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**On Raising Plants  
& Children:**

**The Life of  
Edward F. DuBose**

“DuBose, I want to make you an offer. We need you in Huntsville. The young generation growing up in the mill village needs you.”

Eager for another adventure and challenge, Edward DuBose accepted his offer and after a firm handshake, Joe Bradley boarded his train back to Huntsville.

***Also in this issue: A Night at the Russel Erskine***

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## On Raising Plants & Children: The Life of Edward F. DuBose

by Andy Myers

The story of the life of Edward Foyl DuBose is one that spans the breadth and width of a century. A life whose deep rutted impressions shall no doubt be inherited by the many coming generations of those he impacted and whose lessons in fortitude and grace shall be a crown of wisdom to all who crave guidance and understanding. From his tireless work as a humanitarian and educator in Madison County and across the state of Alabama, to the many organizations and programs he nurtured and whose growth he oversaw; the momentum of E.F. DuBose life's work is rivaled only by his boundless energy and infectious sense of motivation.

E.F. DuBose was born on the eighth day of the twentieth century, during the doomed presidency of William McKinley and into a South still cooling from the heat of a great Civil War. His father worked the heavy red clay of Pike County, Alabama as a cotton and corn farmer and as

soon as E.F. DuBose was of age he too would be learning the lessons of hard work from behind a horse and plow. As a child he developed a rich inner world of imagination and a deep fascination with the natural realm of plants, an interest that would extend through out his lifetime and would provide an ever unfolding metaphor to his life's work of teaching.

As his adolescence approached, DuBose immersed himself in the teachings of the Bible, building on the foundations his Mother had planted as a young child and would many a time drive the family wagon into the nearby Pike County town of Brundidge for church services. Growing up on a vast thousand acre farm in a time before television or radio; the young DuBose was often witness to the inner workings of the small community that thrived around his family's farm and he befriended many of the children of his father's employees.

A number of the family's close neighbors had been born well before the Civil War and the proverbs and folktales they told and retold spun a rich aroma across the farm and provided a vision into a time long past.

When the time came for E.F. DuBose to begin his academic career, the only option was the long trek by wagon to a nearby town for private schooling. In time this became a burden and in response the elder DuBose

**"The Mall of America in Bloomington, MN. is the size of 7 football fields."**

*Sent by Bob Pierce*



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had a clapboard, one-room structure built that would serve as a schoolhouse for both his sons and daughters and all the employee's children for years to come. The young teacher who was brought in would also find room and board with the DuBose family and whose lesson plans of writing, reading, and arithmetic would leave a lasting impression on the young Dubose. The educator saw much promise in the talented and highly intelligent young man, and, at her suggestion, DuBose applied for admittance at the Troy State Normal School, despite his age of only sixteen years. After passing the qualifying examinations, DuBose received his acceptance letter and soon was on his way to Troy, Alabama. He would never forget the prudence and wisdom he had gleaned from his family, the teacher, and the land itself.

In the spring of 1916, DuBose arrived in the budding city of Troy and began his classes at the square red brick building that had housed the Troy Normal school since it's opening in 1887. At the time, the town of Troy had been experiencing a boom of sorts in the ways of population, economy, and

political influence; having been the home to Charles Henderson, the recently elected Governor of Alabama as well as several senators, congressmen, and instrumental businessmen of the region. Troy was also home to many colorful characters, such as Pink Parker, the elderly Confederate veteran who had a stone monument erected in his front yard in memory of John Wilkes Booth, the assassin of Abraham Lincoln.

The clanging of the nearby rail lines, the bustle of a growing downtown with stores and merchants, rubbing shoulders with the talking heads of local Alabama politics, all these would prove a sure distraction for a young man on his own for the first time. But for the young DuBose this was a time of deep concentration and focus on his school work, knowing what the end result would be. Often he would think of his home, of the big country house and the smells of cooking floating down the hallway, the glow of the oil lamps at night illuminating the rooms, and of the soft evening wind gently swaying the curtains through the open windows. He thought too of the brook that snakes across his fa-

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ther's land and of the crawdads that would jet under rocks in the icy spring waters. His chosen academic path would be teaching, and after classes on theory and method, he found himself as a teacher's understudy in a local classroom. He ran errands for the teacher and helped certain students with their lessons and soon he began to gain an understanding of his field and began to see the dynamics of a classroom.

After practice teaching and taking his final sets of classes, DuBose left the Troy State Normal School with a diploma in hand and returned home to his family and the life he had left behind. He put his teaching career on hold and began to work for his father once again, this time on another farm in nearby Covington County. There were barns to be built, fences to be mended, and acres to be plowed, and DuBose was ever busy, yet his mind wandered restlessly in concern of the path of his future.

On a fall day in 1919 he found himself splitting cedar shakes to be used for roofing a new barn, the rich cedar aroma wafting in the autumn breeze. Soon he was on the roof of the new structure, laying down the cedar shakes

on the rafters. He focused his eyes on the task before him yet he found it difficult to not be distracted by the children passing by below him on a dirt path. They were all on their way to school and DuBose couldn't help but feel a deep yearning inside to teach, to show these young minds about the wide open world around us, of nature and human learning.

He envisioned the application papers that had sat in his bedroom those past few months, to apply to be a teacher. Wasting no time he hurried down the ladder and raced back to his house, where he began filling out his name and information. Soon the applications had been mailed and his hat was in the race for the newest teaching positions that would become available in the state. Several weeks passed and soon the metal mailbox at the end of the road grew heavy with the bundles of mail from schools all across the state wanting to hire DuBose. Hurriedly he opened the vari-

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ous sealed documents, his eyes running across the typed words in anticipation. The offers were from all around, even one from Bay Minette starting off as principal of the entire school. This particularly brought a grin to DuBose's face as he read the letter to his proud family. He balanced and weighed all of his options whether to relocate south towards the Gulf or possibly further north towards the mountains and hill country near Birmingham. After much contemplation he decided upon a job offer from the Etowah County schools to teach at the high school located in Attala, just outside of Gadsden.

Early January of the year 1920 found DuBose quickly settling into his newfound occupation and home. The school had rented him a room nearby and soon light dustings of snow blanketed the ground. His job title quickly expanded and he found himself covering several subjects at the high school from arithmetic to the agriculture courses the school taught. Outside of his classroom window lay a vast overgrown field, the tall blades of grass brittle and dead from the chill of winter.

DuBose would often peer out the window when taking a break between classes, pacing back and forth to clear his mind before the next group of students hurried in, their faces all flushed from the winter winds. He would then turn around to face the shuffling class and begin the day's lesson. As the ground began to warm little shoots of green protruded from the dark sod and tiny buds of leaves poked through the rigid bark of the sleeping trees, and DuBose once again peered out the glass window to the fallow field before him. Soon his eyes lit up and he jotted down on a nearby sheet of paper a plan for a garden in that empty field.

After getting the "OK" from his principal, DuBose let no time pass to put his plan into action. He hired a local man with a mule and plow and had the field mowed and turned under, exposing the rich brown soil from its dormant winter slumber. His hands combed through the loose soil and the smell of spring filled his lungs as he and his agriculture class carefully hand-seeded rows of corn, bush beans, squash, and a plethora of other garden staples. Now as he

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looked out of his classroom window, he smiled with pride at his handiwork and the garden that became an integral part of his teachings. To many of his students, Mr. DuBose's class was the favorite, a class that fed not only the mind but also the spirit as the cycles of nature became a willing metaphor to the lessons he instilled. He also gained the respect of his fellow teachers and the parents of his students as his teaching skills were honed as if on sharpening stone.

As spring wound down into summer and the garden grew heavy with the fruit of the land, DuBose would commence each day with an early morning harvest of vegetables to be used by his students and the school lunchroom. On a midday walk by the Attala train station DuBose noticed a sharply dressed man waiting for a train, occasionally checking his glimmering pocket watch. DuBose was curious about this man and decided to strike up a conversation.

The man wore a dark, neatly pressed suit, and a vest sporting a long row of shining brass buttons. DuBose quickly counted the buttons in his mind and realized that the number equaled his age, twenty-one. With a smile he told this to the stranger and a conversation sparked up. The man introduced himself as Joseph Jones Bradley, he hailed from a small but growing town in north Alabama called Huntsville. In Huntsville, Joe Bradley was the agent of the Merrimack Mill, a textile company complete with a thriving village and surrounding hillsides, and although it was barely a whistle stop on the way to Nashville,

it still held the title as the "watercross capital of the world". Mr. Bradley decided to wait for a later train and took up DuBose on his offer of a tour of his school. DuBose spoke proudly of his fledgling school, showing off the neatly cleaned classrooms, the shine of the wax polished hardwood floors, and the abundant summer garden in full bloom and bearing fruit. Mr. Bradley was amazed at this young man's drive and motivation, his clear speaking, and his will to succeed. At one point he stopped and faced the young man, crossing his arms and making sharp eye contact.

"DuBose, I want to make you an offer. We need you in Huntsville. The young generation growing up in the mill village needs you." Eager for another adventure and challenge, DuBose accepted his offer



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and after a firm handshake, Joe Bradley boarded his train back to Huntsville.

The Merrimack Mill boasted one of the largest textile facilities in the South and Joseph Jones Bradley had nurtured and watched it grow since 1905. The expansion of the mill village included nearly three hundred homes, to the most recent advancement when the old steam turbines were dismantled and replaced by new electric power in an effort to increase the efficiency and production. The mill had drastically changed the Huntsville landscape at the turn of the century as the sleepy countryside just outside of the city limits soon developed a grid of streets, stores, and the hulking building that housed the mill itself.

By 1903, demand and profits ushered in the construction of a second mill building, and in the bustling village families

began to grow. For the mill children of this era, opportunity beyond the confines of the Merrimack Mill were rare and most only received an elementary school education before they, too, began their careers toiling in the mill with their parents. Most of the money made by the mill workers at the end of the week would be spent at the mill store where all the necessary

foodstuff and toiletries could be purchased, thus forming a cycle of debt that could prove to be nearly inescapable. In 1919, after much demand, the Joseph J. Bradley School was constructed and quickly filled its halls with the eager mill children. The mission before the teachers was huge and any amount of creative energy of wisdom would've been greatly



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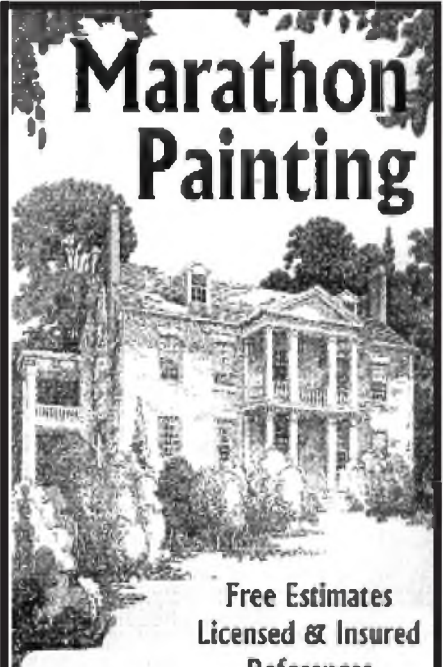
Into this fledgling school stepped Edward Foyl DuBose and in September of 1921, DuBose was installed as the manual training and agriculture teacher.

DuBose took his position very seriously and devoted many hours in and out of the classroom, to the various needs of the children he taught. He repeated many of his successes from the Etowah County High School, planting a large vegetable garden and winning the respect of his fellow teachers and all who encountered him.

By the time he turned twenty-three, the principal of the Joe Bradley School announced his retirement and DuBose was quickly hired as his permanent replacement, a position he would hold at the same school until 1963, nearly three generations later. Also in his twenty-third year he married Lilly Rockett, a fellow teacher whom he had met while working at the Etowah County High School. DuBose settled into his

new married life and purchased a white clapboard home adjacent to his school. He worked to improve the school in any way possible and improve the quality of life for the children who attended there.

