, cut up

Bring a large pot of water to a boil, with the vinegar added. Turn off heat, add the shrimp. Cover and put aside. Combine the butter, garlic and chives in a separate pan and cook for one melts. Add the Parmesan to the butter sauce, heat til the cheese melts. Drain the shrimp, put it in a baking dish and pour sauce over them. Bake at 300 for 5 minutes or so, serve with lots of lemon.

Creamy Spinach (Dr. Atkins recipe)

2 packages frozen chopped spinach
4 T. butter
1 clove garlic, crushed
1 t. onion powder
1/2 c. sour cream
1/3 c. grated Parmesan cheese
2 T. minced parsley
1 T. sesame seeds

Cook your spinach slightly, less than time instructed. Melt your butter in a skillet and add the spinach, garlic, onion powder, cook for 5 minutes.

Add the sour cream, cheese, sesame seeds and parsley. Heat, stirring til well mixed and hot.

Chocolate Balls (Dr. Atkins recipe)

1 c. heavy cream
1 T. cocoa
1 T. gelatin in 1 T. cold water
2 T. Skippy Chunky Peanut Butter
1 T. creme de cocoa
2 t. Wagner's Chocolate extract
2 t. brown Sugar Twin
1/4 c. finely chopped walnuts

Combine the heavy cream and cocoa in the tope of a double boiler. Heat til the cocoa melts. Add the gelatin that has been softened in the water, add peanut butter. Heat til it begins to boil and remove from the heat. Add the creme de cocoa, extract and sugar twin. Blend well. Freeze til it can be handled, shape into balls, roll in walnuts.

The Funeral of Amy Chapman

cont. from page 15

when she was tired, that she did not immediately force upon me some sort of payment in kind, a bucket of figs, eggs, or vegetables from her garden. When I heard that she was ill and went to her house to see if I could do anything for her, her son Hewey showed me a box of sweet potatoes washed clean of dirt which she had dug for me. And I remembered the last time I had seen her; when I had taken her home in my car, she had insisted against all my protests that she would bring me some potatoes soon for my kindness to her. Even in her illness she had thought to tell Hewey to be sure to give them to me.

She was born a slave on Governor Chapman's place. She learned to be a seamstress-- did sewing and weaving for her "Ole Miss." According to her own account, Governor Chapman was good to her, but he owned around three hundred slaves and had several plantations; and he spent most of his time with his family at Huntsville. One overseer he dismissed on learning that he treated the slaves with cruelty. But it was a white overseer, a Mr. Hewey Leman, who was the father of Aunt Amy's children. "I didn't want dat man, but he wuz de overseer an he beat me till I had ter have him – twarn't nuthin' else ter do," she told me once.

Mr. Leman (the overseer) was married and a curious relationship seems to have developed between his wife and Aunt Amy after Mrs. Leman became used to the situation. The couple took two of the children into their own home to live with them, Mr. Leman averring that since the scandal was out anyhow, he might as well own them! Before his death, he provided liberally for them, giving each a house and a piece of land. And when Mrs. Leman became seriously ill, it was Aunt Amy who nursed her till her death. One wonders about the Lemans-- what curious compulsions, what distorted forces of the human psyche motivated Hewey Leman? What fates compelled Mrs. Leman to accept a situation so hopelessly impossible?

She was too jealous of her independence to go and live with one of her married sons, and I was often anxious about her, wondering how she would manage if taken suddenly ill. But when illness came, her neighbors forgot her former aloofness of attitude and were kind. Several of them stayed with her to the end, taking turns sitting up with her at night and seeing to it that she was kept as comfortable as her condition would permit. And on a Wednesday afternoon on a lowering, threatening day, fifty or sixty of them accompanied her to her last resting place in the old Chapman burying-ground, a most out of the way and almost inaccessible place.

According to her wish, Aunt Amy was buried on the plantation where she was born. There, on top of a limestone hill commanding a splendid view in all directions of once proud acres, her sister was buried, and they dug her grave beside Aunt Mary's. A few stops down the hillside were other graves unmarked, members of her family who had gone before.

The burying was set for two o'clock. (According to custom the

actual interment is referred to as the "burying." The funeral is preached later on a Sunday to be appointed by the family, sometimes after a year or more has elapsed. In this case, Hewey told us that he had set the funeral for sometime soon "before cold weather set in," and that it would be held at the Baptist Church, of which Aunt Amy had been a member for over eighty years. But as I had taken the wrong turn and lost my way twice, I was late in arriving. Probably I would never have found the burying ground had not Hewey sighted me from the hill and sent a man to guide me. Even then, I had to abandon the car and cover the last part of the way on foot.

Several wagons and a Ford or two were drawn up on the hill at a respectful distance, screened by the cedars. The closer relatives were seated together on an automobile cushion placed on the ground to one side. Hewey came up to speak to me, then returned to take charge of the digging of the grave.

This was the responsibility of the friends of the family and fellow church members and they gave their time and labor to the sad duty. As only a few inches of topsoil covered the solid limestone, it was an arduous process. A strong Negro man hewed at the rock with his pick, working his way the length of the grave, then back again. Then, as he jumped out panting with exertion and covered with sweat, two young Negroes took his place with shovels, throwing the chips out in two mounds, one on each side of the grave. Some of the men worked with cigarettes drooping from their lips, but there was no disrespect in this, for they meant no disrespect.

The men assembled, alternated; when one became tired he handed his shovel to another who was rested and the digging went steadily on. A smaller boy disappeared down the hillside in the direction of the spring, and after a time came back with a bucket of water and a dipper, which were passed gratefully from hand to hand.

