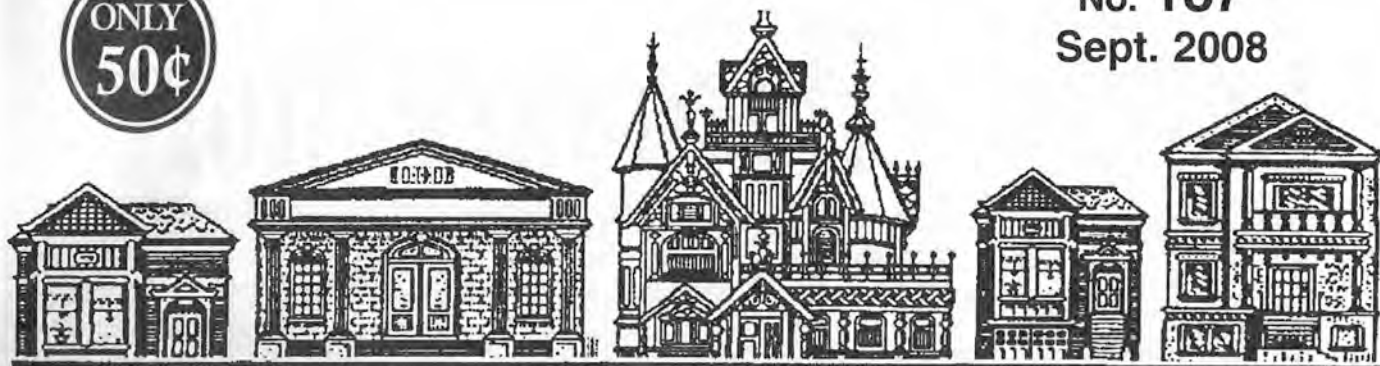


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Sept. 2008



# Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY



## Carry Me Home

The day they buried Mister John was a perfect day for a funeral, if there is such a thing. There was just enough chill in the air to make you thankful that the cold days of winter had passed. Light wispy clouds seemed to hover in the sky like angels waiting to greet their brethren.

Brother Luke preached a hell, fire and brimstone sermon about a "good God-loving man," members of his church saying "Amen" and "Hallelujah" at the appropriate times.

Also in this issue: The Hurricane Valley Popcorn Company

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*Domie Lewter*  
*Mac Lewter*

# Carry Me Home

Louise Pulley was sitting on the porch stringing beans when she first noticed the old black man. He was sitting under a tree about halfway down the long driveway between the house and Meridian Street, not moving, just staring at the house and the lands around it. He was dressed in an old threadbare black suit that somehow still retained a certain amount of elegance, and his hair was as white as newly-picked cotton.

At first Louise didn't think anything of it. This was the Great Depression and hobos and tramps often wandered over from the nearby railroad in search of a handout.

Once she finished stringing the beans she turned her attention to preparing dinner. Occasionally she would glance out the window to see if the old man had moved, but he was always there, just staring at the house as if lost in thought.

At dinner that evening Louise told her husband, Claude, about the strange old man. Claude nodded his head, say-

ing that he had noticed the man when he had left for work that morning but had paid no attention to him. After talking for a few minutes, and looking out the window to see if he was still there, they decided to confront the stranger.

As they started out the door Louise suddenly darted to the kitchen where she filled a large fruit jar with lemonade. "He's been sitting there all day," she explained, "and I know he hasn't had anything to drink."

The couple waited patiently as the stranger took big gulps from the fruit jar. Finally, with his thirst quenched, the old man leaned back on the tree trunk and explained his purpose there. He didn't want to alarm no one, he said. "I just wanted to sit here and remember."

"You been here before?" asked Claude.

"Oh, yes," replied the stranger with a weak smile. "This place is my home. I was born right up there in the big house, in that room on the

**"I'm re-tired. I was tired yesterday, and I'm tired again today."**

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bottom right. I just wanted to come back and see it one more time 'fore I died."

Claude looked at the old man with disbelief. He knew the history of the house. It had belonged to John Tate Lowry during the Civil War and was passed down to his son, Sam Lowry, who married Claude's aunt, Lucy Pulley. Aunt Lucy had been a widow for years and lived in a small cottage in town. Rather than let the house stay empty, she had talked Claude and Louise into moving in and taking care of it. In all the stories associated with the house, he had never heard of any black person being born in it. Nevertheless, he let the old man continue his story.

"My Mama, she belonged to Mister John Lowry. She wasn't but about fourteen years old when she got big with me. When it got to be her time she had a terrible fit, screaming and hollering and hurting something awful. I recon Miss Lowry took pity on her 'cause she moved Mama into the big house where she could take care of her. That's where I was born. Miss Lowry, she said I was the 'stubbornness baby she ever seen so she started calling me Mister John, cause she said her husband was the same way. And I been Mister John ever since."

Mister John paused to take another drink from the fruit jar

and to catch his breath before continuing.

"Mister Lowry, he was good to me. He never put me to work in the fields, I just did chores around the house and ran errands. When I got to be bigger he taught me how to drive a horse and buggy and I drove him everywhere he went."

"When the War came along and Mister Lowry went off to fight, he wanted to take me with him but Miss Lowry, she threw a fit and said that she needed me to stay. The worst thing that ever happened to me was when I left."

Louise interrupted Mister John, "If you liked it so much here, why did you run away?"

A look of annoyance and anger flashed briefly across the old man's wrinkled face. "I didn't run away! I got captured!" He continued his story by telling how he had been sent to town one morning to fetch a load of fire wood when the Yankees stopped him and ordered him to a nearby warehouse where he was loaded with bales of cotton. He was then ordered to join a large

**"Hey, you must have been doing about 125 to keep up with me. Good Job!"**

*What you Don't want to say to a cop who pulled you over*

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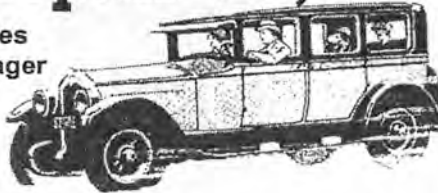
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wagon train hauling cotton to Nashville.

"When I got to Nashville they sent me to Kentucky and then they had me hauling supplies for the army. I recon I traveled about every road there was back then, going here and there with everyone always in a big hurry. After the fighting stopped, I ended up in Cleveland, Ohio where I met my wife. She already had Jesus and she helped me get Him too, so I done spent my whole life preaching the word. She died about ten years ago and I just been walking every since, spreading the word. I came back here one time when I was a young man but the house was empty so I just kept on going."

For the first time Claude noticed an old worn Bible in Mister John's hand. "You know how to read that?"

Mister John looked solemn as he answered, "No sir, I can't read but I done preached enough so I know every word by heart."

By the time he had finished his story, the sun was beginning to dip below the horizon. Louise asked Mister John where he was going to spend the night.

A gentle smile seemed to play on the old man's lips as he replied. "I'll just find me a tree and curl up underneath it."

Louise noticed how pale he was. Suddenly his body was convulsed by a violent bout of coughing. It was apparent he was seriously ill.

A few moments passed in

silence with everyone left to their own thoughts. Almost hesitantly, as if he wasn't sure of his decision, Claude turned to Louise, "Make him a pallet on the back porch. I don't suppose it will hurt nothing for one night."

Early the next morning, almost at first light, Claude was awakened from sleep by the sound of someone chopping wood in the back yard. Going to the window he stood for a long time, transfixed by the scene in the back yard. Finally he called for Louise to come and look.

It was apparent that Mister John had been working for hours; there was already a sizable stack of wood stacked neatly next to the porch. As Claude and Louise watched from the upstairs window, Mister John continued with his chore. It was easy to see that the mere weight of the ax was almost more than he could lift: he had to stop every couple of minutes to catch his breath. When he had several pieces of wood chopped he would laboriously carry them to the stack, stopping and resting for a few moments, before he once again returned to the ax.

Claude hurried to get dressed, telling his wife, "I'm going down and make that old fool quit. I'm not going to have some Darky dropping dead in our back yard."

Although Mister John quit chopping wood, he insisted on

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doing other chores like feeding the chickens or hoeing in the garden. "The Good Book," he said, "tells you that you reap what you sow."

Gradually over the next several weeks a routine developed. Mister John slept on the back porch and Louise would bring his breakfast and supper. In the early morning hours, while it was still cool, he would do chores around the house. Later in the day, after it got hot, he would go back to the tree where they had first seen him and sit there for the rest of the day - just staring at the house and the yard. Once, when Louise asked him what he was looking at, Mister John replied, "I'm just trying to remember, but it's been so long ago."

As more and more time passed, Claude began to get irritated. "It just ain't right to have some Darky living on your back porch. He is going to have to go!"

Louise agreed, but unfortunately there was no place in Huntsville where a feeble ninety-year-old black man, with no family, could go. Claude and Louise both knew, deep in their

hearts, that they could not just tell Mister John to leave, with no place to go. "We'll just take it day by day and hope there is an answer somewhere," Louise would say whenever the subject came up.

It was late fall and there was already a tinge of frost in the air when Mister John appeared at the back door with a shovel in his hand. "Mister Claude, I need your help."

Curious, Claude took the shovel and followed Mister John to the spot under the tree where he had been sitting for months. Carefully lining the tree up to where it was in a straight line to the corner of the house, Mister John paced off fifteen steps. "Mister Claude, I want you to dig a hole here, about two foot deep."

By this time Louise had joined the men in the yard. Claude, feeling very irritated, explained to her

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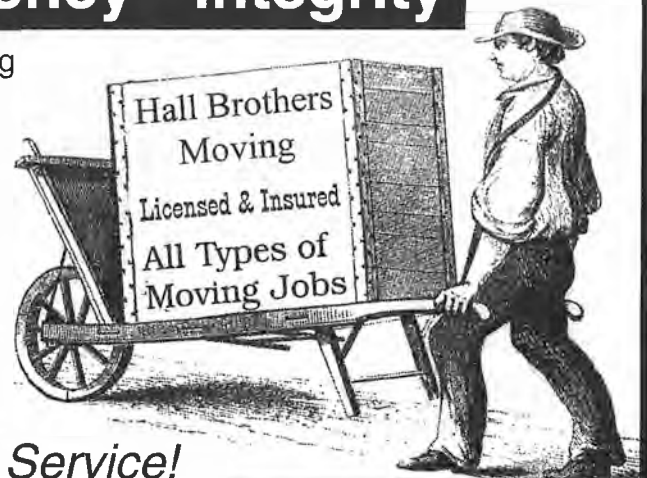
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what Mister John wanted and added, "I'm not going to spend my Saturday morning digging holes in the yard for some crazy old man."

Despite his misgivings, Claude finally agreed to humor Mister John and started digging. Suddenly, about two feet down, the shovel hit metal. Dropping to his knees, Claude used his hands to finish uncovering a small cast iron pot.

Inside was a small bundle of old fashioned bills, known as "Greenbacks," several gold coins and an assortment of jewelry.

"I knew it was there," said Mister John, "I just couldn't remember exactly where!"

Almost speechless, Louise and Claude listened while Mister John explained. "When the Yankees came to Huntsville they were stealing 'bout everything not nailed down. Miss Lowry, she called me, Aunt Missy and Miss Anne into the house late one evening. She had four of those old bean pots and she divided up all her valuables in them. Once it got dark she told me to go out and bury one of the pots and remember exactly where it was. She made me promise I would never tell anyone except a member of the family. When I got done and went back to the house, Aunt Missy took her pot and did the same, followed by Miss Lowry and Miss Anne. Miss Lowry, I recon she figured that by splitting it up the Yankees would never get it all. Even if they made one person talk, the rest would still be safe."

Still speechless by the discovery, Claude finally managed to ask what he and Louise were both thinking. "Why didn't you just

come back and dig it up?"

Mister John's face took on a look of shock. "Mister Claude, I couldn't do that! That would have been going against the Good Book. I promised Miss Lowry that it was for the family and I recon you are family and you've been good to me, so it's yours."

Once it was added up, it wasn't a lot of money; maybe three hundred dollars. But, for a young couple during the middle of the Great Depression, it was a fortune. Claude immediately began making plans to pay off debts and get the sorely-needed repairs for his car. If there was enough left over, he figured, Louise could get a new dress and he could get a suit. It had been years since they were able to splurge for new clothes.

His carefully laid plans came



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## HOW IS MEALS ON WHEELS FUNDED?

Many people mistakenly believe that government grants pay for the Meals on Wheels program. Actually, 82% of our program's funding is provided by donations from churches, individuals, civic organizations, and businesses. The remainder of our funding comes from fundraisers, such as our September Pancake Breakfast, and client donations.

### Huntsville Woman's Club Hosts Annual Fashion Show to Benefit Meals on Wheels

Since 1982, Huntsville Woman's Club has chosen to support Meals on Wheels through fundraising efforts. For the past twelve years, they have presented their spring luncheon and fashion show to benefit our program. We are so grateful to all of the women for the hours of work they put in to insure that this event would be a success.



Frank Childs & Craig Satterfeal of Thrivent Financial present check to Board President Jesse Johnson

### Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Makes Generous Donation

This organization provides funding for various services in the community. This year our local chapter chose Meals on Wheels to receive a \$16,000 donation!