When he began as principal, the school only extended to the eighth grade. By his fourth year the school continued on until the twelfth grade and he began proudly handing out high school diplomas to his beloved students. The problem of accreditation also descended upon the Joe Bradley School though, through DuBose's constant attention and work, the school flourished and retained its accreditation. By 1928, DuBose's family included two young daughters and the school he had labored at for the last ten years was becoming a model for other



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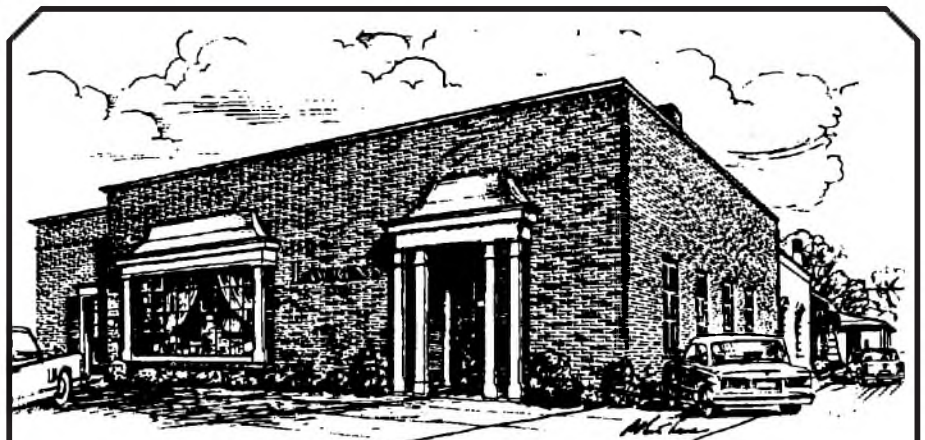


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mill schools in the South.

In 1929, the Great Depression descended upon Madison County and the many poorer mill families were hit the hardest. Inflation rose sharply, the cost of basic food items sky rocketed and jobs began to bleed out of the mill neighborhood.

The Joe Bradley School was not immune to the financial hard times and many jobs and programs were cut. Teachers at the school began to be paid in "script", meaning they would receive their paychecks at a later date when the funds were available. The school's funding only extended for three months out of the year and even the Merrimack Company couldn't afford to carry the burden of the school's bills.

This problem inspired the challenge-ready DuBose into action, to keep his school accredited as a nine month institution. He held meetings with parents, teachers, and local businesses and began to raise money to keep the doors of the school open. The Center Theatre pitched in as well as the Variety Store; parents agreed to a small tuition and the school never lost its accreditation or closed its doors. The challenges placed before DuBose seemed only to put his motivation into momentum and the results were inspiring.

By the early forties and the advent of the Second World War DuBose had developed numerous programs to improve the quality of life; for not only the children of the mill but also the employees who toiled long hours side by side before huge hulks of machinery, where one false slip of the hand could prove to be a detrimental injury.

One of these programs was

**"We must all hear the universal call to like your neighbor as you like to be liked yourself."**

**George W. Bush**

the food stand located inside the mill. Though he had no experience in this sort of food enterprise he accepted this as an opportunity for growth both for himself and the mill workers. A small amount of money was allocated for the beginnings of the stand by the mill's new agent Mr. McKelvie. Unfortunately the start up costs surpassed the funds available and money soon ran dry. Not daunted by this setback, DuBose himself began to use his own earnings as funds to run the stand and managed to hire a crew of dedicated employees who would work many hours to see the stand's success.

The stand functioned as a source of healthy, wholesome food and soon was returning a good profit, most of which went to reward his faithful employees and fund the school. DuBose worked also as the mill's social worker and spearheaded the project to transform a section of the Big Spring lagoon into a summer swimming area, with volunteers dubiously cleaning the water of any floating debris or plant matter. This provided many summers of cool enjoy-

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ment and exercise for the children of the mill. Also under the direction of E.F. DuBose, the Joe Bradley School gymnasium doubled as a community roller skating rink as well as the auditorium showing plays three nights a week at ten cents for admission and senior citizens admitted free of charge. On top of all these achievements and responsibilities, DuBose still maintained his large vegetable garden and took the time to lead a Boy Scout troop on camp outs at the Three Forks of the Flint River to earn merit badges.

In 1951 the Joe Bradley School was annexed into the Madison County School system and by 1956 it was included in the Huntsville City School system. The inclusion of the Merrimack Mill district into the city limits nearly doubled Huntsville's size in land and population.

At the end of the school year in May of 1962, the P.T.A. of Joe Bradley School honored DuBose with a special ceremony thanking him for his years of service at the school. The event was months in the making with everyone but DuBose at work behind the scenes to make the occasion a special celebration.

This would be DuBose's final year at the Joe Bradley School and in 1963 he began the fall semester at a new school built in the same area of Huntsville.

The new school was named Ridgecrest and DuBose was installed as principal with his first set of actions being the beautification of the school. For several decades, DuBose had operated a small plant nursery near the Merrimack Mill raising azaleas, evergreen trees, and an assortment of other ornamental plants. The Ridgecrest campus grounds were soon outlined with rows of azaleas, all raised by the nurturing hands of E.F. DuBose. His work at the new school continued in the tradition of his past achievements with the foundation of school programs and other affairs to benefit the young children.

Of these, the establishment of the city of Huntsville's first class for handicapped children shown the brightest. It was this sort of forward and humanitarian

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thinking that brought about the beginnings of the Special Education Program in Huntsville City Schools.

Besides his work in the school halls of the mill district and the city of Huntsville, DuBose also served on the Welfare Board as vice president and president and also the Department of Pensions and Securities. He nurtured the organizations from their humble beginnings and improved upon their methods of helping the needy of Madison County. In 1977, the benevolent gentlemen known by generations of children as "Mr. DuBose" retired from teaching after a career spanning nearly 60 years of enthusiastic service in which he had become a mentor and gracious companion to generations of children. The lessons he instilled would enrich the careers and lives of many who would lead Huntsville in subsequent years, from police officers to firemen and several sheriffs of Madison County.

As a young boy in the Merimack Village, Doyle Andrews remembers the impact of Edward Foyl DuBose, his instant personality, his discipline, and most of all the everyday life lessons that can be directly attributed to DuBose. Andrews, a retired Fire Captain for the city of Huntsville, attended the Joe Bradley school beginning in the 1948 school year when DuBose was principal.

"Mr. DuBose was a real gentlemen, I mean a gentleman", Andrews affirms as a smile sneaks across his face. In 1952 Andrews' father passed away suddenly leaving Doyle and his three younger brothers without a mentor figure to guide the

young boys. Keeping food on the table became a daily struggle for the Andrews family and DuBose took notice of their plight.

"I had three younger brothers and Mr. DuBose called us all into his office one day and says 'I'm gonna feed ya'll, but there ain't no free rides, you gotta do some work for me. I know you are having a hard time but hold your head up. Persevere.' We would help clean up the lunchroom and take out the trash and he kept us fed everyday. He taught me how to mop, how to sweep."

Andrews recounts many of DuBose's proverbs, no doubt originating from the wise elders of his Pike County farm days.

"Don't buy the hen without the rooster," he would always say." With a warm memory Andrews recalls a time at the Joe Bradley school when he found himself being scolded by his second grade teacher for shooting a dried bean across the classroom with a rubber band. In the nick of time principal DuBose walked through the door, the "board of education" gripped in his hand. He guided the young boy by his shirt collar out into the hall, a look of authority on his face. As the class hushed into silence, a murmur of indistinguishable talking was heard in the hallway. In the empty hall, DuBose's face melted into a smirk, "That-a-boy, Doyle, just don't get caught next time!"

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**Victor Hugo**

**"What we think, or what we know, or what we believe is, in the end, of no consequence. The only consequence is what we do."**

**John Ruskin**

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DuBose loudly slapped the wooden paddle onto the palm of his hand for sound effect and ushered him back to his seat, his face tightened back into a look of discipline.

Doyle Andrews would also spend summers working for DuBose in his plant nursery and vegetable gardens. He recalls DuBose's "darkest moment" one summer day when a sky of graying thunderheads filled the air. Out in the field, a long-time employee and friend of DuBose's named Ezell plowed up new ground with a mule and plow blade. DuBose shouted for Ezell to come back to the barn until the storm passed, but to no avail, as the distance and blowing wind washed away his calls.

Without a warning, a flashing bolt of lightning struck the iron plow and knocked Ezell and the mule back. Doyle Andrews and DuBose rushed forward to the frantic scene and to the lifeless body of Ezell. DuBose held his friend in the freshly plowed earth and tears began streaming uncontrollably down his face. He had died instantly from the

tremendous mass of energy of the lightning.

This traumatic event would leave a indelible impact on the wise educator. A half dollar piece, once given to Doyle Andrews by E.F. DuBose, stayed in his possession for sixty years, he held it as one of his most cherished items, neatly tucked away with other treasures. Though it was meant to pay his admission into the local Center Theater's

showing of the "Three Stooges", Andrews kept the coin those many years as a small reminder of the virtue and humble charity of his mentor, Edward Foyl DuBose.

In 2002 when E.F. DuBose passed away at the age of one hundred and two, Andrews gave the coin to DuBose's nephew as a token of his gratitude and great admiration for the lifelong educator.

## GARLIC FRIED BEANS

2 T. olive oil  
 2 cloves garlic, minced  
 1 c. onion, finely chopped  
 12 oz. cooked kidney or pinto beans  
 1/2 t. dried oregano  
 1/2 t. ground cumin  
 1/2 t. onion powder  
 1/4 t. ground cloves

In a large non-stick skillet heat the oil, add garlic and onions and cook til tender, about 10 minutes. Turn heat to low. Mash beans with fork, add them and rest of ingredients to the onion mixture. Cook 5 minutes, stirring frequently.

These beans are delicious on tacos or stuffed into pita bread, with lettuce, cheese, salsa and chopped tomatoes.



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# Remembering Ma Maw Hillis

by Cathy Bowen Bridges

My maternal grandmother, Theodora (Theo) Cantrell Hillis was one of the biggest influences in my life. She was a humble, southern, God-fearing lady that could make the best home-made chocolate pie with the egg-white meringue piled high on top. Her chocolate fudge wasn't too bad either.

Ma Maw always wore her long hair up in a bun. When I was a little girl, I would call it a donut. She would brush her long hair out, and then twist it, and twist it until she had it all up in what looked like a donut.

I'll never forget just how she looked, with her apron tied around her waist at all times, unless she was going to church or somewhere else.

I can recall seeing Ma Maw

praising God at Mt. Fork Baptist Church in New Market, as she walked around the sanctuary all caught up in His spirit, patting her Bible with no care in the world as to what anyone else thought about her. She had tuned out everyone but God. If you paid close attention, you might even feel just the slightest bit sorry for her. You see, Ma Maw had a crippled leg that was shorter than the other, from having polio as a child, and she also had a crippled arm that she always held a certain way.

She would not ever desire anyone's sympathy though, because she had all she would ever need in this life, the love of God and love of her family.

Ma Maw had a rough life growing up with all her other brothers and sisters in New Market. They were pretty much raised by a single parent, my great-grandmother Sarah Cantrell. Her husband Frank was the forgotten hero of Madison County that one of my rela-

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tives wrote about in the July 2009 issue. He died in a well in New Market trying to save someone else. He was only 37 years old.

The year was 1925. In 1926 my great-grandmother was awarded a bronze medal on behalf of her husband's heroic act. Both of my great grandparents are buried at Rice Cemetery in New Market. My brother Jeff and I spent most of our summers with Ma Maw and Papaw Hillis on the farm in Meridianville.

Papaw and my uncle Junior leased land from the Lewter family that included a wonderful house with a wraparound screened porch that had lots of white rocking chairs that looked out onto the front yard with all of its beautiful peonies in bloom in the late spring. There was a long gravel driveway that took you out to Highway 231/431 north or south. The large kitchen was painted red, with a black and white tile floor. I always thought I was really doing something when my grandparents would let me drink coffee for breakfast. Breakfast was always special anyway, because Ma Maw could make some fantastic biscuits and gravy.

There was not anything that Ma Maw could not do on the farm. If there was, I don't recall. She always had a large garden, including growing her own potatoes, which we ate a lot of. She could wring a chicken's neck, pluck the feathers, and fry it up in a pan. We always had lots of eggs for breakfast, or fried chicken, pinto beans, corn bread and fried potatoes for lunch. Supper usually consisted of left-overs or corn bread and "sweet" milk.