I had time to look about me and recognize the beauty of the scene. On all sides the land sloped away from the hill, disclosing pleasant valleys and peaceful hay fields touched with the first colors of autumn. At a farther distance rose other limestone hills crowned with the cedars so indigenous to this county, and against the horizon where black rain clouds lay, lightening flickered and the distant rumble of thunder could be heard. A damp breeze, unexpectedly cool, stirred my hair, and with its coming it was as though one could lay one's finger on a single moment out of time and say suddenly, "Fall has come, and it is no longer Summer."

I heard one of the men standing near the grave announce in a low voice that they had come to the "last tier," and moved over to speak to Hewey's wife who was leaning on her crutches, her broken ankle propped comfortably before her. She told me that two weeks before Aunt Amy had made the long trip to town to see them, "She said the spirits tole her to come see us, en I wuz afraid then that sumpin was gonna happen," she said.

Now the grave was finished, dug to the appointed depth of

four feet and its bottom leveled to hold the casket steady. In lieu of a trestle, a sapling was cut from the nearby thicket and laid across the grave lengthwise. Steadied on this, first the outer pine covering, then the coffin of light purple were lowered in, and silently the men threw in shovelfuls of dirt until it was covered and the grave a quarter filled.

Then began the simple burial service, in most respects equivalent to that read in white churches today. At its conclusion, the preacher lifted his voice in prayer which soon became a high-pitched, but melodious chant, the congregation joining in with "Amens." It was a very brief, but sincere and dignified service, and one which I am sure Aunt Amy would have wanted. The lavender casket, too, would have pleased her, as would the robe to match, which Hewey had selected.

Soon the men were again at work with their shovels filling in the grave. Each worker rested his spade against the mound's side, iron point in the soft earth and handles pointing toward the sky. The effect was strangely impressive, but when I asked about it later I was told only, "It is customary." The ritual apparently had been followed for many years that its significance had been lost with usage. To me it seemed symbolic, perhaps, of the toiler who has laid away his tools at last and come to rest.

The preacher asked if there were flowers to be placed on the grave, and I was pressed to come forward first with my bowl of zinnias which I placed at the head of the grave, levelling a place first with my hand so that the vase would stand upright without tilting. Then the others stepped forward one at a time with their drooping clusters of flowers mixed with short sprays of cedar. And whether following my lead, or in accordance with a custom of their own I do not know, these they did not lay on the rounded sides of the mound as one would have expected. Instead they made small hollows in the earth in which they placed their bouquets, so that they stood upright also.

We stood a moment with heads bowed while the preacher pronounced the benediction, then made our way back down the hill and across the peaceful hay fields of Aunt Amy's "homeplace." She had been returned to the soil from which she had sprung and was one with the land which she had loved so intensely.

Tips from Earlene

Did you know that fidgety people lose more weight than people who sit around? You burn more calories by being more active and moving around more. Makes sense, doesn't it? Start fidgeting!

If you don't sleep that well and notice dark circles under your eyes in the morning, why don't you try raising the front of your bed up by 1-2 inches? You can put a board under the two tops legs (under your head) or get casters that fit under them. It makes a difference.

When traveling, always put a towel in the tub before you take a shower. Often times the tubs are very slick and the towels will prevent you from slipping.

If you put all the stuff you want to take to work with you in the morning in one "to-go" spot, you will begin checking that spot every morning and not forget things.

Spring is here, but if you still get chilled at night invest in a good goose down comforter-- you wouldn't believe how warm and cozy you feel under one of those.

If someone you don't know calls you to tell you to move your money to a bond fund in preparation for the millennium, DON'T do it. This is the latest of frauds intended for older people and they are using fear to defraud you of your money. Remember to NOT give anyone information about your money or credit cards over the phone, ever.

There is a wonderful cookie recipe using almond brickle that I have recently put out on our web site. Go take a look-- it's awesome-- "oldhuntsville.com".

Put your bathroom light on a dimmer - that way you don't blind yourself in the middle of the night when you use the bathroom.

A very good marinade for steak is lemon juice, Dale's sauce and Worcestershire with a bit of garlic powder thrown in. Measure equal amounts in a ziploc bag, throw in your steak and let it marinade in your fridge overnight. Cook over hot coals on your grill and your friends will come over to see what you're cooking!

The Story of John Hunt

For well over a hundred years, John Hunt, the founder of Huntsville, has been shrouded in mystery. *Where did he come from?* What kind of a man was he? And perhaps the biggest question has always been, "What happened to him?"

Most writers have always claimed that Hunt left the city shortly after its founding, perhaps in search of another adventure, and was never heard from again. Amazingly, the same people wrote that little was known about John Hunt and portrayed him as a poor illiterate back woodsman who just happened to be in the right place at the right time.

Unfortunately for generations of people who have accepted these written words, nothing could be farther from the truth.

John Hunt was born in 1750 in Fincastle County, Virginia, to parents of Irish and Dutch descent. His family first migrated to America in 1635 and after living in New Jersey and Maryland moved to Virginia around 1730. The family appears to have been fairly prosperous. In 1752, records show that a man by the name of Thomas Foster was appointed constable in the home of John Hunt, Sr.

Among the families living in Fincastle County were the Acklins, Holbrooks and Larkins. Many of these families would later play prominent roles in the early development of Huntsville.

In 1769, John Hunt married the daughter of William Holbrook, a close friend of his father. The following year the Holbrook family moved to Hawkins County, North Carolina and John moved with them.

Within a few years the Larkins and Acklin families had joined them in the new settlement.