### Flapjack Festival – Saturday, Sept. 27

The Meals on Wheels Task Force produces this pancake breakfast every September at the Senior Center. In addition, over 50 volunteers are required to set up, cook, wait tables, and clean up. This year, would you please

support these devoted workers, as well as the over 240 seniors who depend on these meals, by attending the breakfast and/or making a generous donation?

### Empty Bowl Project – Academy for Academics and Arts

With a grant from Alabama Learn and Serve and the Corporation for National Service, these students and teachers produce a soup supper and musical performance every spring at the Senior Center. All proceeds go to reduce hunger among seniors through our Meals on Wheels service.

The Meals on Wheels Program in Huntsville exists because so many local individuals are truly concerned for our elderly, homebound citizens. We are fortunate to receive such a high level of funding from our neighbors and friends. Your donation will help provide meals for a hungry senior in Huntsville. Mail your gift to Meals on Wheels.

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to naught, however. Louise refused to spend the money. "It was given to us for a purpose and we'll just wait to see what it is." Regardless of Claude's temper tantrums and arguments, Louise refused to give in. The arguments grew so heated, they didn't speak for over a week.

Despite their marital problems, there was a ray of hope in Mister John's living situation. Louise found a black woman, Miss Betty, who ran a boarding house in the neighborhood known as the Honey Hole, near the Huntsville railroad depot. For five dollars a week she agreed to board Mister John and provide his meals.

When Claude returned home from work that afternoon he literally blew his stack. "We can't afford it. It's a waste of money! We'd be better off paying off some bills."

What had once been a happy marriage quickly turned sour, with both of them barely acknowledging the other's presence. Claude would go to work every morning, return in the evening, and after a silent dinner retire to the back porch where he would drink until time for bed. Louise, equally stubborn, refused to talk with him and barely acknowledged his existence.

Strangely, almost the only thing they had left in common was Mister John. Although Claude was violently opposed to paying for Mister John's board, he was still drawn to the old man and would often spend hours listening to his stories.

Louise also visited Mister John, carrying him hot meals and paying his board every Friday.

Mister John had been living in the boarding house for maybe two or three months and Louise and Claude were having their usual icy, silent dinner when suddenly there was a loud knocking on the back door. It was the son of Miss Betty, who ran the boarding house. "Mama said come quick! There's something wrong with Mister John!"

Leaving their dinner on the table, they rushed to the boarding house. Mister John was curled up in a small ball in one corner of the bed. Claude asked Miss Betty, who had followed them into the room, "What's wrong with him?"

"He's old," Miss Betty replied simply. "He's dying."

Mister John's eyes were

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*Seen in local church bulletin*

staring blankly at the wall. For a brief second they showed a look of recognition as Claude moved to his side. "What can I do for you, Mister John?" Claude asked.

In a barely audible whisper, Mister John grasped his hand and said, "Carry me home."

When they got home Claude picked him up in his arms and started to carry him inside the house. Mister John grew agitated, saying, "No, put me on the porch. I want to see the sun come up."


Claude and Louise spent the night on the porch with the old man, bathing his forehead with wet towels and giving him sips of water. Sometime late that night, before the sun came up, Mister John died. He had a gentle smile on his face, perhaps re-

membering a time almost a century earlier when he had been a small child on the same porch.

That afternoon Louise and Claude visited Brother Luke, a charismatic preacher who ministered to the black community in Honey Hole, to make funeral arrangements. Once Claude explained what he wanted, Brother

Luke seemed to stall, saying he was so busy, and after all Mister John was not a member of his church.

Louise and Claude both started to storm out when suddenly Claude stopped, as if in thought. Grabbing Louise's pocketbook, he counted out the money that was left.



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The sight of a roll of bills captured Brother Luke's total attention. With a broad smile on his face he said, "For two hundred dollars I think we could do him up fine that would make everyone proud."

Claude counted out the two hundred dollars. There was a single ten dollar bill left. Thinking only for a fraction of a second he shoved it into the preacher's hand. "Buy him a new white shirt and a nice tie, too."

The day they buried Mister John was a perfect day for a funeral, if there is such a thing. There was just enough chill in the air to make you thankful that the cold days of winter had passed. Light wispy clouds seemed to hover in the sky like angels waiting in heaven to greet their brethren.

Brother Luke preached a hell, fire and brimstone sermon about a "good God-loving man," with maybe thirty or forty members of his church gathered around the grave, saying "Amen"

**"I wish I had the energy that my grandchildren have - if only for self-defense!"**

**Chuck Saunders, Hampton Cove**

and "Hallelujah" at the appropriate times. The church choir, dressed in their finery, stood a short distance away and whenever the preacher would pause, they would break into a chorus of hymns. Several ladies, dressed all in black, would wail and cry every time Mister John's name was mentioned.

The minister closed the sermon with the simple words, "Mister John has gone home."

After the funeral Claude and Louise were driving home when suddenly he asked, "Don't you think it was a fine funeral?"

Louise replied in a soft voice as she slid over to hold her husband's hand, "I think it was a real fine funeral."



**"If falling in love is anything like learning how to spell, I don't want to do it. It takes way too long."**

**Glenn Johnson, age 7**

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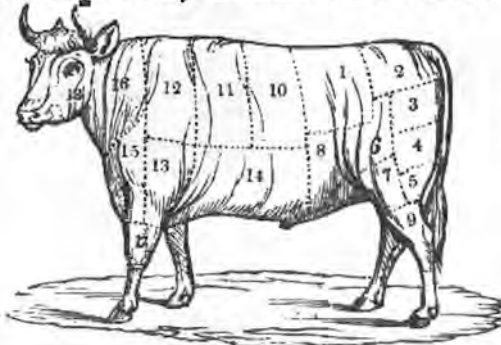
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# The Fiddle Player

by Austin Miller

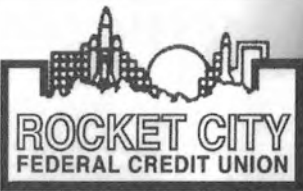
In 1959, my Uncle Robert and Aunt Boots bought a used 1949 Buick LaSabre. This was a time when most Ryland people had a Chevrolet, Ford or Plymouth. Ownership of a Buick, even though it was ten years old, was something to notice and people teased them about being rich folks. It was old but in good shape and served them well for many years. The car was a large gray four door sedan with three rounded chrome edged holes on both fenders just below the hood and a large chrome grill that covered the front of the car above a big chrome bumper.

When you saw it pass on Ryland Pike at a speed of about thirty-five, you knew Aunt Boots was driving; if it was going sixty or seventy, you knew it was Uncle Robert. In those days, he was a fast driver and was stopped more than once for speeding and other violations. The amazing thing was that he never got a ticket. He could always talk the policeman out of it, including one time in Huntsville when he ran into a police car going the wrong way down a one way street.

Late one hot August night, my 1951 Chevrolet Deluxe quit on Huntsville Mountain and I had to walk the rest of the way to Ryland. When I crossed the railroad track at Arley Parton's, I saw that Uncle Robert's lights were on which meant that he was still up watching television. I told him my problem and he went to the shed, got his log chain, threw it in the trunk of the old Buick and we headed toward Huntsville.

When we got to where I broke down, he made a U-turn in the middle of the highway, stopped about ten feet in front of my car, attached one end of

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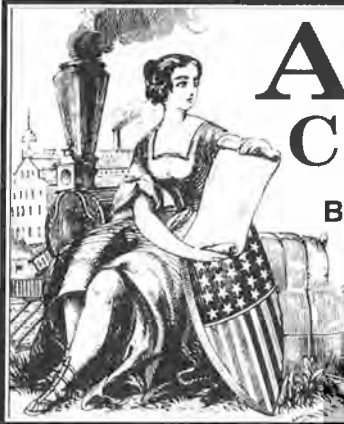
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the chain to his car and the other end to mine.

As soon as we got hooked up, he sped away with me and my old Chevrolet in tow. I had seen cars towed this way many times and knew it was fairly safe if you didn't get above fifteen or twenty miles per hour. When we got to Old Gurley Road, we were doing sixty, when we got to Campbell's store; we were doing seventy and picking up speed. I was in a state of panic because I didn't think we could slow down enough to make the turn from highway 72 to Ryland Pike.

When he finally started slowing down, I began riding the brakes and we somehow made the turn. My brakes were smoking so badly it looked like the car was on fire. He sped up again on Ryland Pike and we bounced almost in tandem across the railroad track at Ryland. As we slowed down to make the turn up the drive to our house, I started riding the brakes again.

When we stopped safely in our front yard, the scent of burning brake pads permeated the air so strongly that Uncle Robert asked what that was he smelled burning. Before I could answer or thank him, he sped off home.

Many years later, I was coming from Huntsville to Ryland on seventy-two when I saw a car back in the distance in the left lane passing everything on the road. Before long, the car passed me and turned almost

on two wheels down Ryland Pike. It was Uncle Robert in his 1977 Buick LaSabre. He was eighty-nine years old.

When I drove the short distance to where I could see his house, he was already parked, out of the car and out of sight in the house.

Uncle Robert was very frugal and didn't spend any money unless it was an absolute necessity. Every fall he drained the water out of his Farmall tractor so the block wouldn't freeze. In the spring, for many years, he forgot to put the water back, cranked up and plowed his garden with an empty radiator. Each year everybody thought the tractor was ruined, but he would refill it with water and it would run all summer without missing a beat.

It was pointed out to him many times that the problem could be solved with antifreeze; he reply was always the same: "there is no need to waste money on antifreeze when water will do fine." He wore his clothes until they were rags.



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His winter coat had both sleeves worn down to the lining all the way up to his shoulders. His work shoes had no heels and were wired together with bailing wire.

When the cable TV Company went up on his bill a few cents a month, he immediately had the cable taken out.

He was a farmer until he was about fifty but remained one in his heart all his life. After farming he worked for the county until he retired. He spent his retirement years watching television, reading, truck farming, playing his fiddle or harmonica and pondering the mysteries of the universe.

Often, you could see him from Ryland Pike sitting on his front porch in deep thought. When visitors come, he always had deep philosophical questions about the bible or universe to discuss. Until he was past 90, he could remember all the places where he lived his entire life to include the exact dates he moved from one place to another. When I needed to check my facts about a story or family history, Uncle Robert was my most reliable source.

His only regular meal each day was breakfast. The menu was a hoe cake the size of a skillet, three or four eggs, a bowl of gravy, a bowl of oatmeal, two or three slices of fat back or streak of lean and a plateful of syrup. It did not include any juice, water or milk. The rest of the day, his diet primarily consisted of Mountain Dew. When people would make comments about his diet, he had a short effective answer. He would quickly tell them that he had lived to be older than anybody around and it must not be too bad!

He loved music and has entertained this nephew many times by breaking into



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song out of the clear blue. Sometimes when I came up in his yard and heard an awful screeching racket, I would quietly leave and return later. It would be him playing the violin. One of his favorite things was playing the fiddle but despite 80 years of practice he never got any better. One of his friends was Monte Crowder, arguably the best fiddle player ever in North Alabama. But even Monte's encouragement and tutelage was not enough to improve his playing. He may not have had as much musical talent as some but he didn't let that stop him from enjoying his favorite pastime.

A few years ago they had Miller night at Shiloh Church and several Miller's including Uncle Robert (some were professionals) sang for the congregation. The only one that got a standing ovation was Uncle Robert. Another friend was Grady Reeves. Grady often visited Uncle Robert and they had long discussions about fiddles, the past, farming, gardening, the weather and the bible. Grady routinely mentioned him on his morning television show.

His faith was strong and when he said the blessing at our annual family reunion on Monte Sano each year, the crowd always hushed into total silence. The prayer touched our souls and bound our family ties leaving no doubt that it came from the heart of a humble servant of God who loved us all.

When he was ninety, he told me that he was thinking about changing from the Baptist Church to the Methodist. When I asked why, he said, "to get to the

Baptist Church you have to cross Ryland Pike, the railroad crossing and Highway 72; I have been thinking that when I get old this might be too dangerous."

He died in 2003 at the age of 93; two weeks before, he was on his Farmall plowing his three acre garden. He was a master gardener and sold his vegetables in the same spot at the Madison County Farmers Market every Saturday for about 30 years. He had many regular customers and was always one of the first from the county to have local produce in the spring.

My cousins kept his tractor. It is the color of rust like it has been as far back as I can remember. But it still runs like a sewing machine. The only difference is they have added anti-freeze.

The last time I saw him,

just before he died, he told me that he loved me like I was his own son - a memory I treasure. I believe that he now plays the fiddle perfectly in heaven's orchestra; but I doubt if he enjoys it more there than he did here on earth.



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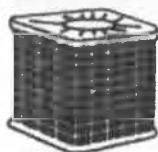
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# Heard on the Street - 1875

- Someone broke into the smokehouse of John Giles and stole all the meat he had, except just enough for one day's rations for his family. Not long ago some villain killed one of Mr. Giles' cows, skinned her, took the hide and, strange to say, left the meat.

- If you want a portrait painted go to W. J. Halsey. He will also paint your signs.