The farm also had a "hog lot" with big trees and big hogs! Our twin uncles Larry and Garry were still at home, plus some of our cousins would stay the weekend from time to time. We would climb the trees and pretend like the hogs were bears. There was a barn also, and a pond. My grandfather had black cows and we would feed them hay right out of our hands. It was also fun playing up in the loft. We never got bored, that's for sure!

Ma Maw has been gone for a long time, but I think about her often. She wound up with breast cancer, and died in the car with my aunt, uncle and grandfather. They were bringing her back from a radiation treatment, and her tired old heart just stopped.

Med Flight was summoned and they tried to revive her after they got her home, but it was no use. She had gone on to be with her Lord. I miss her, and love to remember

the good times I had with her. She and Papaw are buried at Cochran Cemetery in New Market, not far from where I live.

If I was to say that anyone who has walked this earth was a saint, it would have to be Ma Maw Hillis. She is gone but will never, ever be forgotten.



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# Heard On the Street

by *Gathey Carney*



Congratulations to **Melanie Thompkins** of Scottsboro who was the first correct guess for last month's Photo of the Month - the adorable baby girl was **Jane Barr** of Huntsville, who knows all about history of Monte Sano. Melanie is a retired schoolteacher and remembers reading some articles by Jane in past issues about Monte Sano and this area.

We were so sorry to hear of the death of **Marjorie Moore**. She was the beautiful mother of **Allyson Kirkpatrick**, (husband **Raymond C. Kirkpatrick III**), grandmother to **William Todd Moore Kirkpatrick**, and wife to **General (Ret.) William G. Moore, Jr.** We send our deepest condolences to the family and many friends she leaves behind.

**Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Burcham** of Madison are so proud of their gorgeous daughter **Lindsey Morgan Burcham**, who is engaged to marry **Jay Robert Sterline Riffel** in mid December - Congratulations to you two lovebirds!

I wanted to wish a very happy recent 29th wedding anniversary to **Dick and Karen Maroon** - if you remember from an article in

the Times last year, Dick spends half the year and all his own money in building wooden toys for kids who are in the hospital, sick and afraid of what's happening. He delivers them right before Christmas to many smiles and cheered-up kids. Karen is a fabulous cook and a voracious reader and they love living in Old Town!

We all know that death is something that each of us will face one of these days, but when a young person dies it's almost too much to bear. On Oct. 9 we lost **Bryan Creighton Smith**, who was only 37 years old. Bryan was the beloved son of **Judy and M.D. Smith IV** and he was part of a large, loving family. He leaves his sister, **Allison Smith Click** (husband **Mike Click**) and their daughters **Chandler and Campbell**; brothers **Dee Smith** (wife **Lori** and son **Marc**); **Scott** (wife **Jana** and daughters **Erin**

and **Hannah**); **Brent** and his children **Bennett and Sarah**; **Martin** and son, **Dylan**; **Warren** (wife **Rebecca**); and **Owen**. Bryan was a funny, feisty, loving brother & son and absolutely loved his boxer **Lucy**. We send our deepest sympathy to the family and many friends who will miss him so much.

**John Bzdell, Sr.** 3 months ago had open heart surgery and he let us know that he's doing great! He's walking and doing some light jogging and is training for a 13.1 mile half Marathon in November. He said it will be his slowest one ever, but at least he'll be in it! His friend **Margaret Watson** is training with him and she will be taking part in the marathon with him, her **FIRST** Ever!

**Bob Larkin** recently celebrated his 80th birthday with a concert to a packed house at the Hazel Green United Methodist church and it was beautiful. He plays violin and with his wife **Leo** and stepson **Shane Adkins** it was a very memorable event!

**Billy Leatherwood IV** has a Nov. 4 birthday, the young man

## Photo of The Month

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

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Hint: This little boy splits his time between his business and his historic home.



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will be turning 7 on that day and his grandma **Rosemary Leatherwood** is sure proud of him! Rosemary's Dad is **Billy Richardson**, and Rosemary and her Dad are remembering a very special lady, her mom **Mary Richardson**, who had a Nov. 22 birthday and is an angel in heaven now.

I had some calls regarding the year of the courthouse that was featured in a full-page picture in the October issue with no date on it (MY Fault!) but the year was 1914. And regarding that courthouse, a caller wanted to see if **anyone knows whatever happened to that beautiful 4-sided clock that was on top of the courthouse?** If anyone has the answer to this please call me at 534-0502 and I'll let you all know in the next issue! (Sure do miss that courthouse).

We're very proud of our friend **Jane DeNeefe**, who has written a unique book called "Rocket City Rock & Soul." This book begins in the 1960's and contains many interviews with musicians - black & white, soul & rock & country - whose talents all mixed within the city beginning in those days. A great read.

There has been quite an **increase of crime in the city**, and many residents are interested in self-defense courses (some for women only, some for both men and women.) It would be worth your time to take one of these courses when you see them offered - they are normally free of

charge and may teach you some tips that could save your life!

There are some notable birthdays in November. **Jane Eller** is the Relationship Banker at BB&T on Church St. - she didn't say how many birthdays this is but it can't be more than 28!

Also that beautiful lady **Stephanie Troup** (who happens to be my daughter) turns 44 mid November and she's happy that this year there won't be any crows lined up in her front yard!

**Barb & Ron Eyestone** celebrated 32 years of marriage in mid October and it's hard to believe they've been married that long. They are the best.

We are so proud of our **military veterans**, whether older or younger, each and every one of them is or was willing at one time to put their lives on the line for the U.S. and our freedoms.

**Linda Hamlin**, of Linda's Printing, thinks the world of her Dad. He is **Walter Tripp** and he lives in New Market with his wife **Joyce**. Linda says that even though both of them are in their 80's, they act like teenagers!

**Mischelle Ross** wants to send a big hello and much love to her Mom **Yvonne Ross** and her beautiful nieces, **Hannah** and **Heather Ross!**

Recently while having drinks and dinner at Macaroni Grill, we met the nicest young lady who waited on us. Her name was **Britney Erickson**, and she was not only beautiful, with a

great personality, but she was so professional and did a super job taking care of us that night.

We met the partners who are the General Managers of Macaroni Grill and said that they want to make sure their customers have a good experience any time they visit. **Shaun Smith** and **Greg Westerholm** are the managers who are very proud of their employees.

Have a warm, cozy and safe Thanksgiving and look out for your older neighbors who may be alone and need some company this time of year.

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## Favorites from Jodi Sisk

### Colorful Corn Salad

- 2 10-oz. pkgs. frozen corn, thawed
- 2 c. diced green pepper
- 2 c. diced sweet red pepper
- 2 c. diced celery
- 1 c. minced fresh parsley
- 1 c. chopped green onions
- 1/2 c. shredded Parmesan cheese
- 2 t. ground cumin
- 1- 1/2 t. salt
- 3/4 t. pepper
- 1/2 t hot pepper sauce
- 1/8 t. cayenne pepper
- 3 T. olive or vegetable oil
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 6 T. lime juice

In a large bowl, combine the first 12 ingredients. In a microwave-safe dish, combine oil and garlic. Microwave, uncovered on high for 30 seconds. Cool. Whisk in the lime juice, pour over the corn mixture and toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate til ready to serve.

### Tiny Cheddar Meat Loaves

- 1 egg
- 3/4 c. milk
- 1 c. (4 oz.) shredded Cheddar cheese
- 1/2 c. quick-cooking oats
- 1/2 c. chopped onion
- 1 t. salt
- 1 lb. lean ground beef
- 2/3 c. ketchup
- 1/2 c. packed brown sugar
- 1- 1/2 t. prepared mustard

In a bowl beat the egg and milk. Stir in the cheese, oats, onion and salt. Add the beef and mix well. Shape into 8 loaves, place in a greased 13x9x2" baking dish. Combine the ketchup, brown sugar and mustard and spoon this over the loaves.

Bake uncovered in your oven at 350 degrees for 45 minutes and the meat is no longer pink. A meat thermometer should read 160 degrees.

### Winter Greens Puttanesca

- 2 roasted bell peppers, red or yellow
- 1 c. pitted black or green olives
- 6 c. tender fresh spinach or arugula, washed with tough stems removed
- 1 large clove garlic, finely minced
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 2-oz. can anchovies, drained
- 1/2 c. extra-virgin olive oil
- 8 oz. rigatoni or other wide-tube pasta

Coarsely grated Parmesan cheese, for garnish

Cut the roasted peppers lengthwise into 1/4 inch strips. Coarsely chop the olives. Place the spinach or arugula in a large bowl. Sprinkle with the minced garlic and season generously with black pepper. Add the pepper strips and

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chopped olives. Toss everything together well.

Cut the anchovies in half crosswise and add to the spinach mixture. Toss the mixture with the olive oil.

Before serving, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil and cook the pasta until al dente. Drain the pasta and rinse under warm water to remove excess starch; toss with the spinach mixture. Serve immediately, sprinkled with coarsely grated Parmesan cheese.

### Apple Dessert

- 1/2 c. cake flour
- 3/4 c. brown sugar
- 1 t. baking powder
- 1/4 t. salt
- 1/2 t. lemon extract
- 1 egg
- 1/2 t. vanilla extract
- 2 c. tart apples, chopped
- 1/2 c. pecans, chopped
- Dash cinnamon

Mix & sift first 4 ingredients. Stir in egg, lemon & vanilla extracts. Fold in the apples and nuts, sprinkle with the cinnamon. Pour into greased pie pan and bake at 350 degrees for 25 minutes. This is great eaten warm with cold ice cream on top!

### Peach Crunch

- 1/2 stick butter, melted
- 1 lb. vanilla wafers, crushed
- 1 stick butter

- 1/2 c. milk
- 2 eggs
- 1- 1/2 c. confectioners sugar
- 1 qt. fresh or frozen peaches
- 1 8-oz. Cool Whip

Mix crumbs and 1/2 stick butter, press to form crust in a 9x13" dish.

Next, make a custard of eggs, sugar, milk and 1 stick butter. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly til thick. Spoon custard over crust. Refrigerate til cool. Peel and slice the peaches; press fruit into custard. Top with the cool whip.

Refrigerate til time to serve.

### Apple Tarts

- 1/2 c. butter
- 1/4 c. confectioners sugar
- 1 egg
- 1/8 t. salt
- 1- 1/2 c. flour
- 2 medium apples, pared and sliced
- 4 t. sugar

Beat the butter and sugar til fluffy. Beat in egg and salt. Slowly stir in flour til a soft dough is formed. Cover and refrigerate 30 minutes. Put dough on lightly floured surface. Cut in four 5 inch squares. Trim 1/2 inch edge all around each square, place on baking sheet.

Arrange apple slices over the pastry, sprinkle with sugar. Bake at 325 degrees for 15 minutes and pastry is browned.

This is fabulous with some freshly made whipped cream and a hot cup of coffee!



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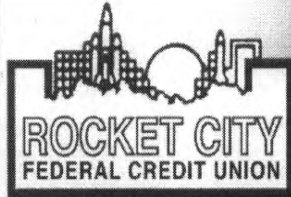
BY TOMMY TOWERY

Carl Fleming "Jack" Towery was born in Fayetteville, Tennessee, in 1919. His mother died before he turned one and he was raised by an aunt and uncle who adopted him. He moved with them to Huntsville where he attended and graduated from Lincoln High School in 1940. For a while he drove a delivery truck for Brown's Grocery Store, but like many of the young men with which he graduated, he eventually joined the Army to serve his country. He was assigned to the 29th Infantry Division and after his initial training he was shipped overseas to await the invasion of Europe. He was lucky to return alive.

I was born in 1946, a year after my father returned from the fighting of World War II. My concept of that war was John Wayne's heroics at the Lyric or Grand Theaters, with bullets flying and bombs falling as I sat in the dark and ate popcorn and drank soft drinks. I knew that my father had been in the Army and had gone off to a war before I was born, but he was no hero like John Wayne. I remember overhearing him telling someone that he had never even fired a shot in combat. All that he had done was run ashore with a bunch of other soldiers at some place named Omaha Beach during something called D-Day. I also knew that before he could make it off the sands of that beach he stepped on a landmine that blew his leg off. He had one medal that I saw as a child - a Purple Heart. One medal did not make him a hero.