With the advent of the Revolutionary War many of the settlers took up arms to fight for their new country. Many historians would later contend that John Hunt served as a captain during the war. This mistaken claim would later lead to confusion in trying to establish Hunt's early years. In fact, Hunt's only military service consisted of several month's enlistment as a private under Captain Charles Polk of the Company of Light Horses, in Salisbury District, North Carolina.

Although John did not see much service, records seem to indicate that his father was a member of the Colonial army while his uncle served as a Colonel in the British army. Short service periods of a few months were common in North Carolina as the settlers had crops and Indians to deal with and could not be gone for long periods of time.

At the end of his short military career, Hunt returned to his home in Hawkins County. Young John and his wife probably lost several children at childbirth, as it was not until eight years after their marriage that they had their first recorded child.

In 1779, John Hunt was appointed a lieutenant in the state militia, serving as a paymaster. As the young community grew in size, the North Carolina government began to realize the need for some type of civic jurisdiction. John Hunt had established himself as a leader of the community and in 1786 was appointed the first sheriff of Hawkins County. It was required at that time for a sheriff to post a bond as a prerequisite to taking office. The bond, in the amount of "1000 pounds current money" signed by John Hunt and four sureties, can still be seen at the North Carolina Archives, located in Raleigh.

In 1789, when North Carolina voted to ratify the Constitution, John Hunt was a delegate at the convention. One year later, in 1790, when North Carolina ceded the lands west of the Allegheny Mountains, John Hunt was made a captain of the militia by William Blount, the newly appointed governor of the territory, The duties of a captain in the militia and a sheriff had many similarities in the sense that they were both charged with keeping the peace, and as Hunt's term of sheriff had just expired, he was a logical choice. As he was also the first and only sheriff at the time, he was probably the only choice.

Everyone living in the territory had heard stories about the new, rich land lying across the Clinch River. This was Indian land and supposedly protected from settlement by the treaties with the federal government. Regardless, many families, ignoring the treaties, began to move into the new lands.

John Hunt, along with the Acklins and Larkins moved across the river in the mid 1790s into an area known as the Powell River Valley. Years later this community would become known as

Tazewell, Tennessee, and John Hunt would be recognized as the founder.

Many stories have been written about the romantic frontiersmen who were bitten with wanderlust. Legends have us believe that the early pioneers kept moving to escape the confines of civilization, constantly moving to see what lay over the next mountain range.

Nothing could be further from the truth. In reality, greed was the motivating factor.

In Tennessee, Alabama and Georgia vast areas had been set aside as Indian territories. Although these areas were supposedly protected by federal law, it did not prevent "squatters" from settling. These squatters knew that it would only be a matter of time before the government recognized their rights and then they could gain possession of large tracts by simply paying a registration fee. If they settled on the right land, with a little luck, they could become wealthy. Basically it was a get-rich-quick scheme that worked for many people.

The other alternative was to wait until the lands had been "opened" for settlement and bid for them at auction. Few pioneers could afford to acquire prime land in this manner.

John Hunt had carved a respectable homestead out of the wilderness when he learned, to his dismay, in 1797, that president John Adams had sent 800 federal troops to evict the settlers. In an attempt to stall his eviction, and probably using his title of Captain in the Tennessee State Militia to help his cause, he wrote the newly-elected governor, John Sevier, asking for help.

On November 25, 1797, Governor Sevier wrote Hunt:

"Yours of yesterday I am honored with and am sincerely sorry for your embarrassed situation, and would I, to God, I had it in my power to render you relief. You may assure yourself that everything will be done for you that is possible for me, but it is in the President's own power to do whatever he may think best on this very important and alarming occasion.

I hope in three or four weeks to hear from Congress and whether or not anything is likely to be done in your favor. In the meantime, I earnestly beg the people, for their own interest, to conduct themselves in a peaceable, orderly, and prudent manner."

Shortly afterwards, the squatters' claims were recog-

nized. By 1801, the land John Hunt had settled became part of Claiborne County. When the new community held its first election, David Rodgers was elected sheriff; but was unable to post bond. Hunt was elected in his place. There were no facilities for the new government in Tazewell at the time so the first term of court was held in the home of John Hunt. (This log cabin later became the first school in Tazewell.)

John Hunt appears to have been living a fairly contented and prosperous life. He had recently given land for a church and was a well respected figure in the community. His daughter, Elizabeth, had married Samuel Black Acklin, the son of his old friend, Samuel Acklin. The newly married couple made their home with John and the rest of the family.

This was a busy time for Hunt. Besides serving as sheriff, he was also heavily involved in land speculation and running a stagecoach inn. Bishop Ashbury, in his travels through the South, spoke of staying and preaching at Hunt's Tavern.

Even though the Hunt family had prospered, John was already looking to the future. Hunt, along with the Larkins and many other families, had staked everything on Tazewell's future. The town simply refused to grow. The land was poor for farming and the community itself provided no incentive for commerce. The only thing the town had going for it was its close proximity to the Cumberland Gap, "gateway to the western lands."

By the time Hunt's term of sheriff was up on September 1, 1804, he had already made plans to leave Tazewell. For the previous six months he had been selling off land holdings that he owned in Tazewell and the adjoining areas and had acquired the amazing sum of almost $40,000.00 in preparation for moving.

Popular legend tells us that he went south in search of a big spring he had heard stories of. Again, the truth is much simpler. There were already rumors that territory belonging to Indians in what is now North Alabama would be opened for settlement. Anyone already living there would probably be able to exercise their squatters' rights by paying a small registration fee. Everyone else would have to purchase their land at a public auction, which by its very nature tended to drive land prices up.