- Public Library - S. D. Cabaniss Jr. has supplied a need long felt in Huntsville - a public Library. It is an elegantly fitted up room in the rear portion of his book store, in Col. Hundley's new building, opposite the Huntsville Hotel. The Library contains many valuable works and a large amount of light reading.

- Halsey's Carriage shop, corner of Green Street and Meridianville Pike, has an elegant display of Phaetons, Rockaways, Spring Wagons and buggies. The departments include wood-work, ironwork, trimming, painting and varnishing.

- For Rent or Sale - the new brick house of C. G. Smith, on Adams Avenue. The house is large and conveniently built, in a good neighborhood and a healthy locality. I will also sell

the former residence of Dr. Smith on Adams, now occupied by Dr. A. J. Green.

- For Sale - by the Probate Court of Madison County, the estate of John Gurley, deceased, will sell at public outcry, for cash, to the highest bidder.

- We hear of a couple living in Guntersville who have thirteen children, the oldest of whom is ten years old. Six pairs of twins are among the number, and all the thirteen are girls.

- D. B. Young will open an English and Classical School for Boys at his residence on Franklin Street on Monday. Terms: \$4, \$5 and \$6 per month, payable monthly.

- For Sale - one half interest in the Machine Shop and Foundry situated on Jefferson Street in

Huntsville. See D. Brainerd Nelson

- Huntsville was left in total darkness last night, because of the flooded condition of the gas works.

- Two bridges across Flint river, one at Brownsboro and the other at Three Forks, were washed away on Wednesday night due to the storm.

- Two men have applied as candidates for Mayor of the City of Huntsville. John A. Erwin is one of the two, and the other is Jere Murphy.

- Building lot for sale - one of the most desirable lots in the city, adjoining the City Brewery and one block from the Huntsville Hotel. 80 feet front by 190 back. Price \$700. Well fenced, good stable and fruit trees.

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# Memories

by Rudolph V. Strickland

Before the war, as all people my age knew, Huntsville was a dry town, but of course we had our bootleggers, one being T-Model Ford at the end of Stephens Ave, near what was then Dallas St. At the intersection of the two; Mr. Tom Snipes had a small store. My grandfather used to say, come on son we're going to Mr. Snipes buy some candy. When we would get to the store grandfather would buy me a sack of peppermint, we would then leave the store and go to T-Model Fords where Papa would purchase a half pint of whiskey, he would take the whiskey put it in the sack of candy and cover it with the peppermint and go home, me a happy boy with a sack of candy.

Papa was not a heavy drinker but he liked his hot toddy.

Before WWII, times were hard, but it really got tough after the war started. On Dec. 7th 1941 we were sitting at the table having dinner (now called lunch), Papa was listening to the radio and I remember the words that came from that radio, "Japanese Have Bombed Pearl Harbor" I looked at Papa and he was crying, I asked him why and he repeated - Japanese have bombed Pearl Harbor and we are now at war.

Many changes were made in the way we lived our lives after that day. Air Raid wardens were appointed for the village, we would have practice blackouts, we were all instructed when you hear an airplane look up, and see if it is one of ours. The field

between Rison Avenue and Stephens Avenue was used for the people to carry any items that could be recycled for the war effort.

We would take old tires, any type of metal, tin cans and aluminum. At Rison school we had a lot of old tires (aka casons) for the boys to play with, we would roll them and also get inside the middle of the tire and someone would roll the tire with us in it. The boys would canvass the neighborhood for old tobacco packs which had aluminum foil around the cigarettes. We would separate the foil from the paper, roll into a ball and take to the collection area.

War bonds were a big thing then but coming up with \$18.75 for a war bond was not easy to do so they gave us stamp books in school and we could buy stamps for five, ten cents; when we got \$18.75 we traded for a bond.

Ration books were another thing we had to live with. If you were fortunate enough to own a car, tires as well as gas was rationed, also food was rationed, you would get your ration books which had stamps in it, you could only buy so much meat, sugar, coffee etc.

Things were not easy but everyone did all that they could for the war. My half brother still has the last three ration books that

we received prior to the war's end.

Food was hard to come by due to rationing as well as people were poor. I remember asking Mama what's for dinner, her answer always seemed to be the same, beans and potatoes, what's for supper; potatoes and beans.

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# The Turkey Farmer

By Malcolm Miller

If there ever was a self-made man, Ernest Horton "Buddy: Wilbourn was the best example that I know of.

I was born on what was known as the Hewlett place, just off Wall Road, in nineteen twenty seven. Our closest neighbors were the Williams and Wilbourn families. Some time before I ever saw the light of day I understand that Mr. Wilbourn, Mrs. Williams' first husband, was killed by lightning and then she married Mr. Macon Williams who owned the farm adjoining the farm we were living on.

I know Mr. Williams had children but never met them, and we were very close to the Wilbourn family, even my Mom and their Mother were very close. There were two girls that I remember, Maxie who never married and Clara who married Roy Wall.

There were three boys, Odis, Olin and Horton. They were all good neighbors and fine folks but the one I admired the most and was closest to was Horton.

Back in the nineteen thirties most kids quit school if they made it through junior high which was the ninth grade, but Horton Wilbourn was certainly an exception to the rule. He not only went on and finished High School but managed to go to college and get a degree to become a teacher. How did he do it? Remember this was when we

were trying to come out of a depression. He did it by raising turkeys and any one who has tried to raise turkeys knows he had his hands full. It took a lot of hard work and sacrifice and I am sure he must have been discouraged at times but in the end it paid off.

On Oct.17, 1946, Horton Wilbourn married Laura Mae Herford of the prominent Herford family in Gurley. They raised two fine children, Jim who is a forester and Laura Jo Hamilton who is a well respected

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Circuit Judge in Madison County.

After attending Central School from first grade half way through the ninth, my family moved to Bob Wade Lane which is in the Meridianville school district and on my first day of school in Meridianville who do I find is the principal? The man I had known and admired since I was a baby, Horton Buddy

Wilbourn and I called him Buddy as I had all my life, however since the other students didn't understand the familiarity I decided I should call him Mr. Wilbourn while at school.

After I finished school at Meridianville and went on to Hazel Green I didn't see him for several years, then one night I went to a rural Mail Carriers meeting and there he was. He had retired from teaching and was running a rural route and farming on the side. I never asked him what kind of farming he was doing but I'll just bet he wasn't raising turkeys.

## News from 1905

- James Murphree will leave for Cincinnati next week to purchase the fixtures for the new Henderson National Bank. The fixtures will be mahogany and marble base and mosaic tiles.

- Mr. John Sutherland, about 50 years of age, died yesterday from a snake bite. He was bitten about six weeks ago and was sent to Atlanta. It is said the snake was some ten feet long, with many rattles. He died in awful agony, six men being required to hold him.

- Mayor Smith has given instructions to the police on the enforcement of the city laws and minors will not be allowed to enter pool rooms in this city. Proprietors will be required to remove their curtains so that people can see in as they pass along the street. The mayor believes this will help the situation.

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# Heard On the Street

by *Cathey Carney*



Many of our readers called to correctly guess the Photo of the Month for August - that adorable little boy was City Councilman **Bill Kling**. But only the first caller wins - and that caller was **Titus Christian** of Huntsville. Titus is a retired disabled Vet - he started out with the Marines in 1960, then Army in '63 and retired in '91. His sweet wife **June** is a substitute teacher for Huntsville City Schools. Congratulations Titus!

Our friend **Malcolm Miller** celebrated his 81st birthday in August at his store Country Treasures in Harvest, a surprise masterminded by his wife **Lois**. Many friends came to see him and Malcolm even provided some of the entertainment!

Another milestone birthday is that of **Virginia Mae Esslinger**, who will be 99 on Sep. 29! She has lived in Madison County (New Market) all her life. Her daughter **Betty Esslinger** is a retired teacher and is so proud of her Mom.

**Ann Smith** has been retired from Colonial Bank now for a couple of months, and her loyal customers STILL miss her. We hope you are really living it up in

your retirement, Ann! She's a proud grandma to baby **Andrea Trentham**, her daughter **Michelle** is the mama and new daddy is **Steve Trentham**.

A beautiful lady celebrating her 100th birthday Aug. 29 is **Exie "Bobo" Parks**. Her son was **Sig Parks** and granddaughter who is very proud of her is **Sheila Parks Brooks**. A party is being hosted by her daughter & son-in-law, **Betty & John Kirkpatrick**.

**Kerry and Carolyn Pinkerton** are sure some happy grandparents! The beautiful granddaughter is **Kennedy Jane Pinkerton**, born in May. Proud parents are **Kris and Kellie Pinkerton** of Harvest, and she joins big brother **William Mason Pinkerton**, who's 6 years old. Carolyn's brother (and Kennedy's new great uncle) **Bud Hollingsworth** has some great plans for vacations - naw, Kennedy won't be spoiled! Congratulations to you all!

Our favorite postal workers are located at the Bulk Mail Unit

on Governors Drive. **Tony Milliken, Tom McKee, Mark Grunwald** and **Greg Williamson** have been watching all the construction going on across the street, where the driving range used to be. A lot of dirt is sure being moved around there. The guys watch all the activity in their very limited spare time!

We want to send our best wishes to **Juster McClain**, who's only 59 and in the hospital. His caring brother **Jesse McClain** goes to see him all the time and wants to let him know how much he loves him.

We were so sorry to hear of the death of **Jack Gilstrap**. Jack had such a positive attitude and always had a smile for everyone. We send our deepest condolences to his wife **Peggy**, and their friends and family.

If you like fun, food and auctions, mark your calendars for Oct. 28. The **Huntsville Christian Women's Connection** will host their "Country Fair" to provide gifts to Stonecroft Missionaries

## Photo of The Month

The first person to correctly identify the youngster below wins a 1-year complimentary subscription to "Old Huntsville" magazine.

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and Village Missionaries. There will be lots of goodies to bid on as well as free childcare for kids 6 and under - call **Betty** at 837-8286 for more information.

**Carol Christopher**, of Southern Home and Hearth, loves to cook and we are featuring her recipes this month. But she is proudest of her gorgeous new granddaughter **Zaylee Joy** who was born on July 2. **Farrah** is Carol's daughter and mother of the new baby, who has strawberry blonde hair and lots of dimples!

Happy September birthdays to my favorite ladies! **Annelie Owens, Peggy Rhoden** and **Barb Eyestone** are the greatest!

That handsome **Will Swift** recently had a birthday - he works at JC's Gun and Tackle with **J.C. Vaughn** on Jordan Lane. Happy Birthday to you Will!

We'll soon notice lots of activity at the old Heart of Huntsville area when the first hotel breaks ground. Also we hear from **Scott McClain** that he hopes to recruit a "green grocer" to be located there as well - we love that!

**Chuck Owens** has a good friend who lives in California, who called recently with some interesting news. He told Chuck that he just got married. What made this news especially intriguing is that **Ret. Col. Thurman Irving** is 94, and his new bride, **Edna Little**, is 85. Congratulations to the new west coast lovebirds!

While watching the Today Show on NBC recently, while **Sheryl Crow** was entertaining at Rockefeller Plaza, I saw someone from Huntsville! **Rebekah Keith McKinley**, an attorney here in Huntsville, was visiting her sister **LeeAnna Keith** in New York with mama **Janet Watson**. The cameraman focused on her face (and that of her son) for a full 5 seconds while she was rocking out to the music!

Congratulations to **C. B. "Bill" Miller**, of Miller & Miller

here in Huntsville, who just had a beautiful bridge named for him! It is located just southwest of the Embassy Suites on Monroe. There were many friends and dignitaries there including **Dr. Richard Showers, Bill Kling, Glenn Watson, Mark Russell, Cecil Ashburn, Rita Dunkin, Marie Hewett**, mayoral contender **Tommy Battle** and many others.

We were sorry to hear that **Ethel Pulliam** had died recently. She was Lincoln Village's oldest living citizen, and would have been 106 years old in August.

We were very proud to learn that **Huntsville Hospital** had earned a very prestigious award recently. The American Heart Asso./American Stroke Asso. recently honored Huntsville Hospital with the **Triple Performance Achievement Award**, as reported in U.S. News & World Report, for their excellent treatment of cardiac and stroke victims. It was the only hospital in Alabama, and one of only 30 nationwide, to receive awards in stroke, heart failure and coronary artery disease. We're very proud of our hospital!

It was great catching up with **Terese** and **Bill Stevens** recently, on the patio at Mason's Pub downtown. Terese owns Cloud Nine, and is licensed for sports and in-home massages. She and Bill have been married for 10 years and are

still on their honeymoon!

Many customers at Furniture Factory were shocked when **Nick Saban** walked in! The head coach of Alabama arrived with his coaching staff and **Tommy Tuberville**, head coach of Auburn University! They were there for Sports Week in Alabama. Since there was no press coverage, the coaches had the privacy they wanted.

Don't forget **Trade Day** on Saturday, Sep. 6!