My dad came back from the war on crutches to the girl he had married just months before he joined the Army. The citizens of Huntsville welcomed him with open arms. He was given one of the first automatic automobiles in the area since he could no longer use a clutch because of his missing leg. He received training as a draftsman and started to work at Redstone Arsenal.

My earliest recollections of him were the seemingly constant trips he made in and out of the VA hospitals with one medical problem or another. We moved from 9th Avenue to East Clinton Street in 1952. Somewhere along the way, he started drinking and in the days before the medical profession made us aware of the problems associated with the strong drugs he took for his pain and the alcohol that he drank to forget the nightmares, he was not a very nice person to be around. I'll never know all the problems that he and my mother endured, but when I was eight years old they were divorced. That was in 1954,



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only 10 years after D-Day.

Although we lived in the same town, I never saw much of my dad over the next 10 years. He remarried and moved out to Chase, but drove by our house almost every day going to and from work. I thought about him in 1962 when John Wayne starred in *The Longest Day*. I causally mentioned to my buddies that my dad had been in D-Day, but that was about it. His drinking continued, he remarried and moved to the country, and we did not seem to find a way to be a part of each other's lives. On the day I graduated from high school, he never showed up for the ceremony. I don't even think I bothered to send him an invitation to my college graduation nor to the United States Air Force commissioning ceremony that followed when I pinned on my 2nd Lieutenant Bars.

I married shortly thereafter, and while I was awaiting my first assignment, I took my new wife back to Huntsville to meet my father. No, he had not come to the wedding. I could never put my finger on it exactly, but for some reason, from that period on, we communicated more through letters, cards, and phone calls.

Whenever I came home, we would get together for a meal or an evening of sitting around and small talk, but nothing much more serious than that. Throughout the years, I never found out much more about D-Day from him than the basic facts I had learned secondhand as a kid. I guess I always thought there was going to be a better time when we could sit down and talk it over, man-to-man, but I moved about, as military people do, and the times we had at home had to be divided between so many people and so many other things to do.

I kept telling myself that someday when he was retired and I could get

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home, we'd sit down and fill in all the gaps of that part of his life. I needed to better understand the cost he paid for the Purple Heart he had long ago stuck away in a drawer somewhere.

Near the end of my own military career, I was stationed in England, where I found people who seemed to better appreciate the cost and sacrifices of war. I visited the war museums, went to the military parades, and saw the respect showed to the war pensioners on the streets. I vowed then that upon my return to the states, I would finally ask him about his D-Day experiences. Six months before I returned home, I received a phone call that he had died in his sleep. He was 68 years old.

His death took from me any chance to find the answers to the questions that I had stored in my head most of my life. I had not only lost a father, I had also lost a comrade-in-arms. I wore my uniform to his funeral. On my chest were awards for meritorious service, the Air Medal, awards for service in Vietnam and other conflicts, and a dozen other colorful ribbons that reflected my almost 20 years of service.

I thought about his one medal - his Purple Heart. The bugler played Taps, and when

the American flag was lifted from his casket and ceremonially folded, the color guard commander turned and presented me with the flag, with the hallowed words "With the thanks of a grateful nation." Tears came into my eyes for this fellow warrior that I hardly knew.

When *Saving Private Ryan* came to the screen, I saw more graphically than I wanted how terrible it was for the men during the invasion. It may have been the first time that I came even close to actually understanding what my father suffered through. I watched the movie, and wished that I had taken the time to talk to him.

Using the internet I have started putting together some events in my father's short military life that led him to that beach. I know facts about his unit and where he was stationed. I know how many men were killed and how many were wounded and how many were missing in action. I have lots of statistical facts that tell only half the story I really want to know. What I don't know, and never will, are the personal feelings of the man that would survive that hell to become my father. Those and so many other questions

will forever remain mysteries, maybe because I never realized that I would not have forever to ask him.

After his funeral I had to go help clean out his apartment. I found his Purple Heart in the bottom of a drawer along with a clipping from The Huntsville Times that was written on the 25th anniversary of D-Day. The article had his photograph and quoted my dad saying that he had strayed off the path during the landing assault and had stepped on a landmine. It went on to tell how he had laid on the beach for 18 hours with that mangled leg before being evacuated. I thought about the term "the longest day" and knew that I would never in my life understand its meaning the way that my father had.

The most haunting thing about the article was that it proved to me in black and white that my father was willing to talk about his experiences, if only someone took the time to ask him. How often I have wished that someone had been me.

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# LEARNING TO FLY

BY JUDY C. SMITH

I guess I started flying lessons backwards. After the trip to Nas-sau, I knew that if I ever went up in another small plane, by golly, I wanted to know how to land it. So I started flying lessons from instructor Bob Wise. I felt free as a bird while flying and in no time had soloed. I got my solo flying plaque with the date on it, August 7, 1967.

I remember I would call the tower after I had descended to 1500 feet (800 feet above the ground) for clearance to land. If the person in the tower said that a Southern Airways flight was ahead of me, I'd ask him to please divert the other plane to go around and let me land first. The tower always complied with my wishes. I guess I had a convincing voice.

I continued to fly, but I guess I can upset most anyone at times and my instructor, Bob, would holler out things like "pull up" or "slow down" or whatever he felt I needed to do. It made me very nervous and took a lot of the fun out of flying. I also remember when we'd be turning base or final for the runway, I'd use landmarks, like the big church on Airport road as my point where I'd turn to final. Bob wanted me to use the instruments and refer-ences to the runway, knowing that at other airports, I would not have such convenient landmarks.

Sometimes when landing, Bob would jerk the control horn and over ride my steering to pull

the nose up or down. I'd have done just fine, but he was not so sure and didn't want to take chances. This didn't do a whole lot for my confidence.

My husband M.D. was taking instrument lessons from Grady Thrasher, a kindly old southern gentleman with a very mild man-ner. I started taking lessons from him, and loved flying a whole lot better. By then, we were all flying at the new airport.

When M.D. wouldn't baby sit for a lesson, I'd drop the kids off fifteen minutes before Sun-day School and they could stay through church in the nursery.

That was just long enough for me to head to the airport for a quiet, peaceful, serene flight.

Several months later, I tried to contact Bob for old time's sake since I had not seen him at the airport for a long time. I was told that after he had finished giving me flying lessons, he decided to quit being a flight instructor and became a psychiatrist.

I never was sure exactly why he quit instructing, but I believe I had something to do with it.

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# OLD FUZZY

By MALCOLM MILLER

There was a restaurant recently in Ryland called "Lauren's", owned by my good friend Avon Everett's two daughters, Joyce and Carolyn. His grand-daughter was Lauren and thereby the name. There was a picture on the wall of me and my dog Old Fuzzy when I was maybe eight years old. Old Fuzzy was my dog given to me when I was born by a family friend and for the first fourteen years of my life we were inseparable.

You see growing up in the nineteen thirties, as I did, life was hard all around. There was no money for toys and things to play with but I always had Old Fuzzy, incidentally his real name was Shep but he was always Old Fuzzy to me. When I was too small to work in the fields I spent many happy hours playing with him. I would pretend he was a mule and have him pulling a make believe plow or pretending we were battling lions or tigers.

When I got big enough to venture to the creek, he was always there looking for snakes. He hated rattlesnakes and I dare say he killed dozens of them during his life time. He would dart in and out until the snake struck then he would grab the snake and start shaking and wouldn't stop until there was only pieces of the snake left.

During those hard times possum hunting was very popular and Old Fuzzy was the best possum dog in the community. I wasn't big enough to go along but many nights during late fall when the persimmons were ripe some of my older brothers and their friends would head for the mountain and bring back a fat possum or two. I can still remember my Mama putting a big possum on the table surrounded by sweet potatoes.

I don't think I could eat one now-a-days but back then the only way you got fresh meat was by catching a possum, killing a chicken, a squirrel, a rabbit or even a ground hog. Of course, we had fresh pork once a year usually in the middle of November when we killed hogs so you see possum hunting back then was a popular sport and also pro-

vided much needed food for our large family of seven boys and Mama and Daddy.

I have heard folks say you shouldn't give a child a dog or cat because when something happens to the pet the child would be upset but I believe that having a pet and eventually losing it helps prepare a person for things to come. In my eighty

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years I have lost my parents, five brothers and most of the friends that I grew up with.

As I grew up Old Fuzzy grew old and slowly lost his ability to get around, then one day in the fall of nineteen forty one when I came home from school I was told that Old Fuzzy was laying in the edge of the cotton field dying. I went out to where he lay, placed a coat over him and stayed with him until late that night. The next morning he was dead.

I guess not many people remember the great singer Red Foley. His greatest hit in my mind was the classic song "Old Shep". The last line of the song says: "If there is a heaven where good doggies go, Old Shep has a wonderful home."

That certainly holds true for Old Fuzzy.

## CITY NEWS IN 1885

### Amputated

A few weeks ago Wiley Acklin, a colored farm hand on the plantation of Mrs. Sanford at the Cove, had the misfortune to have his ankle dislocated and it was found necessary to have the limb amputated, which operation was successfully performed by Dr. S. H. Lowry of this city. At last accounts Acklin was feeling comfortable enough under the circumstances and is recovering.

### New Hose

We inspected yesterday 500 feet of new hose rubber lined, at the Firemans hall. Capt. Spence informed our reporter that this brand is the best manufactured and is the same as used by the New York City fire department. The Firemen will drill with the old hose on Thursday next and twice a month hereafter, so as to keep their hand in, in case of a conflagration.

What with the new engine and new hose, our fire department ought to be able to measure their strength with the fiery

fiend successfully.

### Does the Hog Law apply to Cows?

A number of cows have been disobeying the city ordinance by not being in their beds, like all good cows, at the right hour.

These naughty creatures have been doing much damage. Some of them broke into the gardens of our citizens and created sad havoc among the rose bushes and other plants. The authorities would do well to watch East Holmes street and impound the bovines.



**"Nobody in football should be called a genius. A genius is a guy like Norman Einstein."**

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# The Bon Air Restaurant

by Libby Sanders

On Meridian Street sat an old cafe, The Bon Air. At one time it was a motel and was a convenient stopover for travelers on their way to Florida. In the early seventies it was a favorite place for my former husband and I and our two sons to have breakfast on Saturday mornings. This was a beloved ritual rivaled only by doughnuts on Sunday, at Mr. Donut, before church. We were later blessed with a daughter who missed all the good stuff, or so she says.

The waitresses were like family and everyone knew everyone else. You had a preferred seat, a special waitress, and she knew to bring two coffees and two chocolate milks. The food was good, especially the gravy and biscuits, and the company was nearly always the same.

One lovely lady was still waiting tables at 80 years of age, and loved everything about Princess Diana. When it was announced that a royal baby was on the way, she crocheted an entire sweater set; a cap, sweater, and booties and mailed them to the soon-to-be mother. She was delighted when she received a signed thank you note. I, for one, will never forget it. She whipped that letter out every time she saw you and you had to read it again. It was finally framed to protect it, mostly from her loving hands.

Another waitress lived near Butler High School, and she walked to work. It was not a short stroll. Anyone who knew her made sure to pick her up when they saw her but most times she had to walk, winter and summer alike. Then she walked home again after her shift. I never once heard her complain about being tired. She had a family to provide for.

I have heard a story, and I don't know if it's true or not. Werner von Braun and some of his rocket team were eating in the Bon Air and speaking with, of course, a German accent. An elderly couple sitting at the next booth, on their way to Florida, overheard their conversation. The lady said to her husband, "I just love that southern accent!"

That's our town and that was the Bon Air, you never knew who might come in. Lunch and supper were good home cooking and my favorite part was the yeast rolls. Light fluffy and melt in your mouth.

A couple of days a week the left over rolls were used as a basis for the most delicious desert ever. Chocolate bread pudding, the meal was great, but the whole point was the desert. You came on the right day, no matter what was on the menu, for the Bread PUDDING. I would love to have a bowl right now. It would bring back memories, sure. But the taste! That's the thing, it was like no other and I've never had anything like it since.

From the huge old painting on the wall, to the cracked and comfortable old booths it was homey and warm and friendly and irreplaceable.

If anyone knows how to make their bread pudding, I would love the recipe.