John Hunt was determined to have squatter's rights.

Early in September, 1804, John Hunt and Andrew Bean left their cabin in East Tennessee and struck out into the wilds on foot (not on horseback, as many historians have claimed). They traveled in a southwestward direction, guided only by the sun and the stars. Almost a month later they arrived at the stream of water now known as Bean's Creek, at a spot near where Salem, Tennessee, now stands. At that place they made camp for several days in order to make observations and investigate the surrounding country.

Traveling further south the explorers came upon the newly completed cabin of Joseph Criner near the Mountain Fork of Flint River. Criner and his brother, Isaac, were the first white settlers in this area. According to later accounts given by Criner, Hunt and Bean spent the night and inquired about land further south. It was at this time that Hunt first heard of the big spring.

John Hunt and Andrew Bean were not the first white persons to reach the spring. Earlier, in 1802, John Ditto had built a crude shack there and camped for a short while before moving southward to the Tennessee River, where he opened a trading post. When Hunt arrived, he found the beginnings of a cabin that Samuel Davis had started. Unfortunately, Davis, in his haste to return to Georgia for his family, left the cabin unfinished and when he returned found Hunt had completed the cabin and was living in it.

The cabin was a rough one-room affair. People searching for it today will find only a parking lot across from the present-day Huntsville Utilities.

The area where John Hunt settled would be beyond comprehension to a resident of Huntsville today. The area above the bluff, where the courthouse now stands, though reasonably flat, was a maze of thick vines and bushes. Below the spring, between where Meadow Gold Dairy and Huntsville Hospital are now located, was a swampy wilderness teeming with deer, bears, geese and rabbits.

After hastily completing Davis' cabin (frontier law did not recognize a squatter's claims unless a home was built on it), Hunt and Bean turned their sights north. Bean had decided to settle near Salem, Tennessee, and Hunt returned to Tazewell for his family.

The early spring of 1805 found Hunt occupied in selling off the remainder of his land around Tazewell and making preparations to move his family to the "Big Spring." His daughter, Elizabeth and her husband, were selected to remain in Tazewell until the stagecoach Inn could be sold. Other families, upon hearing of John's upcoming departure, also made plans to move. Accompanying Hunt when he returned to the spring was his wife and three of his sons; William, George and Samuel, as well as members of the Larkin and Black families.

It was early summer in 1805 when Hunt returned with his family. He spent most of that summer clearing and fencing a small field, which lay in what is now the best part of the city of Huntsville, running from Gates Street as far south as Franklin. The land was exceedingly fertile and produced bountifully in re-

turn for little labor. William would recall years later how he had killed a bear between the present location of the Regions Bank and the courthouse while clearing the field.

The brave old pioneer, scout and hunter was now happily fixed; his farm gave him employment during the spring and summer. Hunting, fishing, dressing meats and skins occupied his time in the fall and winter, Other pioneers were coming in and settling in other parts of the county. Neighbors were few and highly valued in those primitive days. When the proper time arrived in the fall, all the hunters for miles around went out together to lay in their stores of meat for the year. Whenever a settler died, his family continued to share in the proceeds of the hunt when a division was made, a proportionate share of bear and deer meat was always taken to the families of widows. These rough men knew charity as well as courage. Legend has it that John Hunt was always foremost in providing for the poor and helpless. One Christopher Black, an Irishman, who assisted Hunt in removing his family from East Tennessee, was famous for delivering game to the fatherless and the widows.

Hunt's Station, as the spring was now called, was fast becoming the center of the community. More and more settlers were pouring into the valley. Much evidence suggests that Hunt, who had already enlarged his cabin, ran a public house at this time where a traveler might get a meal, purchase a few basic supplies or even spend the night. This probably explains the persistent rumor today that Hunt operated a shop that sold castor oil. In 1807, his daughter Elizabeth, moved to Huntsville from Tazewell along with her children, husband and five slaves after successfully disposing of the inn in Tazewell.

Congress had already called for a land sale, with squatters being given preemptive rights to one section of land each. With the Hunts occupying the best land in the county, it seemed as if their fortunes were made. Unfortunately, when the sales were held it was discovered that John Hunt had not registered his claims. The wealthy planter, LeRoy Pope, outbid the other purchasers and ended up with legal title to all of John Hunt's dreams. Hunt was forced to move from his beloved Big Spring.

Family histories claim that Hunt did not travel to Nashville for the land sales. According to Hunt's descendants, Pope had promised to purchase the land in Hunt's behalf but instead took title to it in his own name. This act supposedly caused a bitter feud among different factions in Huntsville that lasted for years.

Oddly, while researching this story we talked to Hunt descendants from all across the country and while many of them did not know one another, they had all heard variations of the same story.

With all the prime land in Huntsville already taken, Hunt purchased a quarter section of land far outside of town by paying eighty dollars as down payment. This parcel was located

approximately where the old airport on South Parkway is now. His daughter and son-in-law purchased the adjoining land.

Pope had forced the name of Twickenham upon the new community, but many people resented the fact that he had bought Hunt's land. One of the first actions the new city government took was to change the name to Huntsville, in honor of the intrepid pioneer.

The next few years of Hunt's life are well-documented. He joined the Masonic Lodge, served on juries and was appointed coroner. In 1809 he sold his land to Abasalom Looney.

Hunt was an old man now, and according to family histories, moved in with his daughter and son-in-law. Like old men everywhere, Hunt probably spent his last days recounting tales of when he was young and adventurous, hopefully surrounded by his grandchildren.

On February 27, 1822, John Hunt died at the age of 72. He was buried in the Acklin graveyard, now known as the Sively graveyard, a short distance from where he spent his final days.