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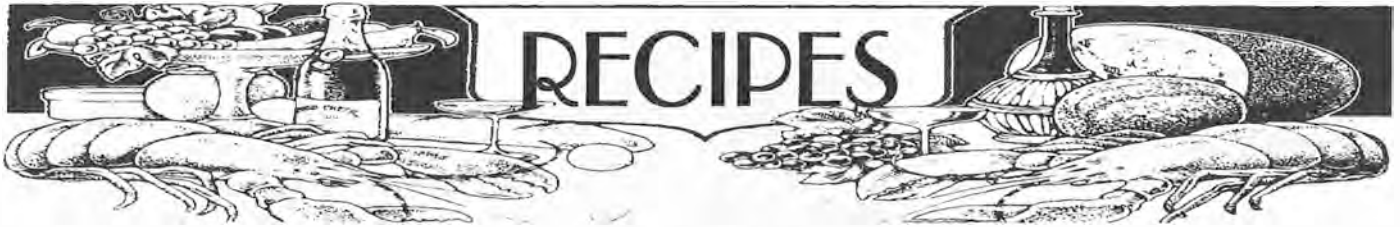
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## Cooking with Carol Christopher

### Grape Salad

- 8 oz. sour cream
- 3 oz. cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 c. sugar
- 4 lbs. small seedless grapes
- 1/2 c. brown sugar
- 1/2 c. chopped pecans

Combine first three ingredients in a bowl, blend well. Add the grapes, coating them with the mixture. Sprinkle with brown sugar and pecans. Refrigerate til chilled.

### Twice-Baked Sweet Potatoes

- 4 oz. cream cheese
- 4 T. butter (1/2 stick)
- 4 T. brown sugar
- 1/2 t. cinnamon
- 1/4 t. nutmeg
- 1/2 t. ground ginger
- 4 sweet potatoes, baked

Cream first six ingredients together. Slice the centers of 4 baked sweet potatoes and scoop out the pulp. Mix this and the cream cheese mixture together, add a bit of salt. Stuff back into the skins and bake in oven at 375 degrees for 10 to 15 minutes.

### Easy Barbecued Glazed Meatballs

- 1 bag (16 oz.) frozen meatballs
- 1 jar (12 oz.) current or grape jelly
- 1 c. your favorite barbecue sauce

Combine the jelly and barbecue sauce in a large saucepan. Cook and stir over medium heat til jelly melts.

Add the meatballs. Heat over low-medium heat for 15 minutes and meatballs are hot and glazed. Serve while still warm.

### Great Grilled Hamburgers

- 1 1/2 lbs. hamburger meat
- 1 pkg. onion soup mix
- 4 pineapple rings
- 1/4 c. pineapple juice
- 2 t. ginger/terriyaki mix (in packet)

Mix all together and make 4 patties. Don't overmix your meat or it will be tough. Push a pineapple ring onto the top of each patty and cook 8 minutes on each side. Grill the pineapple side down first.

### Coca Cola BBQ Chicken

- 1 fryer, cut up (2-2 1/2 lbs.)
  - 1 c. ketchup
  - 1 small bottle Coca Cola
- Remove skin from chicken

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and place in skillet. Mix cola and ketchup and pour over chicken. Bring to boil then lower heat to simmer, til chicken is tender.

Sauce will be very thin at first, but continue cooking and it will cook down to a thick, delicious BBQ sauce. (Baste the chicken as needed.)

## Yahoo Apple Dumplings

2 Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored and sliced into 8 pieces each.

2 cans refrigerated Crescent rolls (8 triangles in each can.)

1 1/2 sticks butter

1 1/4 c. sugar

1 t. cinnamon

12 oz. can Mt. Dew soda

Soak apple slices in 1/2 of the Mountain Dew to keep them from browning.

Take a section of the crescent dough and wrap apple slice to make dumpling, pinch to seal.

Place the dumplings in a slightly sprayed 2x13" casserole dish.

Melt the butter, sugar and cinnamon together and pour over the apples. Pour the remaining Mountain Dew over all. Bake at 350 degrees for 35 minutes.

This is a great-looking dish and tastes Wonderful! Serve with ice cream - YAHOO!

## Sweet & Tangy BBQ Sauce/Relish

1 large onion, finely chopped

1 t. vegetable oil

3/4 c. Coca Cola

3/4 c. chili sauce

1 T. brown sugar

1/2 t. salt

1 T. dry mustard

1 T. paprika

1/8 t. ground red pepper

2 T. white vinegar

Cook onion in oil in large saucepan over low heat, stirring often til it turns caramel-colored. Add other ingredients and bring to boil over medium heat. Cover, reduce heat and simmer for 45 minutes, stirring occasionally. Makes about 2 cups and is a great relish for grilled hot dogs.

## Chocolate Cheese Fudge

1/2 lb. Velveeta Cheese, cubed

1 c. butter

1 t. vanilla extract

1 c. chopped pecans

2 boxes confectioners sugar

1/2 c. cocoa powder

In a saucepan melt the cheese and butter, stir. Add vanilla & nuts. In large bowl sift sugar & cocoa, pour cheese mix into the cocoa mix, stir. Press into 9x2" pan, refrigerate til firm.



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# 1892 News from New Hope

New Hope is still in existence, even though you have not heard from us in a while. Our little town is unusually quiet, with little to talk about except the railroad. The surveyors on the Gurley & Paint Rock Valley Railroad are now surveying their road near here. They will reach Cottonville next week. They are following close to the Tennessee & Coosa survey. We are now beginning to hope that it will be built.

Something like the scarlet fever is raging in our midst. A great many children are down with it.

Mr. W. P. Brazelton has again

broken his leg, this being the third time. It will surely have to be taken off this time. Drs. Hinds and Johnson are with him. Miss Hattie Peevey, of Huntsville, a very charming young lady, is teaching a class in music here.

The beautiful and bewitching Miss Frank James is spending a week or two here. We think there will be some very long faces when she leaves. Misses Anna Owen and Lillie Ellett are visiting in the Burkly neighborhood. Dr. J. R. Simpson was over today, having his buggy repaired preparatory to starting to the World's Fair.

Our bachelor friends have about abandoned the idea of marrying, but they are not to blame for it.

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# Football Under the Lights

by Theresa Hanvey Fallwell

The old axiom, necessity is the mother of invention, is true; however, it may also be said that necessity can serve as an agent for entrepreneurship. The latter was the case in Huntsville, Alabama during the football season of 1934, when necessity

propelled two distinctly different entrepreneurs, a men's club and a child, to memorable action at the new Goldsmith-Schiffman Memorial Athletic Field.

By 1934, football fever was rampant in Huntsville, and schools, public service groups, individuals, and government entities were actively engaged in improving gridiron opportunities for young men. The latest and greatest effort was to be Goldsmith-Schiffman Memorial Athletic Field. On January 25, 1934, the Goldsmith Schiffman family including Oscar Goldsmith, Lawrence B. Goldsmith, Annie Schiffman Goldsmith, Eloise Strauss Goldsmith, and

Robert L. Schiffman generously donated the Beirne Avenue property to the city of Huntsville in memory of Betty Bernstein Goldsmith and Betty Herstein Schiffman to construct a new football field.

Construction of the new athletic field began almost immediately under the auspices of the Civil Works Act, part of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal Recovery Effort. Although the Civil Works Act, initiated in the winter of 1933, was short-lived, it created employment and economic relief for Depression weary citizens, while providing monies to local authorities to fund public projects. For the Gold-



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- Member, Alabama Society of Public Accountants
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smith Schiffman Project, the Civil Works Act provided \$6, 500.00 in labor and materials. My late grandfather, Thomas Lee Hanvey, was part of this work corps and shared this account with me.

Goldsmith-Schiffman Memorial Field was constructed in approximately nine months. Large chunks of native stone held together with thick gray mortar was used to construct the eight foot high perimeter of the Field. The main entrances featured turret-like columns topped with blunted concrete spires. Ticket selling gates featured openings shaped similarly to the turrets, and small enclosed booths constructed of the same stone. Bleachers were built on both the north and south sides of the Field with a concession area at the west end. A wooden press booth was located atop the bleachers on the south side of the field.

As the Field neared completion in the late summer of 1934, local leaders and school officials began to play with the very progressive idea of lighting the field for night games. Those in charge speculated that football games under electric lights would encourage greater attendance and result in higher gate receipts. Increased gate receipts were required to retire the enormous \$1,000 already incurred by the Huntsville High Athletic Association to equip and outfit the Crimson in their new, bright red jerseys.

Lighting the Field was no small task. The equipment, including the poles, connections, and 32 immense arc bulbs with

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48,000 watt light needed to illuminate the Field, was expensive. The City School Board agreed to the lighting if an entrepreneur to finance this project could be found. The Acme Club, a young men's organization designed to promote the moral, social, and commercial welfare of the city, stepped up to the City School Board's challenge and agreed to underwrite the cost of the project; thus, becoming the first entrepreneur of this story.

To fund the lighting of the Field, the Acme Club, with the help of the Huntsville Times, printed 500 season tickets to sell to the community. Club members guaranteed sales of at least 300 season tickets each at \$2.50 per ticket to cover the initial down payment on the lighting. Mr. J.T. Lanier of the Home Loan and Finance Company in the Tennessee Valley Bank Building managed the project. And, as most good entrepreneurs do, the Acme Club enlisted help from the Kiwanis, Rotary, and Civitan Clubs. It was a worthwhile cause and enjoyed strong community support.

The first game played at the new Goldsmith-Schiffman Memorial Field was between Huntsville and Limestone County High School, two well-matched teams who enjoyed a good rivalry. The game was played at 3:15 on Friday afternoon, September 27, 1934, to an impressive crowd of approximately 750 fans. Numerous children watched free perched atop the rock walls until the adults removed them. Coach Milton Frank, the

new Huntsville High School coach, established a strong starting line up that included Captain Walker and Douglas as ends, Lam and Bingham as tackles, Ford and H. Bailey, guards, E. Bailey, center, McAnally, quarterback, McCaleb and Gooch, half-backs, and Giles, full-back. Root, a guard, was uncertain because of injury. The Crimson's had both a forward wall and backfield averaging 160 pounds. The Crimson's made a good showing, scoring in every quarter except the fourth. Long, spectacular runs brought the crowd to their feet, roaring approval. A clean game and a good win, 45 to 0, was a positive omen for the following week's game which would also be dedication day for the new Field.

The second entrepreneur in this story makes his timely appearance just outside the perimeter of the Field prior to

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the second game. It seems a young black boy about 10 years of age was not only a football fan, but quite an enterprising fellow. He had watched the first game of the season from a secure vantage point provided by a fork in an old oak tree adjacent to the northeast corner of the rock-walled Field. His viewing site may have been necessary because of his race and the Southern culture of the day, or it may have been financially rooted as this was during the Depression. Either way, this clever little boy saw the situation in an opportunistic manner. Before the dedication game he cleaned out his dad's lumber pile, and created seats running from the bottom to the top of that old oak tree, along with rungs for climbing. He had cheap seats that were just little planks nailed to tree limbs, and he had grandstand seats that consisted of two planks forming a seat and a back on upper limbs. Cheap seats cost a nickel and grandstand seats cost a dime.

October 5, 1934, Huntsville High School and Gadsden High met at a well-lit Goldsmith-Schiffman Memorial Field. This fierce rivalry had, for the past four years, resulted in Gadsden victories, but Coach Frank assured everyone that the Crimson would win. By 8:00, a noisy parade of vehicles decorated with soggy red, white, and blue crepe paper arrived at the field. The motorcycle officer that led the group was gone, seeking drier ground. The young black boy had "hawked" both his cheap and grandstand seats, and hundreds of fans had entered the field. The coin was tossed and the game began. Despite a miserable, cold rain that fell the entire evening, approximately 1,000 fans viewed the game with another 30 in the tree bleachers outside. Some observers noted that the young entrepreneur's patrons had the best seats at the Field, not only because they could see so well, but also because the old oak tree had not yet shed its leaves, thus providing some shelter from the rain. Fans inside and out braved the elements to watch Huntsville beat Gadsden, 19-6, in the first nighttime football game ever played in Huntsville.

During the halftime intermission, Addison White, a member of the City School Board, stood proudly in

the glaring light and pouring rain and accepted the Field for the school and expressed appreciation to the Huntsville citizens who donated the property. Mr. White also expressed appreciation to the Acme Club for their role in lighting the Field. Dr. William McKissack thanked all the citizens of Huntsville for their support.

Six more games were scheduled for the 1934, season, all of which were played under the lights with record attendance and gate receipts, both for the school and the young boy. Thunderous cheers sounded and pompoms waved exuberantly with each promising play. And, sometimes, especially

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with touchdowns, the cheers were accompanied by a gentle shower of colorful oak leaves raining down on the Field, adding to the revelry of the night, and the absolute wonder of watching a football game played under the lights.




## Happenings in 1888

- The quarries on Monte Sano are furnishing the finest gray limestone rock, not only in quality but size, that could be found anywhere in this country. The Monte Sano Railway has a large amount of stone on the grounds at the plant and are keeping plenty of material for the masons to pursue their work on the foundation. Laborers are employed under the superintendency of Mr. Henry E. Turner, in ditching work.

- The many friends of Jack Hall are glad to see him out and on the streets again after several week's confinement to his bed and room caused by a jump from a buggy in which he sustained a badly sprained limb.