Libby Sanders: libbysanders88@hotmail.com

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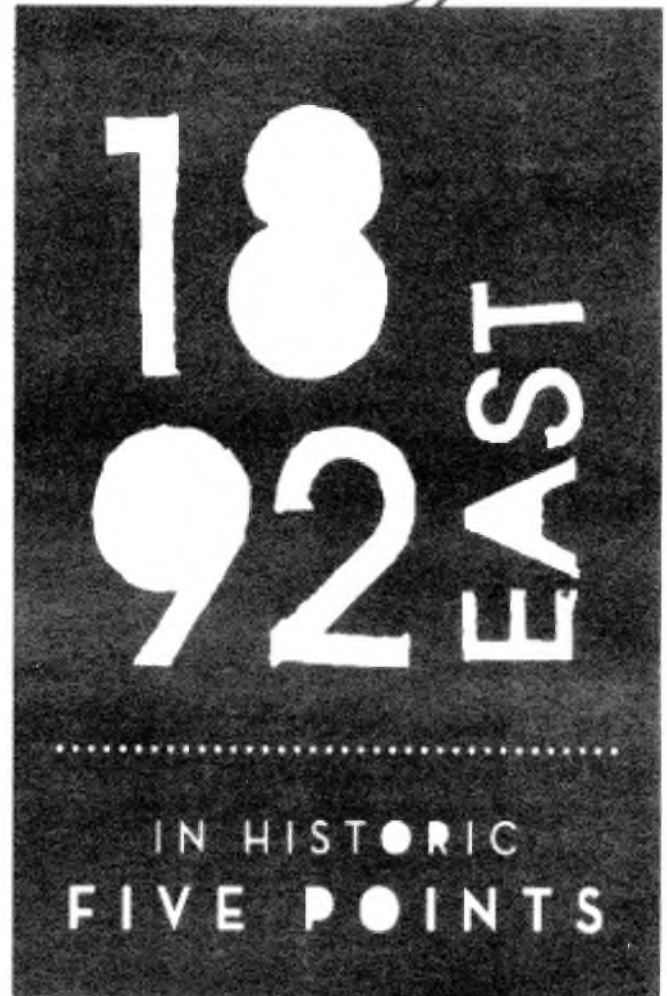
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Huntsville, Alabama,

May 22, 1864

Friend Lucy:

I believe the last time I saw you there was something said about my writing to you when I arrived in Dixieland. However, it doesn't make any particular difference whether I was to write or not as I claim to be an old friend with nothing to do and plenty time to do it in.

I will write you a few lines anyhow, if they are not so interesting, as George says, and we have been here nearly two weeks, and I am very much pleased with the place. I think this is the most beautiful country I ever saw. Nature has done everything for this country. Allowing me to use the phrase it is God's own land, beautifully supplied with the necessary, and blessings of life. You don't know about beautiful flowers up north. We have them here of every variety and description and the richest color imaginable. I wish I could send you a sample of them and have you enjoy them as they look here. Huntsville is enthusiastically a city of flowers.

There are several splendid churches and other public buildings here with stained variegated windows and other beautiful embellishments too numerous to mention without taking all the space of this sheet with a description. There are a great many fine private residences in this city. I passed one the other day that particularly pleased me. It was built of freestone, in the Gothic style of architecture, the doors guarded by sculptured lions, birds, etc. The grounds were laid out in terraces covered with shade trees, evergreens and flowers. There were several fine arbors and I counted some twenty marble statues distributed throughout the grounds. I think if I was the owner of such a place, I would be contented, get married and settle down for the remainder of my life on this earth.

About the only drawback is the weather. We are now having Illinois July

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weather in the daytime. The nights are cool.

We have excellent quarters in the Huntsville Court House. The whole of the second floor is assigned to us for practicing and sleeping rooms. Our dining room is just across the street. We have an old darkey and his wife to do our cooking and they are pretty good cooks. The General is pretty much pleased with his bunch and is going to get us the appointment of post band. If he does so, we will probably stay here during the war or until our time of enlistment is out.

I am so well pleased with my position that I would not change positions with a captain. We are situated here, we enjoy ourselves, as we only have to play for the government about an hour and a half out of 24. The rest of the time we do what we please. The General gives us privileges that but few soldiers get. The band has been out serenading nearly every day since we have been here, for the officers on such occasions. The best of wines and liquors are placed before us. To partake of this is an awful place for a temperance man. I don't think I am in much danger. I was never much of a hand to drink spirits and less so now than ever.

I will enclose my photograph in this and should be very much pleased to receive yours in return. It isn't as good as I

could wish, but is the best I have. If this meets with your approbation, I shall expect an answer soon.

Most respectfully yours,  
 Theo. Pomeroy  
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# FLYING MACHINES

By LEO LARKIN

He called, looking for harmonica lessons. Rick Jobe, a local musician, recommended me, as I'm the only game in town. He already could play but wanted to play better. His name is George Epps. I told him that I was going to Africa for a month and he agreed to wait until I got back. When we met, and started our lessons, I learned more about him. He is an entrepreneur and has helped many Huntsvillians start up businesses. He is also the CEO of several companies.

George shared with me about his family. In 1953, he came here from Georgia. When he was a boy, his father (who was the first aviator in Georgia) crashed an airplane and died, leaving his mother with nine children to raise. To accomplish this, she moved the boys into the basement and turned their home into a boarding house. The boys, now older men, laugh and say they couldn't grow taller than 5'9" as that's how high the ceiling was. They also laugh about catching flies, 'gluing their butts' and attaching lightweight wings to them; entertaining themselves and their mother by watching the makeshift planes fly. All was well until the flies landed on the ceiling and then gravity took over.


George learned to fly at age 17 in a J-3 cub, and he

joined the Navy during WWII. He didn't get his wish to go to pre-flight school because the atom bomb was dropped and the war ended. The Navy sent him to Duke University. He then went on to Georgia Tech, where he earned his master's degree in mechanical engineering. He also worked to help his mother financially.

To fly planes was more than

a dream; it was in his DNA. He met and married Dottie Crovatt who was a nurse. Together, they made his dream come true. They purchased a farm in Harvest, bought their first plane, and put in their own 2600-foot airstrip. They have three children, Kathy Trapp, Liz Epps and Charlie Epps.


George's mother, Omie Williams Epps, wanted to keep the family close so they began having July 4th reunions. The family came from all across the country. Some flew their planes in, some flew commercially and some drove. Along with busi-



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ness associates and friends, the reunions grew so big that they needed to make it a two-day event. They made the more intimate family and close friends event on July 3rd.

The July 4th reunion/celebration has now been going on for 48 years. Included are airplane and tethered hot-air balloon rides, acrobatic flying demonstrations and live music provided by "The Tuxedo Junction." The tasty barbecue is always preceded by ringing of the bell in the old bell tower. Children ride the plane train (oil-drum carts with wings) pulled by a small tractor. As was their nature, George and Dottie soon adopted me and my husband, Bob Larkin, as part of their family. Upon Dottie's death, George later married Doris 'Dot' Humphrey whose enthusiasm contributes greatly to the reunion.

To get ready for the onslaught of family and friends, they began a kid's camp for nieces and nephews (eight to fifteen years - older kids come as counselors) to work for a week to get things spruced up and ready for guests. The kids also learn about loyalty to their family and this great Nation. To this day, these cousins are close and have their own newsletter. The past few years, a new generation of cousins came to work prior to the reunion. Small and big, they work hard and the most diligent worker gets an award.

There are in-laws and outlaws; the outlaws being those married to an Epps. The president is Rhonda Epps, their daughter-in-law. They give an award to one of the outlaws; always a fly-swatter, to keep that particular Epps in line. Graduations, engagements, marriages and new babies are always recognized at the reunion. Newly married couples are

required to jump the broom. Servicemen are always honored. There is a memorial tree planted for each family member or close friend who has died that year.

George's brother, Pat, who has a flying service in Atlanta, is highly dedicated to aviation. He led the team that recovered the P-38 twin-engine fighter that had crashed in Greenland during WWII and had been buried in 260 feet of ice.

George has been inducted into the Alabama Aviation Hall of Fame. His father, Ben T. Epps, Sr, was the first aviator to be inducted into the Georgia Aviation Hall of Fame. Also inducted were George's brothers, Ben Jr., and Pat.

As an employee of NASA, I was eligible to nominate someone to attend a launch. I nominated George. Evidently, they didn't tell him who made the nomination and, months later, I asked him if he had been notified by NASA. His reply was, "Was that you?" George and Dottie invited my husband and me to fly down to the Cape in their Bonanza. My cousin, Terry Wilcutt, was the commander for the STS-89 shuttle flight. We accepted their offer, and when we arrived at Huntsville General Aviation, the plane's engine wouldn't start. After some minor adjustments, it started. I was a little apprehensive, but I assumed that he wouldn't pilot a plane that wasn't flight ready. We landed in Titusville and went to the Dixie Crossroads

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***Anonymous, Scottsboro***

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for dinner. As usual at launch time, the restaurant was full and with a waiting list. I heard on the loudspeaker, "Calling the Wilcutt family." We hurried inside and found many of my family. Some I knew and some I did not. There were some of my Daddy's eighty-something first cousins and their families. I was so thrilled to find them. The next night, we went to the Cape, where the launch went off on time. I cannot say enough about the tremendous power and spectacular beauty of a gigantic rocket piercing the night sky.

The next day, tornado warnings included the Orlando area and we had to wait to fly back to Huntsville. To kill some time, we went to the air museum at the airport. Lo and behold, hanging from the ceiling, there was the "Epps Flying Machine."

It was George's father's pioneering plane. He was ecstatic to find this treasure.

Returning to work and tracking Cousin Terry's shuttle flight, it was so good to hear his voice and it made me proud to be in the Wilcutt family as well as the Epps family.



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# FROM OLD TO NEW

By KATHY DUPREE ENGEL

I was born in 1955 in the Old Fifth Avenue Hospital, July 4. When my daddy took my mom and me home, it was to my grand-daddy's cotton farm he worked where Intergraph is now parallel to I-565. He worked for the Madison Police Department when the cotton was planted and then come cotton picking time, he and some fellows that lived along the same road helped him pick it in a cotton picker, dump it into a cotton wagon and haul it off to the cotton gin in Madison.

The house was 2 stories, second floor having a living room, bedroom and kitchen. The first floor had a living room, kitchen, pantry and 3 bedrooms. I can still remember the gopher rats that use to come into the house at night. My parents and I lived on the top floor.

When I was born, my dad would bring me down to the kitchen and put me in the bassinette next to the pot-bellied stove for my grandma to watch until my mom got up.

I'll never forget the fun times on that old farm. We didn't have a bathroom, only outhouses and in the wintertime we had slop jars kept in the pantry. We took baths in an old galvanized tub we set up on the back porch. The lucky kid was the one who got to take a bath first, because the last one got the dirtiest water.

My granddaddy use to slaughter a pig for the 4th of July and bury it in the ground and cover it up over coals and cook it all day. My daddy used to keep bees back away from the house and would go out and bring in a big tub of honey and honeycomb for us. We thought we were living rich then. There were buttercups (daffodils) growing all over the place.

In the fall, my granddaddy would kill a pig and cut it up and put it on the floor in the kitchen and salt it down. Then he would hang the meat up in the smoke house and smoke it so we had ham, bacon, whatever kind of pork you wanted.

Grandma took care of her chickens and got eggs from them, but every once in a while, she'd let the eggs go and we'd have a bunch of baby chicks to look at. Of course, mama hen didn't like us "looking" so she'd take off after us and we'd have to run fast to get away from her.

I remember the pot-bellied stoves keeping us warm. I also remember looking down at the

floor and seeing through the cracks the chickens walking around under the house. The house was built on piers and there was no foundation to keep out critters or cold air.

I bet if you went down that road that is parallel to I-565 now, where Intergraph is, and go back into the back where that thicket of trees is, you'd find a lot of wild buttercups there. Folks, those were my grandma's flowers. She was partial to them and I never remember not seeing them.

When granddaddy had a stroke, he had to quit the Police Department and move off the cotton farm because he couldn't work it anymore. He moved out to Monrovia and lived out there about 10 years before he died.

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REFILL     PRN     TIMES

# Burned to Death in Home in Meridianville where they were Locked in - 1923

Three small children met a horrible death Monday afternoon about four miles from Meridianville, when their home was burned and they were trapped and burned to death without a chance to escape. They were the children of Mr. & Mrs. Hubert Whitworth.