There was never any mystery about what happened to John Hunt until the latter part of the 1800s when Judge Taylor wrote in his history of Huntsville that Hunt left the city shortly after the land sales. This part was true, he moved outside of town. Unfortunately, later historians copied Taylor's work and elaborated on it without doing any original research. Now, instead of merely moving from town, the new version stated that Hunt left the state. Other historians took this version and elaborated on it even more until finally, a mystery was born.

Sadly, while people were perpetuating the myth of Hunt's disappearance, they ignored the papers of his son who was a state legislator in Missouri. Also ignored was a firsthand account of the Indian wars, on file at the State Library in Nashville, that described how a scout spent the night at John Hunt's cabin before crossing the river the next morning to join Andrew Jackson's troops. Another account by an early riverboat captain clearly showed that Hunt was still a well-known resident of Madison County in 1820.

Probably the most glaring evidence of Hunt remaining in Huntsville comes from an 1878 Huntsville newspaper story which detailed his life and actually gave the date and details of his death. Many people have dismissed the article for various reasons-- mostly because it did not agree with their version, but none of them ever bothered to look at the masthead of the paper.

The editor was Ben Hunt, John Hunt's grandson. Even the most naive person would have to assume that he probably knew what happened to his own family.

Ironically, the grave of John Hunt, the man who founded Huntsville and who settled on some of its most beautiful land, was buried next to the entrance of the present-day city dump. According to a long time city employee much of the land around the small cemetery was graded and used in the construction of the new city stadium.

"Ol' John Hunt," said the employee, "is now probably playing third base at Joe Davis Stadium."

Know Your Rights

Revocation of Acceptance, an Overlooked Remedy for Defective Goods

Even if you buy a used car or other consumer goods on an "as is" basis without any express or implied warranties whatsoever, a buyer may still be able to revoke acceptance. Just a letter or oral statement can be enough to cancel the sale. If valid, the revocation allows cancellation of the debt, recovery of all amounts paid, and recovery of incidental or consequential damages. If there is a warranty, that can be additional grounds for non-conformity with the contract.

The following legal conditions apply:

*The nonconformity must substantially impair the value of the goods to the buyer, for the purpose for which it was bought. The defect must be substantial, not trivial.

* The buyer must have been justifiably unaware of that nonconformity at the time of acceptance, or, if the buyer knew about it, reasonably assumed the seller would cure it;

* Revocation must be done within a reasonable time after the buyer discovers or should have discovered the nonconformity, or after the seller fails in trying to correct the problem;

* The goods must be in essentially the same condition as when delivered except for damages caused by the non-conformity; and

*The buyer must notify the seller of the revocation.

Upon revocation, if necessary, the buyer can even resell the goods and apply the proceeds from the sale to what the seller owes. Also, after a valid revocation, repossession by the seller is wrongful. However, revocation by the buyer may still occur after a repossession by the seller, providing a positive recovery for a consumer.

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John Hunt Morgan, Thunderbolt of the Confederacy

John Hunt Morgan was the Confederate cavalryman whose unit was celebrated for the endurance, speed, daring and success of their raids. Morgan was born on June 1, 1825 in Huntsville Alabama. His family moved to a farm just outside of Lexington, Kentucky when he was around 6 years old. Morgan attended Transylvania University (Lexington) and lived with his grandfather, John Hunt, at his home, which is called Hopemont. Morgan left the university and volunteered to fight in the Mexican War, serving honorably as a lieutenant in the Kentucky Mounted Volunteers from 1846-47. On his return from the war to Kentucky in 1847, he became a merchant and proprietor of a hemp and woolen mill. He took active part in civic affairs as well as political affairs. He was a Mason and on the Volunteer Fire Department, where he served as captain. In 1857, Morgan founded the Lexington Rifles, a home guard unit. Kentucky remained neutral during the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, but citizens of Lexington began choosing sides. Morgan flew a Confederate flag over his hemp factory and an order for his arrest was made.

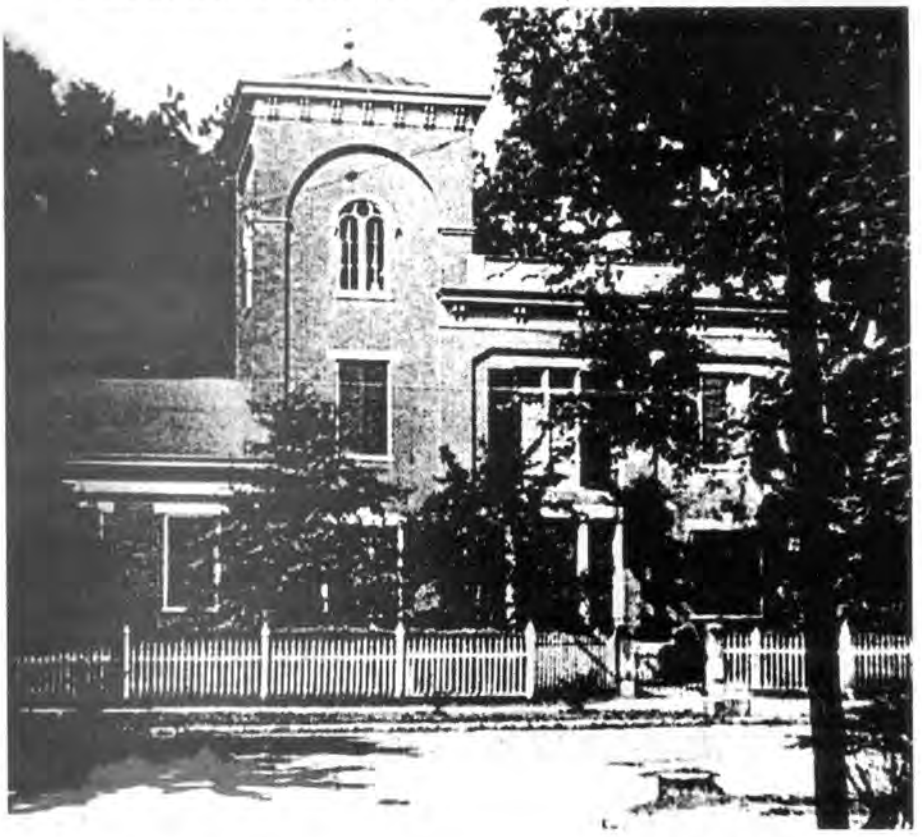
Morgan, forced by this order, fled, taking with him his Lexington Rifles weapons and most of the members of the same. Joining the Confederacy, Morgan became a captain of a squadron in the Second Kentucky Cavalry assigned to scouting under the command of General Buckner.