- The colored citizens living on Howe Street, off Meridian Road, were made painfully aware that some more than usual elemental trouble was in progress, when the water entered their homes and the furniture began to float around the rooms. It was a terrible dilemma to be placed in, to face the blinding storm outside or remain indoors and perchance perish if the angry waters continued to rise. The cause of the high water was the narrow state of the bridge under Meridian Street, which could not accommodate the raging flood, but held it in check until a lake of backwater was formed, and this found its way back into the houses.

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# City Election

*from 1883 newspaper*

The election for Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Huntsville will take place on Tuesday next, April 3. There is less excitement than on many previous occasions, but it is, gradually, developing as election day approaches. There are no party nominations. Registration of votes closed on the 23d inst. The number of registered citizens has been furnished us, as follows:

First Ward: Whites 164, Colored 163. Total, 327.

Second Ward: Whites 202, colored 86. Total, 288.

Third Ward: Whites 169, colored 56. Total, 225.

Fourth Ward: Whites 17, colored, 207. Total, 224.

Total white, 552. Total colored, 512. Total registered citizens, 1064. White majority, 40. Each voter is required to vote in his own Ward for Mayor and Aldermen, but no voter is authorized to vote for Aldermen out of his Ward. The margin between the white and colored vote is very small.

## In the Year 1908

- The average life expectancy was 47 years.
- Only 14 percent of the homes had a bathtub.
- Only 8 percent of the homes had a telephone.
- There were only 8,000 cars and only 144 miles of paved roads.
- The maximum speed limit in most cities was 10 mph.
- The tallest structure in the world was the Eiffel Tower
- The average wage in 1908 was 22 cents per hour.
- The average worker made between \$200 and \$400 per year.
- Ninety percent of doctors had no college education.
- More than 95 percent of all births took place at home.
- Most women only washed their hair once a month.



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# Twins of Shiloh

By Tom Baker

George and Hugh Childress were born on the twenty second of November in the year 1833. Twin boys, the twelfth and thirteenth child in the family of Robert and Temperance Childress, that would eventually number seventeen children. Twelve girls and five boys.

All of Robert and Temperance's children were raised on a farm in the Little Cove area of Madison county, Alabama. With nineteen in the family, needless to say, you were never late for a meal.

With this many children to rule over, their father must have been a strict disciplinarian. It is said that he had a "fetish" about teeth. He would not let his children chew the sweet gum which oozed from the trees, "like

all the other kids in the neighborhood." He had all of his natural teeth when he died at the age of 87.

When the Civil War began, George and Hugh enlisted on the Confederate side. They saw action at Shiloh, distinguishing themselves in that battle. Hugh later rose to the rank of 1st Lt., and George to the rank of 2nd Sergeant.

But tragedy was soon to strike the Childress family. In 1862, the twins had become separated. Hugh was with a unit in Louisiana fighting in the Battle of Baton Rouge where he fell mortally wounded on Aug. 5th, and died a few hours later.

Tragedy struck again 2 months later when his brother George was killed early in the action before Corinth, Mississippi on Oct. 3, 1862.

When Margaret Mitchell was doing research for her famous novel "Gone With The Wind",

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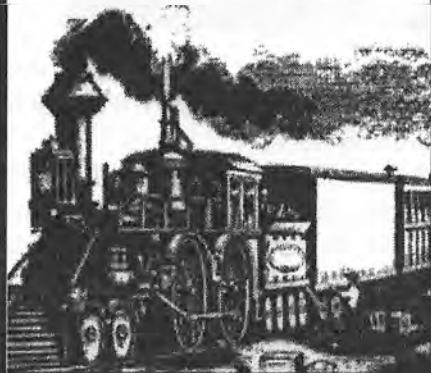
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she visited towns and hamlets throughout the South, talking to old Civil War vets and their families. One of these places she was reported to have visited was Mooresville, Alabama. Mooresville is an old historic town located a few miles West of Huntsville, Ala. Margaret caused tongues to wag when she went horseback riding in pants throughout the village.

Living there at the time of her visit were relatives of the two twin brothers. Whether Margaret Mitchell talked to these relatives, and was told the tragic story of the twins is not known. But, in the first chapter of her famous novel she wrote later, there are two twin brothers, the Tarleton twins who enlist for the South, and are both killed in battle.

If this part of the novel was based on Hugh and George Childress, the truth of it may never be known. All of Mitchell's notes on her book were destroyed after the book was published. The twins being a part of this writer's family tree, I like to believe she did use the story in her novel.

**"You're not gonna check the trunk, are you?"**

**What you DON'T say to a cop who just pulled you over**

# News from 1908

- William Moore is being held here for charges of forgery and bigamy. He tried to commit suicide in his cell by eating the heads of a large number of matches. The jailor discovered his plight and administered medicine. Before eating the matches he wrote a letter to his mother and chief detectives.

- A local woman asserted that for months she had been abused and threatened by her husband. Mrs. Ethel Olsen, formerly of England, and later of Huntsville, sent a pistol bullet at her husband in a crowded street near the courthouse here late Sunday, missed him and powder-burned a passerby. She was arrested and charged with assault with intent of murder. She tells a story of her husband's alleged cruel treatment of her and their children.

- Mayor R. Earle Smith stated today that no whiskey shall be sold in Huntsville while he is mayor. He stated that a few bottles may occasionally change hands but that there will be no general or even restricted sale, and that the law shall be enforced as it appears on the statute books.

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# A Yankee Moves South

by Charles Owens

It was about 50 years ago (48 to be exact) when we left Germany aboard the USS United States, destined for our next military assignment at Redstone Arsenal, AL. The 5 day voyage was most memorable and we were met by my family when the ship docked in New York City.

I was on a 30-day military leave so we spent our time in my old neighborhood of Ridgewood, Brooklyn, NY, with my mother and brother. The quarters were rather tight since there were four of us, plus our year-old wire hair terrier, Chicky, which we brought from Germany.

This was a predominantly German neighborhood so we had no problem finding a German Beer Garden to enjoy an evening of song and dance with our friends.

After about three weeks we loaded up our new Chevy, said our good-byes and headed south. The weather was cold and wet and the three day trip was uneventful.

We all gave a cheer on November 26, 1959, at about 4:30 PM, when we noticed a sign up ahead, as we drove south on US 72, that read "Entering

Alabama".

Never having been here before we weren't sure what to expect but we were eager to find out. I remember driving along a street called "University Drive" and I had to stop and ask for directions to the Russel Erskine Hotel. I had made reservations there before leaving New York.

We checked into the hotel and were very satisfied with the accommodations, which was a large room with several beds. We had to take turns taking Chicky out for a stroll. We spent about two nights at the hotel and used a couple of days driving around and getting acquainted with things and places, including Redstone

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Arsenal.

Huntsville was a small town with a population of about 15,000 people. It seemed like the Russel Erskine Hotel was the tallest building in town. The town square surrounded a modest courthouse with several small businesses, including Harrison Brothers Hardware, and several law offices located around it.

In front of the courthouse was an impressive looking statue of a Confederate War soldier. My son, Ken, enjoyed this statue and we took several pictures, each taking turns standing in front of the statue.

Another business I recall was Hilding Homberg clothing store. While there, I met this guy sitting in the back of the store, reading the Huntsville News. He called me "Sonny" and wanted to know where I was from. I told him that I was in the Army and my home was New York City. I was told later by the proprietor that I was talking to Spec Searcy, the Mayor of Huntsville.

When I reported in to the Arsenal, I learned that we had quarters available but it would be another day or two before we could move in. During this short waiting period, we resided in the Goddard House, an old restored southern mansion on post which had a history of its own. This in itself was a pleasant experience.

A friend (a Huntstivillian) and I were riding in one of the more rural parts of Huntsville and passed a vast field of white. Actually, it was a field of cotton ready to be picked but at the time I did not know that. I asked my friend what was growing out there and he responded with gusto, "What you are looking at out there is grits, one of the best foods you can find in the south!" I was a little skeptical but made no reply.

Initially I was assigned to the Control Office, ARGMA, headed up by LTC Hank Brotherton. As

it turned out, he and I were to become close friends for many years. After some months working in the Control Office, I was assigned to the Industrial Directorate where Col. Hank Wishart was Director. I became Chief, Quality Assurance Division, Bldg. 3505. I had 107 civilians in my Division and Bob Hooker, GS 15, was Deputy Chief. I was the only military person in the Division.

This building was shared with Chief, Engineering Division under Major Bellavance.

General John Zierdt was the Commanding General of ARGMA (Army Rocket and Guided Missile Agency) at this time. Our Co-Agency was ABMA (Army Ballistic and Missile Agency).

During the period, in about 1960 - 1961, there was somewhat

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of an upheaval at Redstone Arsenal when the Pentagon ordered that the two agencies combine.

ABMA was reorganized and Von Braun and members of his team started the NASA Agency. The balance of the personnel of ABMA not going with NASA were assigned to ARGMA.

Joining our division were Ken Joy, former Chief of the Quality Assurance, ABMA, and his assistant Miles Hardinberg.

In the meantime, our family had settled down at Redstone Arsenal. The children attended school at St. Ann's in Decatur, going and returning by bus each day.

Our visit to Woolworth's and Montgomery Ward, as well as to the Court House, was our first experience with the "Colored" and "White" signs shown at the drinking fountains, rest rooms and sections of the counter where people stopped for a drink or a snack. I remember thinking how strange it was.

The Officer's Club had many social functions and it was a good place to go and relax with your friends. It all came to an end when I retired from the service in September 1962.

We had a retirement ceremony in August 1962 on the Arsenal parade field. Col. Cook was the reviewing officer. Three other military personnel being retired and honored at this time included: Major William Moody, CWO Joseph L. Watson and SFC James C. Quate.

I was fortunate to receive an offer from the Thiokol Corporation, located on the Arsenal, not far from the location of Rohm and Haas Chemical Com-

pany. I retired from there in 1984, having spent some of the best years of my life on Redstone Arsenal.

And, yes, I suppose you could say we have all become real Southerners. And I've even started to like grits!



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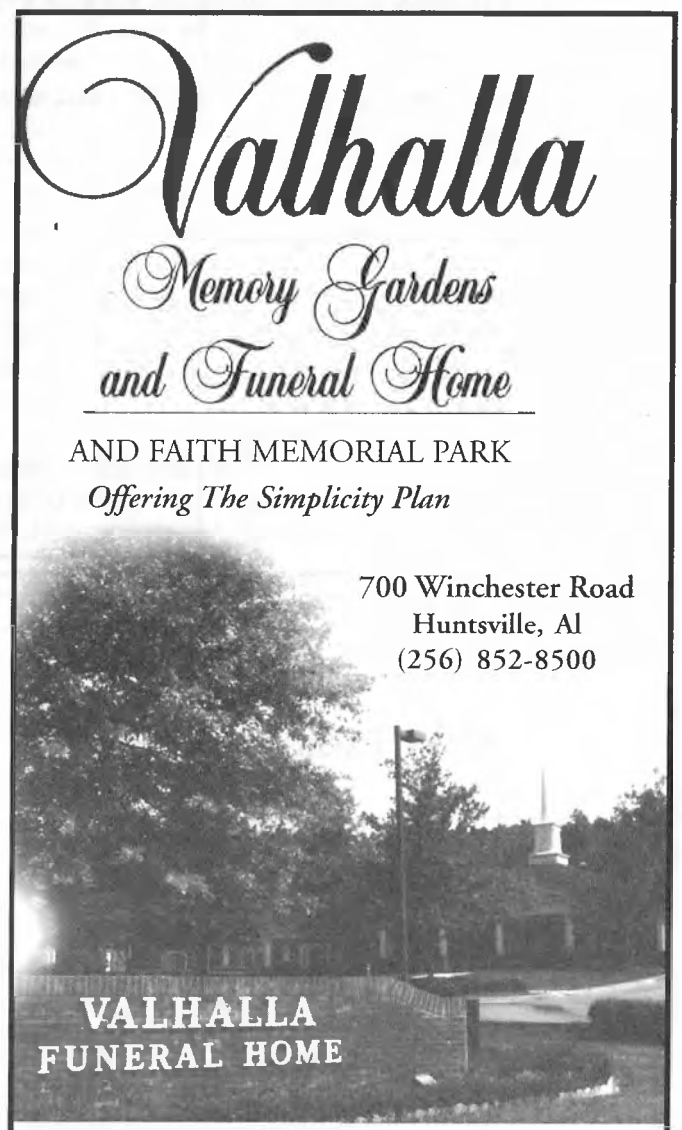
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# Tips from Liz

\* To keep squirrels away from your garden plants, sprinkle them with ground cayenne pepper. It won't hurt the plants, but the squirrels won't come near it.

\* To get something out of a heat register or under your fridge, add an empty paper towel roll or empty gift wrap roll to your vacuum. It can be bent or flattened to get in narrow openings.

\* Pin a small safety pin to the seam of your slip or dress and you won't have static cling. This works with slacks that cling when wearing panty hose, just pin the seam of the slacks.

\* Before you pour sticky substances into a measuring cup, fill it with hot water. Dump out the water, but don't dry the cup. Add your ingredient, such as peanut butter, and it will slide right out!

\* If you have an area in your garden where you don't want weeds, just wet newspapers and place them on the spot. Cover with mulch, and no weeds!