The Whitworth home is located on an out-of-the-way road near Meridianville. It was necessary to leave the Pike Road at Meridianville and go more than four miles over a small narrow road. This finally turns off into a smaller trail and it was only after following this trail about a mile that the scene of the tragedy was reached. There is no means of communication except by automobile or other vehicle. The News has learned the following:

Late Monday afternoon Mrs. Whitworth was alone with the 3 small children - a boy of five years old, a girl four years old and a boy fourteen months old - when she decided to lock them in the home so that she could go about two hundred yards away to give a cow some water. Neighbors living about a quarter of a mile away saw smoke rising from the house and ran there as rapidly as possible. Mrs. Whitworth, attracted by the yells of the neighbors, also hurried back.

A brother of Mrs. Whitworth was the first to arrive at the burning home and kicked the front door in. He attempted

to force his way into the little children, who could be heard behind the flames screaming.

The fire was rapidly eating up the front part of the home and it was impossible to get the rear door open as it was heavily bolted. There were no windows in the rear through which they could be reached. The neighbors assembled in the front yard while the three little ones were screaming frantically as the flames closed in upon them. Mrs. Whitworth's brother reported that although he could get occasional glimpses of the children, who had crawled

beneath a bed, he was badly burned about the hands, arms and face and couldn't get in to the children.

The mother of the children had hysterics as the burning walls fell in and the last cries of the little ones were heard.

Just how the fire started is unknown. Mrs. Whitworth says there was no fire in the house when she left. The theory was advanced that the little ones had played with some matches and had set the house on fire. However, when the flames were discovered all the front portion on the inside was burning and all efforts to force entrance were unavailing.

Those who witnessed the terrible tragedy could only stand helplessly by with tears streaming down their faces. It will never be forgotten.

**"Geezer (gee-zer) - noun.  
Not young. Not Dead.  
Somewhere in between."**

*Bumper Sticker*

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# TUBE CHECKERS?

By M. D. SMITH, IV

"No, Grandson, it's not a form of checker game." That's what I replied when I had mentioned having to use a tube checker in the fifties to repair my hi-fi amplifier. So I explained it to him last week.

A lot of the original reasons to visit the radio stores were to buy replacement tubes for your TV, radio or music amplifier. Originally only the big radio stores had a tube tester, and often you'd take many or all of the tubes out of your radio or TV, put them in a bag and take them down to the radio store to test and buy replacements for the bad ones. In later years, you could find tube testers and limited replacement tubes in convenience stores. Most of the chassis in the TV's had the number of the tube etched on the metal so you knew where each tube went, or it had a printed label on the back cover of the

enclosure that showed where tubes belonged. This made it possible for the average person to test their own tubes and get them all back in the right place, which was important if you ever wanted your set to work again.

There are still a few stores around today that have "tube checkers" and are open just as they always have been. You can take your old tubes in to be tested on one of the testers in the store and buy new replacement tubes for the ones that are bad.

Remember that sometimes silence is the best answer.



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# FROM THE HEART



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A S S I S T E D L I V I N G

Mock Electronics stocks tubes including ones for the old tube car radios where many antique car restorers want to make the original equipment AM radio work again. You can buy tubes on the internet also, but with shipping, they will cost more.

You had to call the TV repairman if replacing tubes didn't solve the problem. A picture tube needing replacement was sometimes a death sentence for a small table set, but not a console. Some sets cost five hundred dollars and the big consoles might be almost a thousand dollars, so you sure didn't discard it when it stopped working. The mahogany cases themselves were fine pieces of furniture and an attractive part of your home furnishing, which lasted for many years. They were not "disposable" as small electronics are today.

That was the fifties and early sixties in Huntsville for vacuum tube replacement, which certainly has changed over the years. Most of the parts stores

are gone, replaced by Radio Shack, Wal Mart and Best Buy centers. Some of the old TVs, radios and stereos are still with us, and it's good to know there are still a few places to go when they need tubes.

Sometimes my body feels like an old tube type TV set, still working but parts are hard to find and repair is more difficult.

## BLOATING

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## Dastardly attempt to Burn the Business Block on the North Side of the Square

FROM 1891 NEWSPAPER

Monday morning about 1:30 o'clock, as one of the Mercury's compositors was going home after his night's work, and as he passed the storeroom recently vacated by Mr. J. B. Bradford, and since then has been unoccupied, he saw a small light through the front door, way back in the rear. He also could detect a volume of smoke rising. He called a gentleman or two who were standing on the Huntsville Hotel corner, and after a slight examination the cry of fire was given.

It did not take many minutes for the fire department to appear, and headed by Fire Chief Baker, the front door was burst open, lanterns were brought into requisition and in the hands of two or three men, the rear end of the store was visited, and just as the corner of the stair was reached from which a door opens into a place reserved for a private office, a fire made of paper and kindling was on the inside, built right on top of the floor.

As soon as it was discovered, the men in the front hollered for the hose, but at that time a member of the department, William Hayden, caught a man's form in a crouching position up in a dark corner of this little space, and immediately laid his iron grasp upon him and drew him from his hiding. Officers Ward and Fulgham were on hand and the man was turned over to them. They got him into the calaboose, while he was kicking, jerking and making strenuous efforts to free himself. Finding the man created a great deal of excitement, but the small gathering set to work and in a few minutes had the fire put out.

If the fire had gained any headway no telling what damage it would have done, for the entire block would certainly have been in danger. The villainous fellow arrested would not disclose his name, nor residence.

It is safe to say that when he is arraigned for an investigation of his criminal act he will be fully known and dealt with accordingly.

~ SINCE 1934 ~

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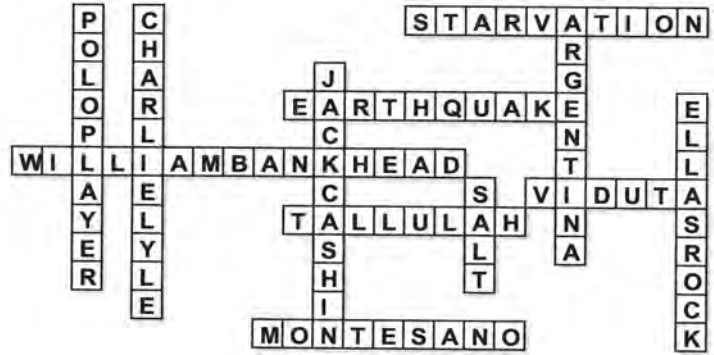


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 DASH SALT & PEPPER  
 1/2 PT. WHIPPING CREAM  
 1 PT. HALF-AND-HALF

TOSS POTATOES IN WATER WITH CREAM OF TARTAR, DRAIN.  
 LAYER POTATOES AND BACON IN LARGE SLOW COOKER, SPRINKLE WITH SALT & PEPPER. MIX WHIPPING CREAM AND HALF-AND-HALF, POUR OVER POTATOES.  
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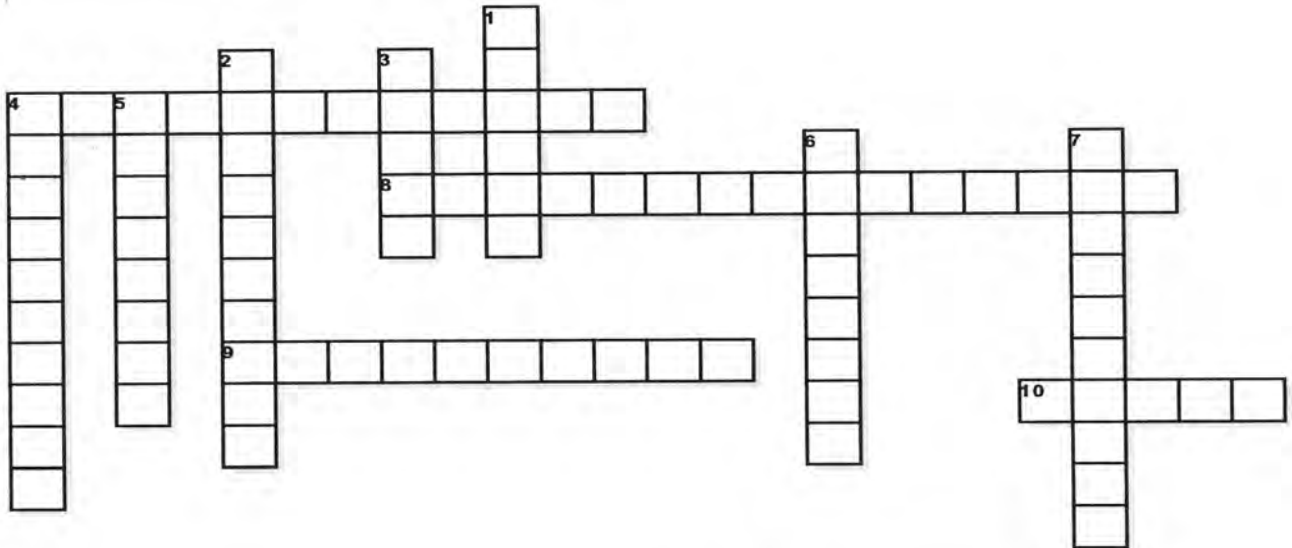
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## Old Huntsville Crossword Puzzle

The information for this crossword puzzle comes from this issue! See how well you can do! Solution will be in next month's magazine.



**Across**

- 4 She hears things on the street!
- 8 African Princess
- 9 Had a statue of John Wilkes Booth in the yard
- 10 "\_\_\_, don't get caught next time!"

**Down**

- 1 Hotel turned diner
- 2 Leo taught him harmonica
- 3 She was crippled as a child
- 4 It may cause bloating
- 5 Last month's cover girl
- 6 She share her favorites!
- 7 This was in Michael's cardboard box

# PENUUCHE

- 2 c. light brown sugar
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- 4 T. butter
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# Tweetie's Pet Tips



\* Add some lemon juice or vinegar to your pet's rinse water after a bath. This will cut the soap scum along with getting rid of the odor. Or, add some baking soda to your pet's rinse water after his bath. This will get rid of that doggy odor and will give him a soft & shiny coat!

\* When it gets really cold and you don't want to bathe your pet in water, rub her down weekly with disposable, pup-up baby wipes with lotion. The lotion eases her dry winter skin and she's clean!

\* A good flea deterrent for cats or dogs is Brewers yeast supplements. Sprinkle the powder on their food - fleas hate the taste and won't be biting anymore!

\* Another natural remedy for fleas for cats is to slice a whole lemon very thin, peel and all. Add to a pint of water and heat this mixture to boiling. Take off the heat and let it sit overnight., In the morning gently rub the mixture into your cat's fur & skin, just dampen. Do this once a month - fleas hate this!

\* Train your puppy to let you know when he has to go! Hang a bell by the back door.

Each time you take your puppy out for a "pee", ring the bell. As he gets older he'll let you know himself by ringing the bell!

\* When you have a new puppy and find chew marks on your favorite furniture, try rubbing the furniture with clove oil. The bitter taste & smell will keep him away!

\* If your cat jumps on a chair that you were prefer she doesn't do, just cover it for a week or so with plastic film, and to go even further apply some double faced sticky tape on it. Cats don't like this and will get out of the habit fast!


\* When your cat does something that you don't want her to do, just keep a spray bottle of water handy and squirt her each time. She'll learn.

\* Macadamia nuts can really cause bloating in dogs and they could become extremely ill.

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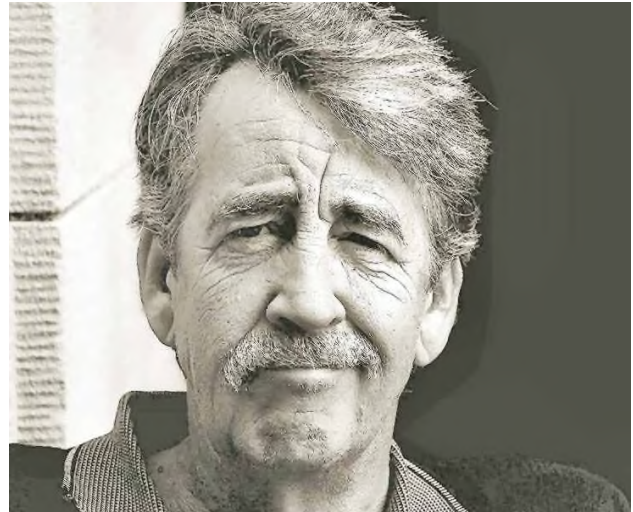
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# From the Desk of Tom Carney

## Frank and Jesse James Ride Again



The paymaster looked at the four horsemen with anger and bewilderment. What sort of men, he wondered, would have the audacity to rob a United States Army paymaster?