In April of 1862, just before Shiloh, Morgan was promoted to Colonel and his command participated in the battle. That July he launched the first of his major raids. During the following months, he made a series of raids in Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, Indiana and Ohio, which made up his Great Raid.

He second raid was called the Christmas Raid. It began in December of 1862 at Hartsville, Tennessee, where he took 1,700 Federal prisoners. Two important things happened before this raid. He was promoted to Brigadier General, and he married Martha Ready of Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Morgan marched his 1,700 prisoners back through the streets of Murfreesboro, past the house where his Southern-patriot bride resided, and presented her with this procession as a wedding gift.

Morgan began his next and most famous raid in June of 1863, where he led 2,000 men on an 1,100 mile ride into Ohio. This was farther north into Federal territory in the Western theater than any other Confederate force had marched. The men did much damage to property and

Below: Home where John Hunt Morgan was born.



the North's morale, but Morgan's men were so exhausted that they were eventually captured.

Morgan and a few of his officers were sent to the Ohio State Penitentiary instead of prisoner of war camps, and were treated as common criminals. After four months, Morgan and five other officers escaped and made their way back to the Southern lines. His escape took place on November 27, 1863.

Morgan was honored by the cities of Richmond and Atlanta during January and February of 1864. The public adored him and gave him the name, "Thunderbolt of the Confederacy."

Morgan's dismounted cavalry tactics were admired by the military and yet they did not quite understand the freedom Morgan was given. John Hunt Morgan was one of the first in the War to use guerrilla warfare effectively. He continued his raids in Kentucky and Tennessee, which were marked as before by the swiftness with which he struck, the destruction of property, the taking of prisoners, and supplies and general mayhem for the North.

In September 1864, during a surprise raid at Greeneville, Tennessee, Morgan was shot and killed while surrendering. His command was surprised by a force of the enemy under General Gillem's command. Morgan's body was identified by both Army's officers, his brother-in- law, Basil Duke and his wife. The body was sent to Abingdon where his wife, expecting their first and only child, was staying. The funeral was one of the largest of the War, with mounted troops escorting the coffin. He was put to rest in an above ground vault. Later, he was moved to Richmond where he lay in state in the Capitol and was buried in the Hollywood Cemetery.

After the War, he was moved to Lexington Cemetery in Kentucky, where he rests beside his parents and brothers. Morgan's daughter, Johnnie, was born after his death. She died at the age of 23 and left no direct heirs.

After his death, Basil Duke commented that, "the glory has gone from the war."

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Corp. Roy Brown Wears Decoration For Valor

Twent-five local men from 366th Infantry arrive in town

Decatur, 1919: About twenty-five colored soldiers from the Twin Cities, veterans of a strenuous campaign in France, returned Sunday from overseas. Clad in khaki, with their steel helmets attached to their bulging packs, and looking fit and fine, the men attracted considerable attention as they emerged from the train, and as they swung through the streets with a jaunty military air.

The returning soldiers were for the most part attached to Company E, 366th U.S. Infantry, Buffalo division. They "went over the top" on four different occasions, the last time being the day the armistice was signed – November 11 – when the company lost two men.

Conspicuous among the veterans was Corp. Roy A. Brown, of Decatur, who was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for gallantry in action. He was one of the very few Morgan county soldiers thus decorated, and perhaps the only negro from this immediate section to win the coveted distinction.

Among the men who returned was Alonzo Mattison, son of Henry Mattison; Rastus Malone, formerly with Johnson's barber shop; Will Walker and Corp. Brown.

At the newspaper office this morning, Mattison, Walker and Brown told of their experiences abroad.