\* If you are bothered by mosquitos but hate that spray, just rub your exposed areas with a dryer sheet - mosquitos will really avoid you!

\* To warm breads, biscuits, pancakes, etc., place them in the

microwave with a cup of water. The added steam will keep the breads soft and moist.

\* Sweet peppers with 3 bumps on the bottom are sweeter and better for eating. Peppers with 4 bumps on the bottom are firmer and better for cooking.

\* Add garlic immediately to a recipe if you want a light taste of garlic and at the end of the recipe if you want a stronger garlic taste.

\* To make really rich scrambled eggs or omelets add a couple of teaspoons of sour cream, cream cheese or heavy cream before pouring into your pan.

\* Melt Andes mints & pour over brownies for a real treat!

## Correction

In the July 2008 issue of "Old Huntsville" there was an article entitled "The Confederate Statue", which was erected in 1905. In this article the name of the sculptor was incorrect.

Instead of Oscar Hummel, the sculptor was John Frederick Hummel, who was actually the father of Oscar Hummel.

We apologize for the error and thank Mary Johnson Dudley, who is the great-granddaughter of the sculptor, for her information.



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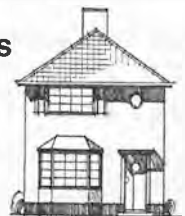
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# Huntsville's Naval History

by Richard Modlin

Four hundred miles from the nearest seashore and a city made famous by America's space program, Huntsville is an unlikely place to be found in the annals of naval history. The following entries are a result of two naval vessels that were christened *USS Huntsville*.

Launched in 1857, the first *Huntsville*, a 196-foot wooden screw steamer with a displacement of 860 tons, sailed along the Atlantic coastline as a cargo ship for the H. B Cromwell & Company. At the beginning of the War Between the States the *Huntsville* was chartered to the U. S. Navy, renovated to carry a crew of 64 sailors and armed with two 32-pounders and 164 smaller deck guns. In May 1861 the vessel was

commissioned as the *USS Huntsville* and placed under the command of Commander Cicero Price. Almost immediately the *USS Huntsville* sailed for the Gulf of Mexico to join the Gulf Blockading Squadron. The navy purchased the vessel in August 1861.

The *USS Huntsville* remained on blockade duty for approximately five months before returning to New York. During this interval she captured two schooners off of Alabama and became en-

gaged in a short battle with the blockade-runner *Florida*, seaward bound, causing it to turn and return to Mobile.

In June 1862 Lt. Howard Rogers took command of the *USS Huntsville* in New York and returned the vessel to blockade duty along the east coast of the Gulf of Mexico. Before 1862 ended, the *USS Huntsville* captured five vessels: the Confederate steamers *Adela* and *Reliance*; two schooners, *Courier* and *Ariel*, trying to

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run the blockade; and the British schooner Agnes. A variety of prize cargoes - cotton, coffee, lead, tin, wine and medicine - were confiscated from these captured vessels.

Blockade duty during 1863 became even more lucrative for the *USS Huntsville*. She captured two Confederate cargo ships, the *Minnie* and *A. J. Hodge*; the British schooners, *Surprise* and *Ascension*; and a Spanish steamer named *Union*. Also, the *USS Huntsville* was given credit for aiding in the capture of three other vessels: the *Cuba*, *Eugenia*, and a Confederate sloop named *Last Trial*. Besides the important commodities and supplies these ships carried to the besieged Confederate states, the most valuable prizes taken were five hundred bales of cotton destined for sale in the West Indies. Money from this sale would have gone to finance the South's war efforts.

The *USS Huntsville* remained an obstacle to shipping in the western Gulf of Mexico and the waters off Cuba into 1864. But during a mission to Tampa Bay in May of that year, to support the landing of Union troop, the crew of the *USS Huntsville* fell victim to a yellow fever outbreak that occurred that spring. This disease plagued most of the sailors stationed aboard Union vessels. More than half the crew of the *USS Huntsville* was stricken. Ordered back to New York, the *Huntsville* was placed in quarantine until August and then decommissioned.



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Recommissioned in March 1865 and with Lt. Comdr. Edward F. Devens as her new captain, the *USS Huntsville* steamed for New Orleans and took on passengers and prisoners. The vessel returned to the Brooklyn Naval Yard on the first of May. After a short stay, she proceeded to Baltimore and embarked one hundred and fifty men bound for Panama. On the return voyage, while passing Roncador Island (a small island on treacherous Roncador Bank, which lies roughly midway between Costa Rica and Jamaica), *Huntsville's* crew found the survivors of the wrecked steamship *Golden Rule*. With the aid of

another vessel, the *State of Georgia*, the passengers and crew of the *Golden Rule* were rescued and transported back to Panama. Near the end of June 1865 the *USS Huntsville* returned to New York with eighty-five crewmen from the *Golden Rule*.

After two short trips to Boston, the *USS Huntsville* escorted the monitor *Nausset* from the

Brooklyn Naval Yard to Philadelphia. This was her last duty as a naval vessel.

The *USS Huntsville* was decommissioned at the end of August and sold in November 1865. Again a civilian steamship and without the prefix USS, the *Huntsville* returned to the sea as a commercial vessel. She continued in this mission until destroyed by fire in December of

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Much closer to the present time and to the reputation of Huntsville, Alabama, is the second *USS Huntsville*. On March 2, 1945 the Maritime Commission contracted for a Victory class tanker to be built. The Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation of Portland laid the keel. The finished vessel was christened the *Knox Victory* and launched in April 1945. Delivered to the War Shipping Administration in May, the *Knox Victory* finished the remainder of World War II as a merchant tanker under charter to the Olympic Steamship Company. After the war the *Knox Victory* continued in merchant service under a variety of bareboat charters (charters issued on

the vessel without the crew) until 1958 when the vessel was placed into the National Defense Reserve Fleet.

The U. S. Navy took possession of the *Knox Victory* in 1960 and assigned it to the Military Sea Transportation Service. In November 1960 the *Knox Victory* was renamed *USS Huntsville* and given the designation T-AGM-7, the seventh in a line of missile-range instrumentation ships. She was converted to a vessel capable for this function by the Triple "A" Machine Shop, Inc., of San Francisco, California and placed into service as a missile-range tracking ship in

1961.

This second *USS Huntsville* was 455 feet long, had a beam of 62 feet, a draft of 29 feet, and a displacement of 5,498 loaded tons. It had no armament and carried a compliment of 49 civilian crewmen. From its homeports of Port Hueneme, California and Honolulu, Hawaii, the *USS Huntsville* operated throughout the central Pacific Ocean for the next four years, making intermittent patrols from Mexico to Wake Island and the Marshall Islands. These patrols provided the fledgling American Space Program with considerable

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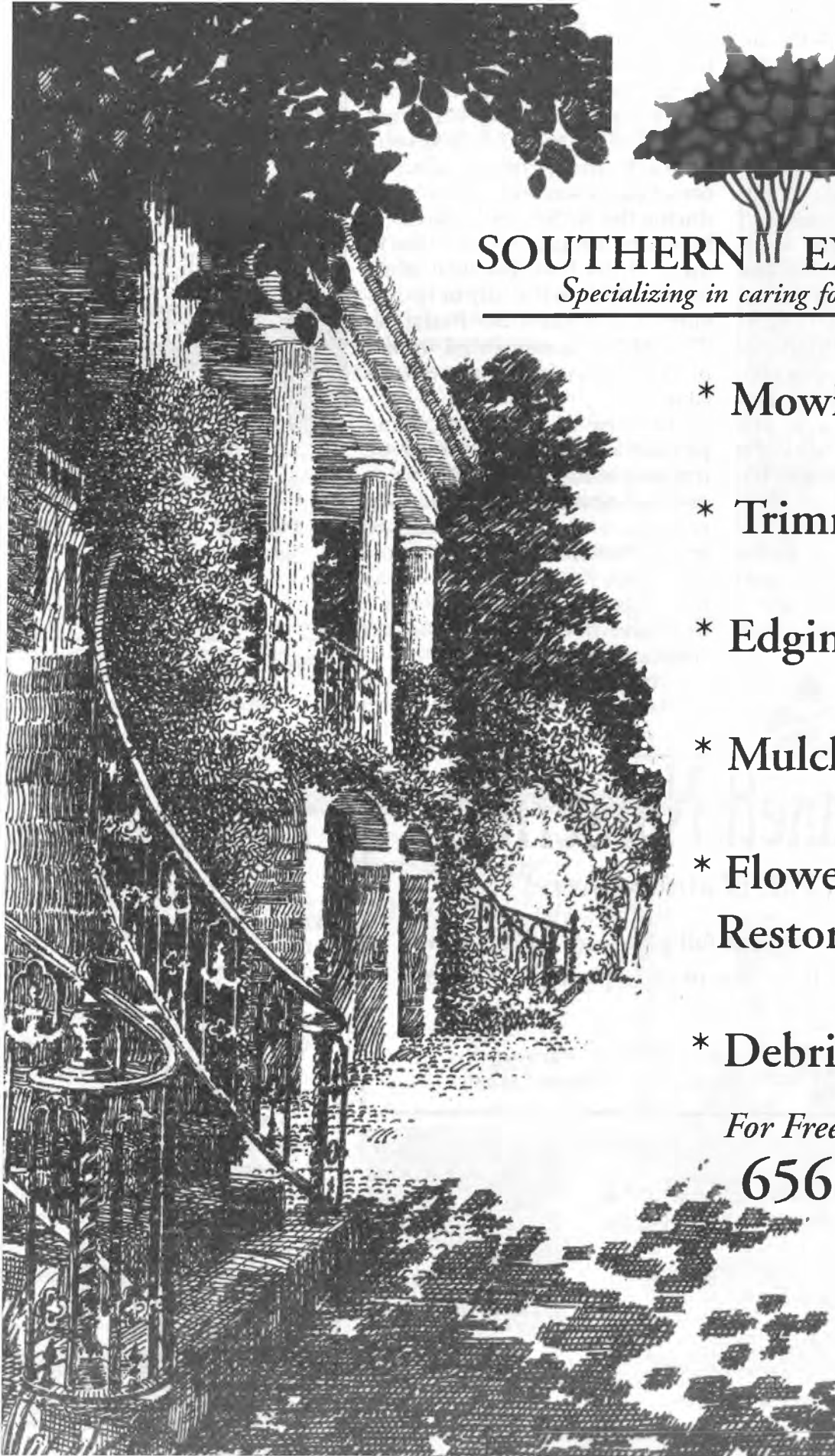
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data and information.

In the spring of 1965 the Navy ordered the *USS Huntsville* to the Avondale Shipyards in Westwego, Louisiana to drastically overhaul her technical and electronic capabilities. These conversions and upgrades took almost two years, but provided the vessel with improved satellite-linked communication. The *USS Huntsville* now had the capability of uninterrupted contact with the mainland and spacecraft. The satellite link also provided the vessel with an improved aid to navigation; the technology installed was the forerunner to today's Global Positioning System (GPS). With this system, the ship's navigators were able to fix the ship's position to within 600 feet and flight controllers could more precisely locate and track space-

craft.

With these improvements the *USS Huntsville* was reassigned to the Pacific Ocean in 1967, where she joined the four other missile-range instrument vessels to track and provide links in communication with spacecrafts during the NASA Apollo Man-to-the-Moon Program. One other of these ships had, because of its name, a link to the City of Huntsville. It was the *USS Redstone* (T-AGM-20), a converted tanker of the Mission Buenaventura Class.

Because of technological improvements made to land-based tracking stations, the AGM ships used to monitor the Apollo missions have been decommissioned and struck from the naval roster. Some have found their way to scrape yards and some have become artificial reefs off America's seacoast.

The final destiny and fate of the second *USS Huntsville* and *USS Redstone* is unknown.



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# Hurricane Valley Popcorn Company

by Theresa Hanvey Fallwell

In the 1940's, movies were the foremost entertainment in Huntsville. Modern, black and white productions with sound such as Casablanca with Lauren Bacall and Humphrey Bogart, or Grapes of Wrath with Henry Fonda, or Rebecca with Laurence Olivier and Joan Fontaine were presented at a trio of theaters including the Lyric, the Grand, and the Elks. And, without a doubt, the most popular snack to accompany the movies was popcorn.

The popularity of popcorn fairly exploded during this time period for several reasons. First, popcorn was inexpensive, tasty, and readily available. Second, the taste for the salty treat grew immensely because of the lack of sugar available for sweet treats during the War. Third, the number of movie-goers increased dramatically with the successful combination of picture and sound, and the post-War emotional and financial climate was conducive to entertainment.

My late grandfather, Walter McGehee, as the Hurricane Valley Popcorn Company, successfully capitalized on the popularity of movies and popcorn, and proudly grew the popcorn that for many years was an integral part of the movie experience in Huntsville.

Prairie gold, the

Native American name for popcorn, was an ever present commodity on the McGehee Farm of the 1930's and 1940's.

Granddad was choosy about his popcorn. His preference was always pearl corn. Pearl popcorn was rounded in shape and smooth, as opposed to rice popcorn which was elongated and bumpier. The pearl corn produced a variety of colors including red, pink, blue, yellow, and multi-colored kernels.