As the bandits wheeled their horses around and started to leave, one of the strangers, with a wide grin on his face, hesitated. "Mister," he said. "You can tell your grandchildren that you've had the pleasure of meeting Frank and Jesse James!" For years rumors had circulated in North Alabama about the James brothers. One of the gang members, a man by the name of Ezzel, actually lived a few miles outside of Florence, and it was he who had first brought the robbery plan to the James brothers' attention. After observing the paymaster for several weeks at various saloons around the Florence area and listening to his talk of carrying "a big payroll" every week to the men working on the dam, Ezzel sent word to Jesse and Frank.

Frank and Jesse James had "retired" from the life of banditry and were living just outside of Nashville. Evidently the life of a pig farmer just did not appeal very much to Jesse, because when he received word of the Muscle Shoals payroll just waiting for an honest bandit to rob it, he called his band back together again.

On March 11, 1881, a cold and wet afternoon, Alexander G. Smith, the payroll master, was barely two miles outside of Florence, when four horsemen appeared out of the woods. After tying Smith's hands behind his back, the robbers relieved

him of the army payroll, his gold watch, and \$221 of his own money. Smith had been saving the money to buy a farm, and when he told this to the bandits, they returned part of his money, after first asking if he was a "damn Yankee."

No such luck for the payroll itself; within minutes the bandits had made away with over \$5,200 - \$500 in gold, \$4,500 in fifties, and miscellaneous smaller bills.

The bandit leader carefully divided the money equally among his partners and himself, and then, after untying the unlucky paymaster, headed north with his gang toward Tennessee.

Posse's were formed and rewards were offered, but no trace was found of the outlaw gang. They had, apparently, just disappeared into the cold, drizzly night.

In all likelihood, Jesse and Frank might have lived their lives out in the Nashville area, with no one suspecting who they were, if one of their cohorts had stayed sober.

Most folks who knew "Wild Bill" Ryan agreed that he couldn't hold his liquor, so it didn't come as any surprise when he pitched a "rip-roaring drunk" and shot up a local saloon in Nashville. What did come as a surprise were the

two six-shooters, a sack of gold coins, and a fist full of greenbacks found on his person when the sheriff arrested him. In all, the money added up to \$1,300, exactly one-fourth of the money taken in the Florence payroll robbery.

The sheriff wasn't too slow in realizing there must be a connection somewhere, and within days the suspicions were verified.

The James brothers knew that it was only a matter of time before the law started breathing down their necks, so deciding that discretion was the better part of valor, the brothers left Nashville.

Within weeks, the James brothers had settled in St. Joseph, Missouri, and had begun their outlaw careers anew. Every week, it seemed, the newspapers were carrying new accounts of the latest robbery committed by the infamous brothers. The gang struck in Winston, Missouri, killing two men, and next in Gallatin. Robberies were committed in Booneville, Blue Cut, Haneyville, Sawyer's Ford and Heflin. There seemed to be no end. Rewards failed, bounties failed, even the famous Pinkerton Detective Agency could produce no results.

In the end, Governor Crittenden of Missouri was forced

to resort to the one weapon that has struck terror in the hearts of outlaws since the beginning of time. He hired a "stool pigeon".

Bob Ford had been a loyal member of the gang for a long time, but when the governor sent word that he wanted to have a "secret" meeting with him, he didn't hesitate. Meeting in a Kansas City hotel at midnight on January 13, 1882, the governor promised to pardon Ford for his "past indiscretions" and to pay \$10,000 each for the bodies of Jesse and Frank James.

On April 3, Bob Ford shot Jesse James in cold blood while Jesse had his back turned, adjusting a picture on the wall of his home. The pearl-handled, silver-mounted pistol that Ford used was the same one that Jesse had given him earlier, as a token of lasting friendship.

Where would Frank go? Newspapers everywhere speculated on the fate of Bob Ford. How long would it be before the surviving James brother sought revenge? Days, weeks, and months went by, but nothing happened.

On October 5, Frank James calmly strode into the Missouri state capitol, wearing both of his six-shooters on his hip. People began running and hiding as James pushed open the door to the governor's office and walked in. The infamous outlaw stood there, staring with hatred at the man who had caused the death of his brother. Slowly, he reached for his pistols, and laid them butt first on the governor's desk.

Frank James, the most sought after man in America, had surrendered, in exchange for the promise of a fair trial.

As the state prosecutors began preparing their case against the former outlaw, certain problems arose. Witnesses, citing health reasons, declined to testify. Evidently, they thought that facing Frank in a courtroom might be injurious to their continued good health. When the prosecutors were finally able to bring Frank to trial on one charge of murder, the jury re-

turned the verdict in a matter of moments with "not guilty."

Unfortunately for Frank, the authorities down in Alabama had not forgotten about him. Jesse was dead, Wild Bill Ryan was serving twenty-five years, and Frank was the only one left to face the music. He was promptly rearrested and shipped to Huntsville to stand trial for the payroll robbery.

During the months he spent in the Huntsville jail, he became an instant celebrity. While he was lodged in the jail, his wife and child had more spacious accommodations at the old Huntsville Hotel. His cell quickly became the top tourist attraction in North Alabama. Many of his visitors left with the feeling that "he didn't look and act like an outlaw, and besides, it was just Yankee money!"

Newspaper men from all across the country gathered in Huntsville to cover the trial. One of the first things Frank did was to invite the press for an interview. "You boys ought to thank me," said James. "Jesse and I have given you something good to write about for almost twenty years." He asked the press not to be too critical of him, as he had recently lost his dear brother to a "back-shooting assassin" and now the same people were trying to do him in.

It was a gloomy, rainy day when the trial began. Crowds had started gathering early that morning and when Frank, surrounded by armed deputies, walked in, wild cheering broke out. The judge had to rap repeatedly for order.

The trial began with the witnesses for the government. These witnesses had delivered testimony that had sent Wild Bill Ryan to jail for the same robbery. But in a surprise move, four of them suffered from severe memory loss when they confronted a real, live Frank James sitting there in the courtroom, casually cleaning his fingernails with a pocket knife.

The fifth government witness, Dick Liddel, insisted that Frank had committed the rob-

bery. Unfortunately for Liddel, the defense was quick to point out that he had been in cahoots with Bob Ford, the back-shooting assassin of brother Jesse. Dick Liddel soon lost whatever popularity he had enjoyed in Huntsville.

When Frank James' legal counsel, Gen. LeRoy Pope Walker, ex-Secretary of War for the Confederate States, began his summation in front of an "impartial jury" of 12 loyal ex-Confederate veterans, it seemed as if the only thing missing was the waving of the "old flag."

The jury seemed rapt with attention as Gen. Walker testified about being proud to defend James, a loyal Confederate. The General heaped scorn upon the government's case, saying that Liddel was just a common horse thief.

Complicating matters even more for the prosecution was the testimony of a Nashville policeman who claimed that Frank could not have committed the crime. The officer swore that Frank was in Nashville, testifying in court, the very day of the robbery.

After hearing all the evidence, the jury retired to deliberate on the verdict. Thirty minutes later they returned with a verdict of "not guilty." Later that night Frank James was seen meeting and drinking with members of the jury at the Huntsville Hotel. He seemed to be in fine spirits and was heard to entertain his listeners with many exploits of his past.

Frank James was never convicted of any of the crimes that he committed. He became a model citizen, holding various jobs such as a race starter, shoe salesman, and his longest, doorman for a burlesque house in St. Louis. When Frank James died, he was a pauper.

He never visited Huntsville again and, no, he did not rob the bank downtown and, no, he did not jump his horse off the cliff at the Big Spring.



# News from the Year 1925

## News from Huntsville and Around the World

### Teacher Indicted under Anti-evolution Law

May 25. John T. Scopes, a young high school teacher in Tennessee, was indicted tonight on a charge of having taught Darwin's theory of evolution to students in his science class. The trial is expected to attract national attention to the little mountain town of Dayton.

William Jennings Bryan, the spellbinding orator and perennial Democratic candidate for president, will serve as a prosecutor for the state. Clarence Darrow, the noted Chicago lawyer, and Dudley Field Malone of New York City will serve as the defense team for the Tennessee teacher.

Scopes is accused of violating a new law, passed earlier this year by the Tennessee Legislature, banning the teaching of theories denying the divine creation of man as told in the Bible. The indictment charges that Scopes "did teach thereof that man has descended from a lower order of animals."

### Silk Stockings Said to Thicken Ankles

May 22. A report in the British Medical Journal cautions women against wearing silk stockings in cold weather. The practice results in erythema, a chafing and puffiness of the skin. One doctor states that the "scanty" covering of the legs, from dress hem to the tops of boots or shoes, accounted for this modern illness. The condition was rarely reported before short dresses and silk stockings came into vogue.

### American Dirigible Explodes in Storm


Sept 3. The U.S. Navy dirigible Shenandoah, whose silver beauty has been sighted over many American cities, fell broken and shattered on the fields below when it was ripped apart during a thunder storm this morning near Cadwell, Ohio. With 70-mile-an-hour winds, the storm broke the great ship in two, tearing loose the control cabin which fell to earth like a stone. Its 14 crew members were killed, including Captain Zachary Lansdowne. Twenty-seven men survived the disaster.

### The Charleston is the Newest Dance Craze


"Up on your heels, down on your toes ..." So began instructions for accomplishing the Charleston, a fad fast becoming an institution. Developed in Charleston, South Carolina, the steps were first noted at an all-Negro review that opened in New York in 1923. With turned-in toes, syncopated arms and flying legs, dancers move more frantically than film clown Charlie Chaplin. The dance is cutting across age lines; the middle-aged ballroom set are doing it in 4/4 time. And people who usually loathe exertion enjoy standing perfectly still while criss-crossing the hands back and forth across the knees.

### Josephine Baker is New Star in Paris

Oct 7. "The Negro Review," produced in the Paris Theatre de Champs-Elysees, is causing excitement. The audience seems to be in ecstasy before Josephine Baker's stupefying wiggles. Miss Baker is always smiling



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and sings with warm voice. Appearing almost naked, she is also a splendid dancer. Some critics say this she is decadent, crazy, lustful; others maintain it is brilliant. The show already is very successful. With "The Negro Review," Miss Baker accepted her first prominent dancing part. The American singer began in a traveling theatrical company and in 1923 joined the chorus of the Broadway musical "Shuffle Along." Now she is the toast of Paris.

## Duke has Become the Richest University

Oct 27. James Buchanan, Duke tobacco king and philanthropist, died last night of pneumonia. Duke, 68, rose from extreme poverty. He began working in an old log barn hauling tobacco by driving "a pair of blind mules and a tumble-down wagon." Last year, he established Duke University by a trust fund of \$40 million to give North Carolina preachers, teachers, lawyers, chemists, engineers, and doctors. This gift doubles under the provisions of his will, making Duke the wealthiest university.

## Egyptian Pharaoh was Youth of 15

Nov 13. Egyptologists believe King Tutankhamen was no more than 15 years old when he

died. Clothing fragments found in the king's tomb and the manner of bone calcification in his body lend credence to the claim. The young Pharaoh had been married since age five.

## The New Flapper Dress

This year saw the birth of the popular flapper dress, distinguished not so much by its brevity, but more by its shape. Skimming a barely discernible bosom, it features a drop waist or no waist at all, creating an abbreviated columnar look.

## Surrealists Display Dreams at Paris Show

Nov 14. The hitherto distinct barriers between dreams and reality faded a bit today in Paris. A major art show opened at the Pierre Loeb Gallery. It is the first collective exposition of the Surrealists. The artists represented include Max Ernst, Man Ray, Joan Miro, Pablo Picasso and Giorgio De Chirico.

Andre Breton, the Surrealist poet, believes in what he calls automatic writing, guided by pure thought and devoid of logic or moral preoccupations.