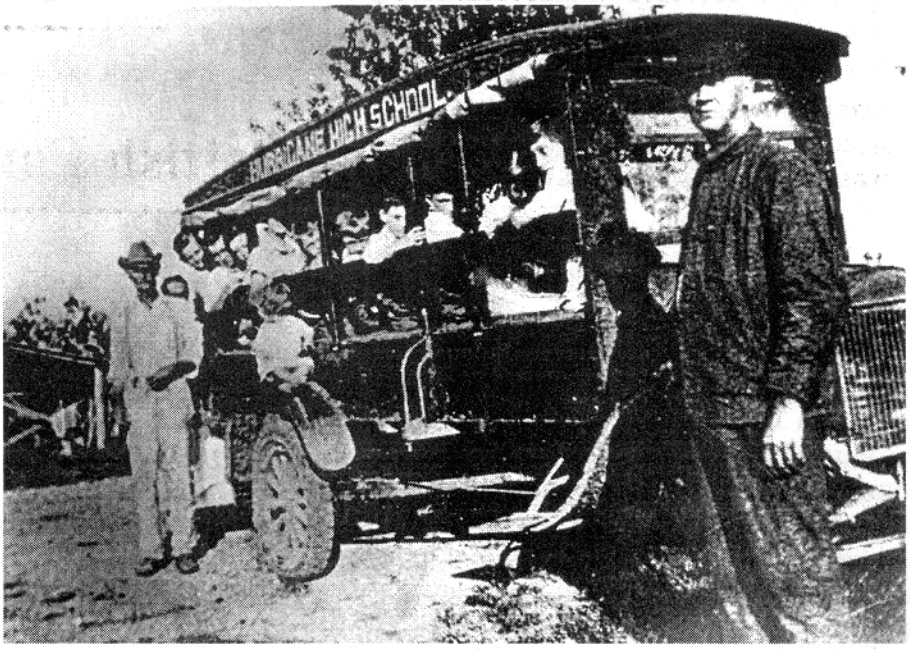
"The Alabama troops, whether white or black, won a reputation in France, not only for bravery in battle but also for courtesy and kindness," said Mattison. "It will be a long time before the French people quit talking about the Alabamians."

The reception extended the veterans at New York and other American cities was highly praised. The citizens of Gotham, and especially the Red Cross, showed them many courtesies and gave them a royal welcome back to their native soil.

All of the men insist that the U.S.A. is good enough for them. "I wouldn't give a yard of United States for all of France," was the declaration of Corp. Brown.

Memories

by Ruby Crabbe



Hurricane Creek schoolbus circa 1923

This is a story about a man by the name of Isaac Crabbe.

Isaac worked for Mr. E. P. Miller well over half his life. He was one of the most honest people you could ever meet. His word was his bond. When he told you something you didn't have to wonder about it. He simply stated the fact. The feed store in Huntsville that used to be on Meridian Street was the last place of his employment.

Like a lot of people he liked what he called "A little nip," and like a lot of other people, sometimes he didn't really have the money for that "little nip." He always carried a little black book in his overall pocket and when he borrowed money from someone he put their name in the book and he wrote down how much money he owed them.

Isaac was born in the beautiful Hurricane Valley in the year of 1916. His mother died when he was only a year old and it was left up to the other family members to teach him the value of being honest towards his fellow man. His Dad, Oscar, drove the Hurricane school bus, and they also farmed the land belonging to Mr. Nance. Life on the farm was hard work for the Crabbe family. They worked from sunup til sundown tilling the rich soil of the farm. When Isaac was just nine years old he could plow as well as any grown man. He would have to stand on his "tip toes" to see over the plow handles.

Now if my memory serves me right, I believe Isaac said he and his two sisters worked that 40 acre farm themselves. Of course their Dad helped when he wasn't

driving the school bus, but mostly it was left up to the children to see that everything that needed doing was done. Isaac was only a boy and his sisters were only a few years older. Isaac had one other brother but he had left home and was working on a farm adjacent to the Nance farm.

When the school bus was not being used it stayed in the school yard. Every morning Mr. Crabbe would drive his little flivver to the school and take Isaac with him to drive back home. Isaac would always stand up while driving the car because he couldn't reach he pedals if he sat down.

When school let out in the evenings Isaac and his sisters rode the bus home, changed clothes and then hit the cotton patch. Isaac would pick 250 or 300 pounds of cotton before nightfall.

Sometimes Mr. Oscar would be called up to play his violin at country dances.

It seems unbelievable but wild cats were plentiful in those days and sometimes Mr. Oscar would have to walk backward so he could keep the cats off him by hitting them with his violin case. Isaac also learned to play the violin at the age of 7. Later as an adult he played his violin at the Snuff Dipper's Ball in Huntsville. Monte Crowder, Joe Sharp and all the other musicians were dear friends of Isaac.

One day Mr. Crabbe told the family to start packing all their belongings because they were moving to town. He had gotten a job as night watchman at Mr. Miller's Cotton gin. After all that hard farm work for those years those children thought they were moving to Paradise.

After the move one of the sisters got a job in the Lincoln tex-

cont. on page 38

Husband of local woman may be British Foreign Secretery

Report Says Lord Curzon to Succeed Balfour

London, March 11, 1919. The report that Lord Curzon would succeed Balfour continued to circulate today

The above announcement is of much interest locally because of the marriage of Lord Curzon to Mrs. G. Elvina Duggan, widow of Alfred Duggan and eldest daughter of the late J. Monroe Hinds, formerly of Decatur. Mrs. Curzon was born in the old McEntire home on the banks of the Tennessee river and lived in Huntsville during her early life. Several relatives at present make their home in Decatur. Mr. Hinds was United States Marshal for a number of years at Decatur. Mrs. Curzon's maiden name was Gracie and she was the eldest of three children. Several local women were classmates of Mrs. Curzon when she attended school here.

Travels Through Alabama

by Booker T. Washiongton

Born a slave, Booker T. Washington became the greatest leader of the Negro race in America. Trained at Hampton Institute he early became convinced that his race must achieve economic independence before he could attain political equality. Idolized by his own people, he was trusted too by the whites, and the great Kentucky editor, Henry Watterson, said of him that "no man, since the war of sections, has exercised such influence and done such real good for the country – especially to the South."

I REACHED Tuskegee, as I have said, early in June, 1888. The first month I spent in handing accommodations for the school and in traveling through Alabama, examining into the actual life of the people, especially in the country districts, and in getting the school advertised among the class of people that I wanted to have attend it. The most of my traveling was done over the country roads with a mule and a cart or a mule and a buggy wagon for conveyance.