Granddad was also ahead of his time as he only grew what would be called heirloom popcorn today. This popcorn was open or self-pollinating with the seeds replicating the parent plants. He saved his own harvested seeds to plant next year's crop, and he also bartered with other farmers for

unique varieties.

Each spring Granddad planted ten to twelve acres in popcorn. These acres were located on the outside perimeter of his farm so as not to compromise pollina-

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tion, quantity, or quality of any other crops, particularly sweet corn. The popcorn acreage, just below the mountain land, was also chosen because of its abundance of wet water springs which supplied the corn with plenty of water for optimum kernel development. Tall green corn stalks flourished and bore ears of corn that ripened during the long, hot summer, and came to harvest in the late fall when the entire plant had turned into dry, straw-colored fodder.

Granddad and my brother, Wayne, harvested the corn. Two mules were hitched to a wagon and driven through the tall, crackling rows of corn. As the wagon and mules traveled through the field, one or more rows, the "down rows," would be sacrificed for the convenience of using the wagon. As a little boy, my brother trailed behind the wagon and picked up those ears that had been knocked down under the wagon. Granddad picked the ears from the standing stalks. The two of them pitched ears of corn covered in dry shucks into the wagon until the field was harvested.

The overflowing wagon was returned to the barn where the ears of corn were hand stripped. The dry shucks were pulled downwards from the top of the ear to form a tail at the end where the corn had been connected to the stalk. Several ears were tied together with a loose shuck and hung over tier-poles that crisscrossed the corn crib from top to bottom. Granddad left the harvested ears to dry in the cool fall air until he deemed them ready to shell. Ready to shell meant that the corn

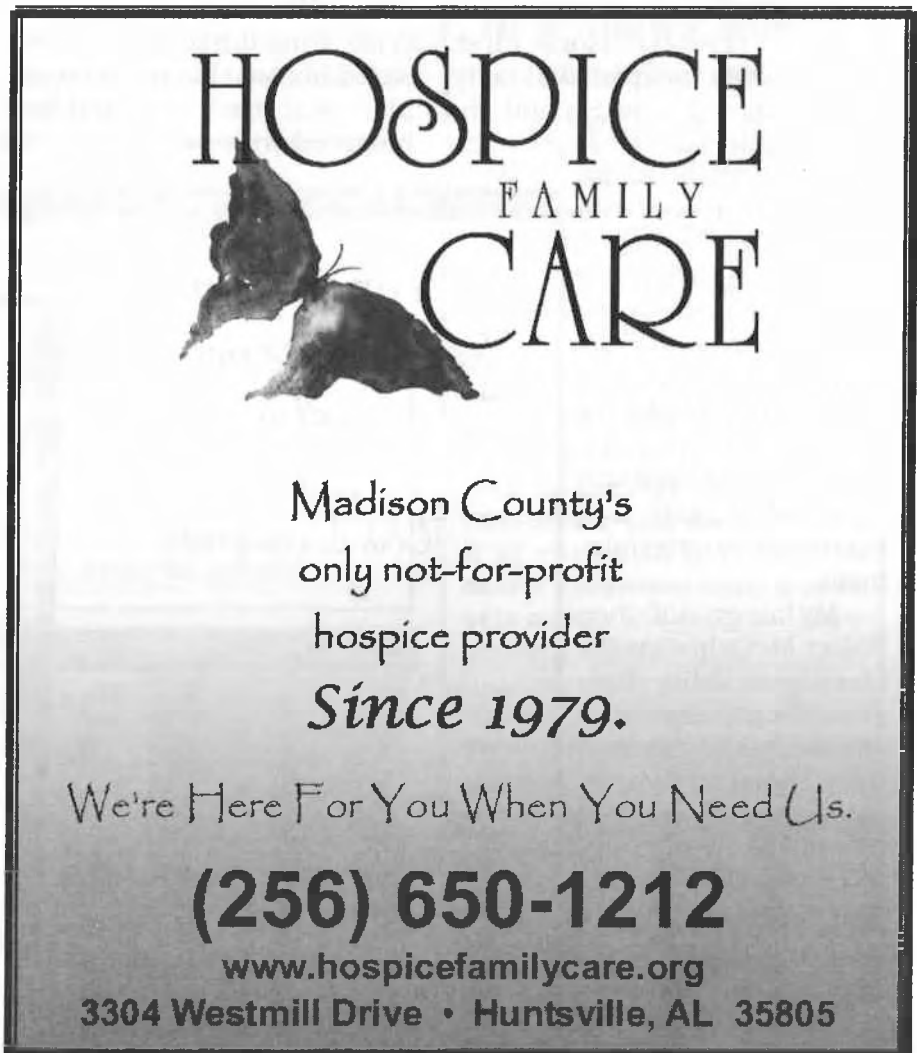
had a moisture content of somewhere between 13% and 17% which was determined by shelling sample ears and popping them. If the popcorn was too chewy, then the corn needed to dry more. If the kernels popped up fluffy and tasty, then it was time to shell. Too many "old maids" meant the corn was too dry.

Shelling the popcorn was

no easy matter. The corn was very hard and dry and shelling was rough on the hands. Granddad did not use a mechanical sheller because of the potential damage to the kernels, i.e., jeopardizing the drop of water at the center of each kernel which, when heated, caused the eruption. And without electricity on the farm, an electric sheller was useless. The popcorn was hand shelled by holding one ear in your left hand and one ear



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6. *Why is it Named That?* 250 Place Names in Huntsville/Madison County by Dex Nilsson \$13.95
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8. *True Tales of Old Madison County* by Virgil (Pat) Jones \$7.95
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in your right hand and rubbing the two ears together with sufficient force to release the kernels, and hopefully, spare your own knuckles. The little dry kernels rattled as they fell into a small tub, and then that tub was slowly poured into a large #2 washtub from a height that allowed a breeze and gravity to clean any residual chaff or shuck from the kernels.

This process was repeated until the corn was clean and free of debris. The cobs were tossed into a pile in the crib for later use as fire-starters.

After the cleaning process, Granddad packaged the shelled popcorn into 50 pound burlap sacks which he sewed together with a thick twine. Then he loaded his '47 Ford truck to take the corn to town to fulfill the annual contracts established the previous spring.

The contracts were just gentlemen's agreements, handshakes. So, on a fateful fall day about 1948, Granddad and my brother set off for town to complete the final task in a nine month journey of growing and supplying popcorn to all three movie theaters in Huntsville.

In retrospect, Granddad always said he should have seen the invasion of Jolly Time Popcorn coming to small town Huntsville, infiltrating his market. He had heard about and been entertained by "General Jolly Time and His

Popcorn Colonels" on the radio.

He had also heard Jolly Time advertised as the "world's best popcorn" by radio personality, Arthur Godfrey.

Even Hollywood well-knowns like Bob Hope, Danny Kaye, and Ozzie and Harriet seemed to sup-

port the Jolly Time Popcorn Company in radio interviews.

This company was so incredibly innovative as to sell popcorn, not in bulk as it had always been done, but in modern, novelty tin cans with snappy logos for 10 cents each. And, as if to add in-

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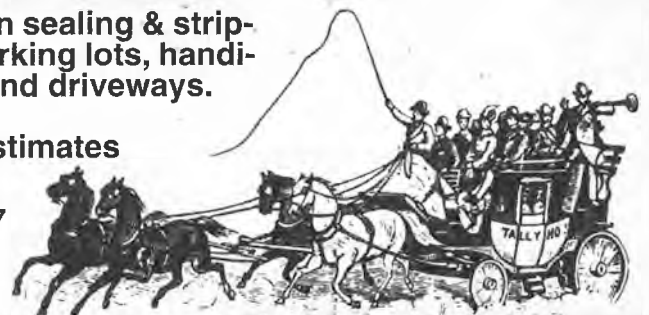
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sult to injury, "a guaranteed to pop" phrase was emblazoned on each can.

So, Granddad was not taken totally by surprise when the theaters he contracted with, one by one, told him they had decided to buy their popcorn from Jolly Time. Granddad, disappointed, but ever the gentleman, thanked the managers of the theaters for their long time business connections and returned to the truck where my brother and a load of unsold popcorn were waiting.

Granddad analyzed the situation and justified the theaters' decisions based on the glitzy cans, ease of storage, price, rodent control, and probable government inspections. But what was he to do with a truck bed full of 50 pound sacks of popcorn?

Granddad decided to try to sell it to other commercial dealers in Huntsville. He went to I. Winn Hardware Store first, and there, every last kernel of popcorn was purchased.

His sizeable investment, his cash crop, was not totally lost. In gratitude to the owners of I. Winn, Granddad told Grandmother to go their store and buy something expensive. My frugal Grandmother vehemently opposed this idea, but eventually gave in to Granddad's wishes. She purchased a beautiful cobalt blue, French ceramic cocotte or casserole dish with a lid decorated with hand painted flowers. Grandmother never used that dish. The cost of it was just too distasteful to her, and as she said, "What's that little beauty going to look like on a table covered with a gingham oilcloth?"

Jolly Time, with its progressive marketing strategies and innovative processes, became a world leader in popcorn production, essentially monopolizing the popcorn market for many years. My Granddad never raised popcorn again for public consumption, but devoted his energies to other cash crops.

And that fancy, French casserole dish, well, it sits in my china cabinet today still having never been used, but, in its reflection not only do I see the

demise of the once prosperous Hurricane Valley Popcorn Company, but a bit of my grandparent's resilient character that surfaced in the wake of an unwelcome direction change in their lives.

**"When you want to stay home from school, you have to stay in the bathroom a long, long, time."**

**Matthew, age 9**



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# News From the Year 1932

## News From Huntsville and Around The World

### Lindy's Baby Kidnapped

The most intensive manhunt in American history has been mounted in search of the infant son of Charles A. Lindbergh, who has been kidnapped.

The 20-month-old boy, Charles A. Lindbergh Jr., was snatched from his crib in the family's home at Hopewell, near Princeton, New Jersey, last night while his father, the famous trans-Atlantic aviator, and Mrs. Lindbergh were at dinner.

Police have no clues, aside from muddy footprints in the nursery, a homemade ladder down which the infant was carried, and a note, pinned to the windowsill, demanding \$50,000 for the child's safe return.

Colonel Lindbergh said he would willingly pay the ransom. However, the note made no mention of where or how to pay the money.

News of the kidnapping shocked the nation. President

Hoover has ordered all federal law enforcement agencies to assist in the search.

More than 100,000 officers, aided by civilian volunteers, have joined the search along the entire eastern seaboard, stopping cars, quizzing passengers and trying to assist Colonel Lindbergh in combing the wooded areas around the home.

### Machinist Designs New Zippo Lighter

George G. Blaisdell realized this year that Americans lacked something essential: a wind-proof and easy-to-use cigarette lighter. So, using his experience as a machinist, he designed the Zippo lighter. Initial sales seem promising, and Blaisdell hopes his invention will soon catch on like wildfire.

### Rockefeller Center being Built in N.Y.

A project of hope in the midst of despair is rising in the heart of Manhattan. Begun last year, Rockefeller Center will one day include 14 steel-framed office buildings. The complex is being constructed under the financial sponsorship of John D. Rockefeller Jr., son of the renowned oil baron.

The anchor of the plan is the 70-story RCA Building, to be surrounded by smaller skyscrapers built parallel or at right angles to the anchor. The center will house offices and broadcasting facilities.

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## Bonus Army Driven Out

Acting on orders from President Hoover, federal troops, armed with machine guns and tear gas, evicted the bonus army from Washington tonight, setting fire to their makeshift shanties and tents near the Capitol and along the Anacostia River. By midnight, only a few veterans were still in the city.

In calling out the troops, which were commanded by General Douglas MacArthur and Major Dwight Eisenhower, Hoover said the ranks of the bonus seekers had been infiltrated by Communists and persons with criminal records, a fact perhaps unknown to those veterans who had been camped here since May in their drive for a bonus for service in the Great War.

Before federal troops moved in, city police fought with the squatters, resulting in the death of one veteran and several injuries on both sides.

Unfortunately for Eisenhower and MacArthur, this event will probably result in their careers coming to an end.

## King Gillette Made Shaving Easy

King Camp Gillette, millionaire inventor of the safety razor, died today in Los Angeles. He was 77. Despite his enviable success in the business world, Gillette loathed the inherent evils of competition.

In 1894, long before his success, he wrote books advocating the construction of a utopian society near Niagara Falls. Gillette envisioned a community of trust and cooperation, living on the clean power produced by the falls.

Gillette was born in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. His father was a part-time inventor and his mother wrote a bestselling cookbook.

Young Gillette held various low-paying jobs throughout the Midwest. In 1903, he founded the Gillette Safety Razor Company. That year he sold 168 safety razors. The next year, he sold 15 million. The present annual output is one billion. The safety razor has been heralded as one of the world's greatest inventions.