The painters on display today are trying their own kind of new, imaginary language. Their images are often contradictory and even irrational. And they hope their new images will even create a social revolution.

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# Franklin Shepard

by Austin Miller

Franklin was several years older but sometimes played with me despite the age difference. He ran with a rough crowd and could hold his own with the worst of them but to me he was my neighbor and seemed like an older brother. In summer we searched the fields behind our house for blackberries, wild plums, apricots and rabbit tobacco. He was the first to tell me about sex and introduced me to an extensive new vocabulary of curse words.

In those days there were no social promotions at school. If students didn't do the work, they failed. Every class had boys that were three or four years behind their age group. Many of these kids were mean bullies who made life miserable for younger students. The best protection was the good fortune of having an older brother. For all thirteen years that I went to school, I stood in front of the school bus next to the driver. The reason I did this was because I was the last stop before the schoolhouse and the bus was usually crowded. In time, even if there was a seat, this became my place on the bus. I had the same driver, Mr. Roy Phillips, from first grade to graduation. Mr. Roy drove the Ryland bus out of Possum Hollow, through Yankee Town, around by Cedar Gap, took a left at Jordan Road to Dr. Jordan's, back to Ryland Pike, down through Ryland to where he picked me up at our mail box.

When I first started to school, I had a problem on the bus with a big bully several years older, who also stood in front of the bus. He would pinch me, shove me down, knock my books out of my hand and make

fun of how I looked or what I wore. Although Mr. Roy was an adult, he couldn't do anything. Daddy talked to his father and it didn't stop. He talked to Mr. Kennemar, the principal and it didn't stop. One morning, when I was walking to the bus, Franklin came out as I passed his house.

He walked with me and I told him that I hated school. He asked why and I told him I was having a problem with one

of older students. Other than asking who it was, he didn't say a word. At morning recess, I saw a crowd gathered on the ball field. I knew it was a fight but I didn't know until later that it was Franklin and the bully. After that day, the boy never bothered me again.

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In his growing up years, Franklin must have shot a million fire crackers of all sizes. He could do things with fire crackers that I never saw anyone else do. He knew how to hold a powerful one between his fingers and let it go off without injury to his hand. He could break a fire cracker in half, light the powder at the break, throw it down on the ground and stomp it in a way that made it explode loudly. As hard as I tried, this was a feat I could never accomplish nor did I ever see it done by anybody else. As he got older he ran with the older boys more and more but he always took time to talk to me.

At age seventeen he joined the Air Force. When he came home on leave after basic training it was, to me, like the return of a conquering hero. Two things still stick in my mind; one was he was drinking beer. It was the first beer I had ever seen and the first alcoholic beverage that I had even seen anyone drink. The second thing was that he was wearing a new gold ring with a beautiful yellow stone. I never saw him after that when the ring was not on his finger. For the next few months, he

spent more time at home than he did on duty with the Air Force. After about a year, he came home to stay, some thought he had gotten a dishonorable discharge for being AWOL. I never believed that; it was my guess that he figured out a way to con the Air force into letting him out with a good discharge. He told people he got out to play profes-

sional baseball. The story was that scouts had seen him play in the Air Force and they were going to offer him a contract. This was probably not true but he was a very good player. He could throw a baseball so hard and with such a curve that there were few in Ryland that could catch him. He could throw a rock, and often did, from our



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After he got out of the Air Force, he slept during the day and caroused at night. No one knew where he went or what he did. Sometimes daylight would find him asleep on the front porch swing. It was not unusual to see Mrs. Shepard (his mother) come out when she got up to let him in the house. Many times I saw him walking the short distance across the church yard at sunup after different women had let him out of their car in front of Shiloh church.

One morning I was standing on the road waiting for the school bus. I heard a car horn blowing way back down the road toward Maysville. It blew continually until it got to where I was standing. When it got close enough, I could see a couple I didn't know sitting close together in the front seat. In the back seat, I saw Franklin and a girl with long blonde hair snuggled close together. They were both waving at me frantically. I was so taken aback; I don't think I returned the wave.

When I got home from school that day, the blond, Franklin and Mrs. Shepard were sitting on the front porch. They had gotten married the night before.

She was the oldest daughter of a farmer and bootlegger from Hurricane Creek. They lived in the house with her parents until Franklin got a job with Republic Steel in Gadsden. It was a good job that paid well and provided a good living. They moved to Gadsden, bought a nice house, had three children and came home to Ryland often.

Franklin had a lot of different talents; one was his ability to cut flat top haircuts. He taught me how to cut a passable flat top but he was the master. When I got him to cut my hair, I felt stylish and it made me feel good, especially at school. When I graduated from high school, he gave me a used pair of Oyster Clippers, the kind professionals had in barber shops. This was a great gift that I used to cut hair all through college. I never charged anybody but it got me return favors and good conversation with a lot of the Ryland community.

After a while, he came to Ryland most of the time without his family and started telling me about relationships he had with women in Gadsden. He said some of them were beautiful, rich and prominent. He was also drinking a lot more. It was not unusual for him to come from Gadsden to Ryland in a taxi.

Sometimes Mrs. Shepard would come out and lead him into the house. One time, I saw him get out of a taxi and immediately fall to the ground passed out drunk. It took us a long time to revive him enough to get him into the house.

One night in the spring of 1967, I was home at Ryland when Mrs. Shepard called and asked me if I would take him to the bus station. She told me that he had to be at work the next morning and his wife would pick him up when he arrived in Gadsden. She said he was drinking but not drunk. She also asked that I please make sure that he got on the bus.

It was raining when I picked him up. He came out wearing a black pin stripe suit, a white shirt with the collar unbuttoned, a black tie, new black shoes and his britches' legs rolled up above his knees. He had a bottle of liquor in both coat pockets. I thought to myself, this is going to be enjoyable! To my surprise it turned out pleasant and I enjoyed the ride to town. Once or twice he tried to persuade me to take him to a bar that he liked and to a woman's house he knew, but I said, "No, I promised Mrs. Shepard that I would get you on the bus and that's what I am going to do."



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**Cathey Carney receives the J. Mercer Barnett Award from Outgoing Pres. Jack Grosser at the Golden K installation dinner. Barnett is credited with bringing Kiwanis to Alabama in 1917.**

Cathey is continuing the publication and Golden K continues to handle distribution in Wal-Mart and Dollar General stores and in coin boxes in Huntsville and Madison County. In the two decades Golden K has distributed the magazine it has contributed more than \$500,000 to youth activities and college scholarships from receipts in the area. Locations of the magazine racks can

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Huntsville Golden K Kiwanis presented the Kiwanis Barnett award to Cathey Carney for support the club has received over the past two decades from her and her late husband, Tom Carney. Tom selected Golden K as the sole distributor for the magazine in Huntsville and Madison County. Tom, though the owner and publisher, has always been listed as the "Copy Boy" and passed away this year.

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When we got to the station, I stood in line with him until he boarded the bus. When he got on, his pantlegs were still rolled up above his knees, the two liquor bottles were still visible in his pockets and he was singing "The Streets of Laredo" as he walked down the aisle toward the back of the bus, in search of a seat.

In the ensuing years he came to Ryland often but we seemed to always miss each other. After I took him to the bus, it was many years before I saw him again. Late in the afternoon on Christmas day of 1988, when we went home to have our family Christmas at Ryland, Essie, his sister, called and said, "Frank is out here, and has been waiting for you to come home so he could see you, would you mind coming out?" He must have been about 60, but I could truthfully say to him that he looked good and had aged very little. His hair was black as ever and he still had a flattop. I could tell

he was glad to see me.

He said that he had come to spend the night with Cora Jean, another sister, who was with him and they both felt a need to come to Ryland at Christmas. I mentioned the clippers he had given me and reminisced about how he used to look after me at school. I told him that I would never forget. I noticed that he had on the gold ring with the yellow stone that I first saw on his finger when he came home from basic training many years before. I am glad we had a good visit because it was the last time that I would ever see him.

About a year and a half later at his home in Gadsden he fell asleep in his chair with a lighted cigarette and burned to death.

These days when I go out to the home place, I sometimes think about him and all the steps he made on the hill we both called home. I loved Franklin because he was a loyal friend that took me under his wing when I was little. I can't say that he was a role model but I can say he made my life better. Some of the things I learned from him helped prepare me for the world that I would enter into as an adult.

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# ONE NIGHT AT THE RUSSEL ERSKINE

By Charlie Lyle



One night at the Russel Erskine Hotel, a Senator named John Sparkman walked into the lobby and exclaimed, "Hey Quinn! I need a room for the night and I will be back later." Well everyone from Alabama knew John Sparkman as did many other people, all over the country. Many streets were named after him, buildings etc. - many in Huntsville, in his honor. Jimmy Quinn was manager of the hotel.

Well, the hotel was packed, there were no rooms available. So Quinn didn't want to let his good customer down.

Quinn and assistant manager George Roach had a plan. There was a friend of Jimmy's who had a room in the hotel that night and always insisted that Jimmy share a little of the juice in the hotel's Red Room. Well the guest didn't really know that Quinn could drink anyone under the table.

So as one might surmise that is exactly what happened. After

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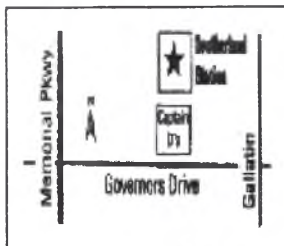
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all, he told George Roach, the assistant manager, "It's just a matter of mixing business with pleasure." The man staggered back to his room and virtually passed out.

Here is where the real story begins. Quinn and a couple of bell boys slid the man onto a portable bed and rolled him down to the laundry room for the night. They made up the bed, tidied up the room. So a little bit later they greeted the Senator with a smile and said "Sir, we have your room ready."

The next morning the senator woke up and went on his way. When the man in the laundry room woke up, he was terrified. He went up to talk to the front desk clerk and told the clerk something strange happened to him last night, but suddenly realizing that he wasn't sure what he may have done last night, he turned in his key and went merrily on His Way!!

*Note: As told by George Roach who now lives in Florence, Alabama.*

One would have to realize that things were quite different back in the forties.



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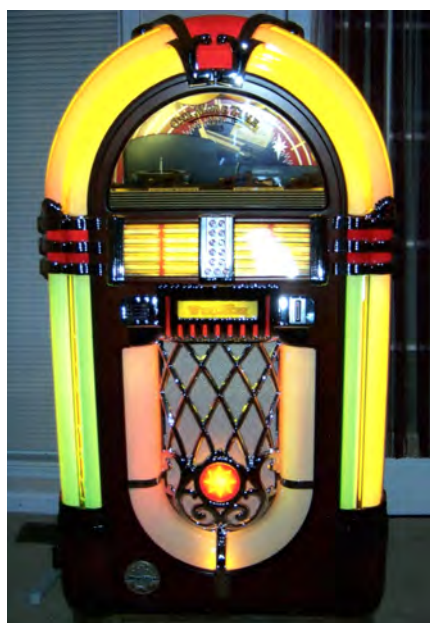
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Facing Southwest towards the First Alabama Bank building. When this picture taken in 1913, of the area known as "Cotton Row", there were more elephants in Huntsville than there were automobiles.

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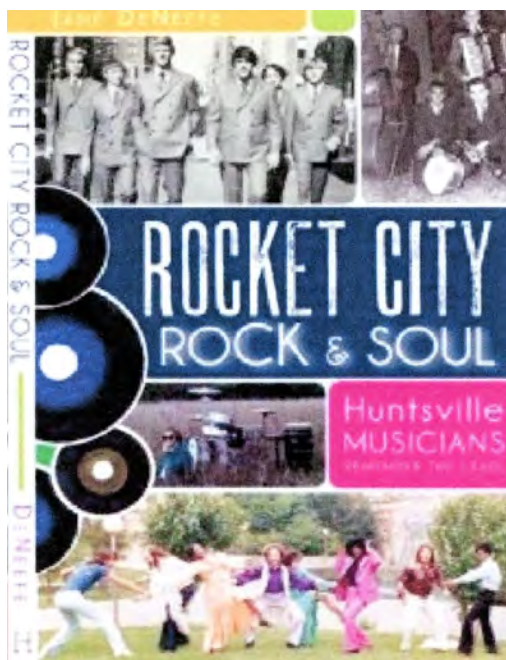
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