I ate and slept with the people in their little cabins. I saw their farms, their schools, their churches. Since in the case of the most of these visits there had been no notice given in advance that a stranger was expected, I had the advantage of seeing the real, everyday life of the people.

In the plantation districts I found that as a rule the whole family slept in one room and that in addition to the immediate family there sometimes were relatives, or others not related to the family, who slept in the same room. On more than one occasion I went outside the house to get ready for bed or to wait until the family had gone to bed. They usually contrived some kind of place for me to sleep, either on the floor or in a special part of another's bed. Rarely was there any place provided in the cabin where one could bathe even the face and hands, but usually some provision was made for this outside the house, in the yard.

The common diet of the people was fat pork and corn bread. At times I have eaten in cabins where they had only corn bread and black-eye peas cooked in plain water. The people seemed to have no other idea than to live on this fat meat and corn bread, the meat and the meal of which the bread was made having been bought at a high price at a store in town, notwithstanding the fact that the land all about the cabin homes could easily have been made to produce nearly every kind of garden vegetable that is raised anywhere in the country. Their one object seemed to be to plant nothing but cotton, and in many cases cotton was planted up to the very door of the cabin.

In these cabin homes I often found sewing machines which had been bought, or were being bought, on installments, frequently at a cost of as much as sixty dollars, or showy clocks for which the occupants of the cabins had paid twelve or fourteen dollars. I remember that on one occasion when I went into one of these cabins for dinner, when I sat down to the table for a meal with the four members of the family, I noticed that, while there were five of us at the table, there was but one fork for the five of us to use. Naturally there was an awkward pause on my part. In the opposite corner of that same cabin was an organ for which the people told me they were paying sixty dollars in monthly installments. One fork and a sixty-dollar organ!

With a few exceptions I found that the crops were mortgaged in the counties where I went and that the most of the colored farmers were in debt. The state had not been able to build schoolhouses in the country districts, and as a rule the schools were taught in churches or in log cabins. More than once while on my journeys I found that there was no provision made in the house used for school purposes for heating the building during the winter, and consequently a fire had to be built in the yard and teacher and pupils passed in and out of the house as they got cold or warm. With few exceptions I found the teachers in these country schools to be miserably poor in preparation for their work and poor in moral character.

The schools were in session from three to five months. There was practically no apparatus in the schoolhouses except that occasionally there was a rough blackboard. I recall that one day I went into a schoolhouse – or rather into an abandoned log cabin that was being used as a schoolhouse – and found five pupils who were studying a lesson from one book. Two of these, on the front seat, were using the book between them; behind these were two others peeping over the shoulders of the first two, and behind the four was a fifth little fellow who was peeping over the shoulders of all four. What I have said concerning the character of the schoolhouses and teachers will also apply quite accurately as a description of the church buildings and the ministers.

Memories

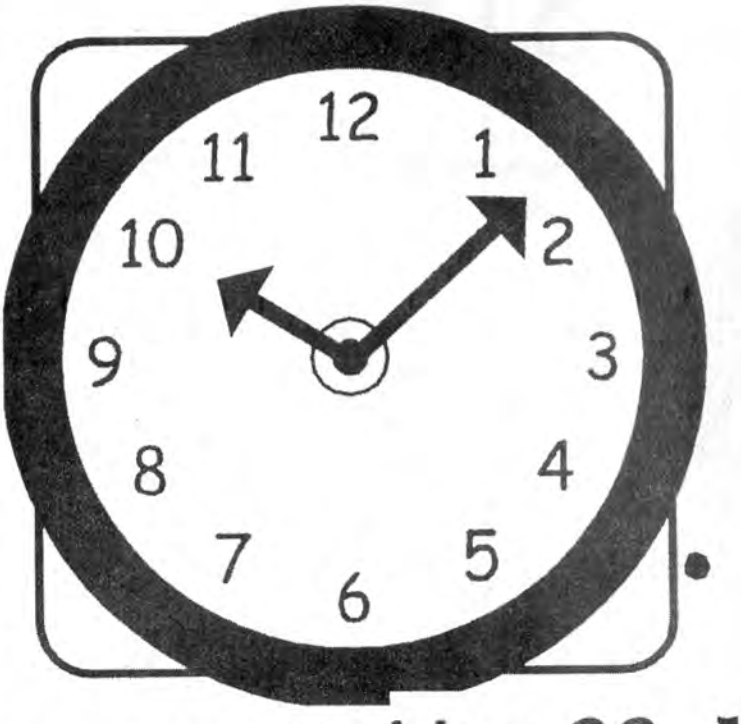
cont. from page 35

tile mill. Isaac also worked as a night watchman. Since he worked at night and went to school 5 days a week he didn't have much time to study his books. He would prop a book upon his desk, kind of slouch down between the book and the teacher thought he was studying his lessons. What the teacher didn't know was he was sleeping behind the book.

Isaac Crabbe died April 21, 1994. The lesson he taught his children will never be forgotten. The principles he taught them will be passed on down to the next generations, and to other generations that are to come.

Rock-N-Roll Reunion

Turn Back The Hands of Time



4:00 P.M. - 1:00 A.M. **May 22, 1999**

- *For a walk down memory lane - plan to attend the 8th annual Rock-N-Roll Reunion at the Huntsville Hilton. Tickets are $20.00 per person and will only be sold at the door.*
- *Room package available at the Hilton.*
- *Listen to WAHR 99 to win tickets!*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