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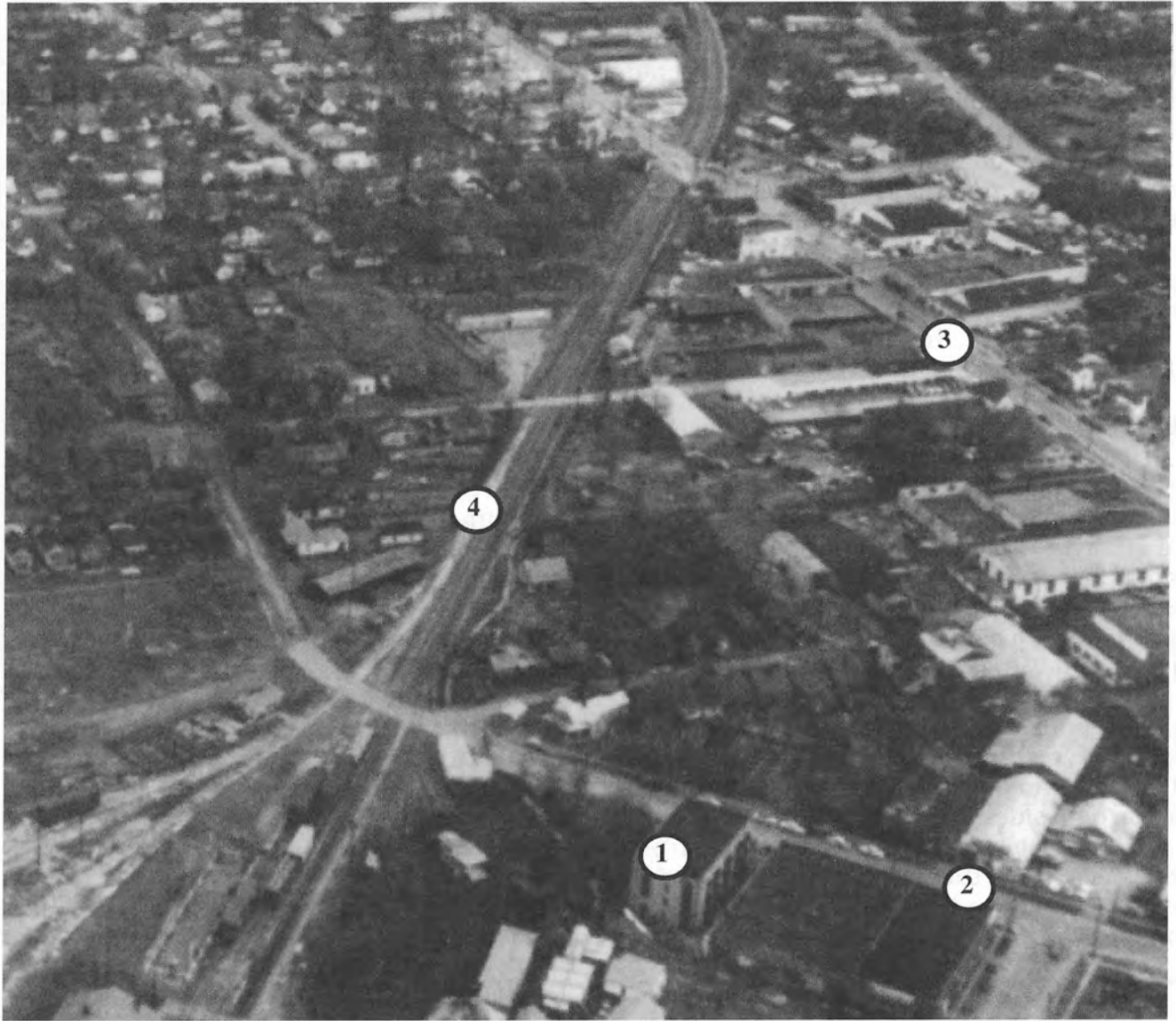
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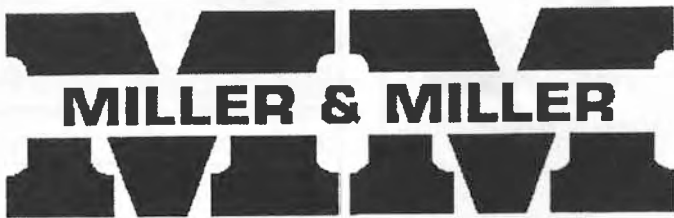
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# Times Have Changed



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# Doing Great Since '58

by Luann Vanova Mekhail

Rock and roll was king. Blue suede shoes and poodle skirts with sweater sets filled the halls of good old S. R. Butler High in Huntsville, Alabama.

The term "teenager" had suddenly been used to define a group of people that had heretofore been known as children. Nearly grown, granted, but children nevertheless, since there were only two categories that designated people; children and adults.

No one knew we were making history, we were just growing up and going to school next door to the space center of the universe. NATO had sent troops to study at Redstone Arsenal and scientists gathered from around the world, but the most important things on our minds were sock hops, lunch at the "Rebel Inn" across the street, passing the next test, and who was going to be at the drive-in restaurant when Grady Reeves dedicated our song from his booth up on the roof.

...And, of course, the football games against Athens, Coffee, Decatur, Deshler, Gadsden, Sheffield, and most importantly, Huntsville High. The school paper, "The Stars and Bars" stirred up our enthusiasm and the cheer leaders, majorettes and pep team kept it going at the pep rallies in the brand new gymnasium.

Days slipped through our fingers and suddenly it was Friday, May 23, 1958 and there we all were in caps and gowns, filing up to the stage where the principal, Mr. J. Homer Crim, presented us with our diplomas and awards.

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We certainly never thought about fifty years in the future. We hardly thought about five years ahead. Some of us went off to college. Some of us married the boy or girl we had been going steady with and began families. We slipped out of that teenage stage with much less notice than we had slipped into it.

Time sped up for all of us. Everyone was caught up in their own lives. Most of us didn't keep in touch. Then we were suddenly thrown into a new world, not in outer space, where Huntsville had already left a mark, but into the internet highway. We could just turn on our computer in our office, or bedroom or living room and be connected to one another around the world.

It was too good an opportunity to pass up and BHS58 Together Again was born. Alice Cobb Eaves and Linda Moorhead Gentle were soon joined by Thelma Walker Westmore, Tiny Speegle Brewer, Viola Matthews Vaughn, Pat Shelton Whitworth, Delores McAnally Hill, Lou Jean Hill Morris, Teresia Shelten Reid in combing their address books and locating classmates around the country. They then formed a committee which also included Kathy Drake Aurelia, Barbara Rothe Williams, Houston Masey and John Moon.

Their endeavor was so exceedingly successful that the 50th Reunion of the Graduating Class of S.R. Butler High was a tremendous success. Thirty-five graduates and spouses still living in Alabama attended as well as many others living in the states of Georgia, Tennessee, Mississippi, Florida, Massachusetts, New York, Ohio, Arizona, California and Washington State. It was a tremendous home coming.

Huntsville did herself proud. The weather was gorgeous and

## Preserving your family history

One evening last week while taking a walk around our neighborhood, my sister and I passed one house that had put out their garbage and I was saddened to see on top of a box of discarded belongings were several old photographs, some still in their frames.

I thought of the shoe box of old photos I found when I went through my mother's belongings when she passed away many years ago. There were many I could not identify. I brought them out during a family reunion and asked her brother and sister to help me identify the pictures and we had a wonderful afternoon reminiscing and I got to know some family history. By putting the photos in an album with the stories that were shared I have preserved a part of our family that can be passed on and not left in an unidentifiable trash heap.

So, I would like to help you preserve your past. Do you have a shoe box of family history that needs to be identified and preserved?

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it only rained at night while the participants were sleeping. The beautiful homes sparkled in the sunlight and the bright red soil looked lovely against all the variegated shades of green in the plants, trees and lawns. The magnolias were in bloom.

My husband and I were guests of Charles Hill and his wife Delores McAnally Hill and they put most five star bed-and-breakfasts to shame.

We were conducted on a tour of the old Butler High School by the principal. Memories came flooding back as we walked the halls and peeped into the classrooms where we had sat almost a half century ago.

We had a dinner at the Marriott where there was a moment of silent prayer in recognition of the twenty-three classmates who are deceased, including Lionel Delmore, the writer of the song "Swinging" which was played to the misty eyed participants.

A tribute to all the men in attendance who had served in the military was an emotional moment. The old music enticed many to get up and dance and filled all of us with many memories.

A Sunday brunch at Linda Moorhead Gentle's beautiful home was not only delicious, but gave us an opportunity to mingle again and say our last goodbye. We all realized that time was catching up with us.

The only thing I missed was dancing bare-foot on the square downtown to Patsy Cline's "Crazy." But it was pretty close to perfect.

When my husband asked me, on the flight back to California, how he could describe his visit to those less fortunate people who have never been to Huntsville, I told him that there were only two words he needed; 'Southern Hospitality.'

It is still very much alive in Old Huntsville.

# A Just Reward

John Malone was arrested last week after placing a reward in our newspaper for a pistol he had misplaced. Authorities promptly arrested him when they identified the pistol as one that had been dropped during a recent burglary of Mill's Feed Store. Malone is awaiting trial.

*from 1899 newspaper*

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# He lost his Teeth

from 1875 newspaper

A Huntsville man, M. S. Thompson, ten years ago got a set of false teeth mounted on a golden base. A short time afterwards he lost his teeth and he supposed they had been stolen by a bag boy in his employ. Thompson was in the habit of taking them from his mouth at night and placing them on a table in a glass of water. The boy strenuously denied the theft, but this did not in the least remove the suspicion. The boy was immediately fired. After a time all thought of the false teeth passed away, with Thompson having secured another set.

About three years ago Thompson caught a very severe cold and from that time forward he was troubled with incessant pain in his right breast, in the region of the lungs. This was attended with a severe cough and frequent hemorrhages of the lungs occurred. He thought he had consumption and for years had been under medical treatment, without relief.

During the early part of last fall he was seized with a violent fit of coughing and during its progress coughed up several pieces of a hard substance which appeared like bone on first examination. He experienced

some relief at this time, and during the next day he coughed up more of the same species of material. Being very curious, he examined this closely and in doing so discovered pieces of metal attached to the bony matter, which, though worn and discolored, looked like teeth.

The truth suddenly dawned upon him. He had gone to sleep those many years ago with the false teeth in his mouth, and in the night he swallowed them, and they had passed into his lungs and had lain there these many years.

In the course of a week he coughed up the gold plate in pieces, along with the rest of his teeth. He rapidly regained his health and strength and is now as hearty and robust as he ever was.

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Windsor House provides a comprehensive array of services to its residents.

- \* Trained & Courteous staff
- \* Three nutritious meals & snacks
- \* Social events & activities
- \* Kitchenette in each suite
- \* Medication assistance
- \* Emergency call light systems
- \* Beauty & barber shop
- \* Private dining room

A place you can call home....

4411 McAllister Drive  
Huntsville, Alabama 35805  
(256) 837-8585

*Be most certain thing about the future is its uncertainty.*

*It's never too early to be responsible.*

*Our Family Care Programs free families from emotional and financial decision-making when numbed by the loss of a loved one.*



**LAUGHLIN SERVICE**

*Funeral Home & Crematory, Inc.*

*2320 Bob Wallace Ave. S.W. 534-2471*

**WE BUY**



**SILVER DOLLARS  
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## Marks Woodshop

***If it's wood - we can do it!***

- Custom Furniture - Antique repair & refinishing
- Hand Carved signs - Gun Stocks Repair & Refinishing - Exquisite Custom Trim & Moulding

**Free Consultation**

**Mark Cauthen - 837-1975**

*Over 30 years experience in Custom Woodworking*



# FREE! LACE THONGS

Simply mention this ad, before October 1st, 2008!

In Celebration of those who fight for our  
Freedoms, we Offer:



**FREE** Wine and Shisha  
TASTINGS  
Every Tuesday night  
6:30-7:30 p.m.

**TOYBOX**  
PARTIES

**FREE** Party Room!  
Enjoy a Toy or Hookah  
party in our Lounge with  
*Beer and Wine!*



## 25% OFF

All White and Bridal Lingerie  
And Men's silk Boxers!

## B.Y.O.B.

**FREE** Buy One Get One Free- Adult Toys, Lotions, Oils,  
Lingerie, Games, Cards, Videos, Hookahs, Gifts and more!!

Coming Soon! For your added Convenience, We will be opening a  
store in the Madison Square Mall on November 1st. Second Level, near J.C.  
Penny's and across from the Encore Shoe store. Just in Time for the Holidays!



★ Because...

**WE Fought for YOU!**

*Pleasures*  
ONE STOP ROMANCE SHOP

4925 University Dr. (next to Chili's) Hsv.  
1711 Central Pkwy. (corner of 14th) Decatur  
**Coming to: Madison Square Mall!**  
**830-0069**

# When life was simple...



By the 1920s the ranks of Confederate veterans were thinning although they still wore their old uniforms on special occasions. During that same decade (1926) J.C. Penny opened a store on the courthouse square and it was against the law to sell gasoline on Sundays. The Ku Klux Klan was protesting boxing matches being held within the city limits and during the county fair a race was held between an ostrich and an automobile. The ostrich won.

***Those days are long gone, but the folks at Propst Drug store still believe in offering the same dedicated, personal service that makes our city a special place to live.***

***"Old Tyme Friendly Service"***



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Open 8 AM - 10PM - 7 days a week  
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