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Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY



The Christmas Puppy

When my mother and brother went to look at the beagle pups, she coaxed my brother into selecting a scared and timid puppy hidden in the corner of the barn. My brother wanted to choose the puppy that jumped into his lap licking him all over his face. These were good qualities in a hunting dog.

Being nine years old, he relented and brought home on Christmas Eve the most timid and scared puppy I had ever seen.

Also in this issue: Hazel Green Girls

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Domie Lewter
Mac Lewter

The Christmas Puppy

by Derek Robertson

Christmas time is either a happy time or a sad time for people. Sometimes the holiday brings about humorous moments, too. I remember a Christmas from my childhood days that brought about all three emotions. It is a Christmas I will never forget. It has created a common bond between two brothers who are different in the way they are as people. My brother and I share at least one thing in common. We share in the memory of the Christmas puppy.

My father and I enjoyed rabbit hunting on the farms near our home in North Alabama during the days of my youth. We had two dogs, a twelve year old Beagle named Lucky and a German Shepherd/Collie mix named Rip. We used these dogs to facilitate increasing our rabbit bounty. Although we experienced success in most of our hunting expeditions, my father always wanted

another beagle hound to add to our dog pack in hopes of making our hunts more plentiful. Unlike most hunters today, we did not hunt for stature or trophies. Our financial status was nothing to be ashamed about, but it was unhandy at times. A bag full of fresh killed rabbits meant food on the table and good family dinners. Adding a younger, faster, and smaller beagle to our hunt meant more food for our family.

Our family was comprised of my father, mother, brother and me. We lived in a modest home in rural Alabama. For the most part we were a close and traditional southern family. In spite of this, my brother and I were very different in terms of who we were as people. We never shared anything in common. Although he was envious about our hunting adventures, he never took part in our rabbit hunts. He did not like being out in the cold weather and did not like killing animals. However, he did enjoy the dinners and he understood hunting meant providing food for our family.

Notwithstanding my brother's unwillingness to hunt with my father and me, my mother felt he was being left out. However, she recognized my brother was not left out on purpose. Several times my father and I asked him to go, and he always declined the offer. Nevertheless, my mother was troubled by this, and she wanted my brother to be included in some

The famous picture of the Mona Lisa has no eyebrows. In the Renaissance era, it was the fashion to shave them off.



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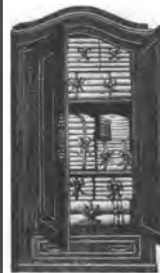
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manner.

There came a day during Christmas time of 1979, when I was twelve years old, and my brother was nine, my mother discovered a way my brother could be included in our rabbit hunts. Her idea meant my brother would be included in a manner for many years to come.

She read in the classified ads of the "Huntsville Times" an advertisement for beagle puppies for sale. The puppies would be ready to buy on Christmas Eve, and she would take my brother to buy one of those beagle puppies for our dad. Her idea meant even though my brother would not go hunting with my father and me, it did mean his Christmas present for my dad would be responsible for our increased rabbit bounty. This would allow my brother to take part in the pride and joy of seeing my father enjoying his new beagle puppy.

Because I felt I was an established hunter and I knew what to look for in a good rabbit dog, I offered my services to assist in the purchase of the beagle puppy. After all, I would be hunting with the new mutt; I

thought I should have a say. My mother insisted this was my brother's present, and I was not invited in this undertaking. She wanted this experience to be solely his endeavor.

To make my brother feel like his purchase was earned, she gave him extra chores to do around our home to make money. My mother throughout the year saved her quarters in a mason jar and when she rolled the quarters it totaled thirty dollars. By chance, she had just enough to pay my brother twenty-five dollars for doing the extra chores. It was also the price of the beagle pup. My mother used the remaining five dollars to buy him a hamburger at the Dairy Delight on the day of their Christmas puppy shopping.

My mother is a loving and caring person. She lives in her heart. These qualities are great for raising a family, but useless when selecting a fine rabbit

"I get my summer glow from a bottle. It says "Zinfandel."

Maxine

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I learned when my mother and brother went to look at the beagle pups that she coaxed my brother into selecting a scared and timid puppy hidden in the corner of the seller's barn. My brother wanted to choose the puppy that jumped into his lap, licking him all over his face. These were good qualities in a hunting dog. Being nine years old, and not yet having developed the necessary negotiating skills needed to change the mind of a mother, he relented and brought home on Christmas Eve the most timid and scared puppy I had ever seen.

Since it was Christmas time and I was full of the Christmas spirit, I did not criticize the selection of the puppy. My mother, although a loving and caring person, also had a hard hand when I got out of line, so I decided to let that motivate me in welcoming the new pup. She told us to make sure we kept it hidden and quiet until Christmas morning. That was an easy enough task since the wimpy dog scurried under the bed in our bedroom and would not come out.

Christmas day arrived. We never had many presents, but what we received as gifts we

cherished. We were too young to know it then, but in our hearts this time of year was about family and the wonderful dinner my mom prepared. However, this Christmas was supposed to be a memorable Christmas for my brother.

After the last present was opened, my mom told my dad that there was one more present. My dad was surprised to hear my mother announce this because we did not have much money and he did not understand how there could be another gift. My mother instructed my brother to get his present he had for my dad. He ran to our bedroom, stretched out under our bed to get the shy beagle pup and ran back to hand the scared mutt over to our father.

The look on my father's face was priceless. It was a look of appreciation, wonderment and satisfaction. My brother's face was swollen with pride and a smile stretched from ear to ear. This was going to be the best

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Bill Cosby

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Christmas ever for my brother. So we thought.

After the joy and excitement settled down, my dad told my brother how much the dog meant to him and how proud he was of my brother. He suggested he take the new pup outside to let it take care of its personal business. My brother put his coat on over his pajamas, picked up the new pup and walked outside, his chest stuck out with honor like a soldier that just received a medal. It was not long after he went outside, the door busted open wide, and in the doorway my brother stood crying. When my brother put the puppy on the cold ground, it had run away into the nearby woods. My mother and father were desperately trying to calm my brother down. Without delay, I took off to begin searching for that wimpy dog.

I remember that Christmas day was remarkably cold. I spent the better part of the day looking for that puppy to no avail, while my relatives spent time consoling my brother and encouraging him with positive thoughts. Christmas in my

home continued as I spent frigid hours in the cold looking for my father's new hunting dog. The sky became purple and red as the day came to an end. I returned to the house and entered with bad news. I could not find that scared canine. What began to be a memorable Christmas became a really sad one.

As the years went by, the memory of that Christmas faded. My brother and I grew up and moved far away from our Alabama home. Many Christmases would be spent apart from my mom and dad, and it would be years before my brother and I could ever be together at home with our parents. I remember the first time we were together again in many years, it brought great joy and happiness for our parents because we were all there for Christmas.

We began talking about our memories of our childhood and humorous stories. In due course, the memory of the Christmas puppy emerged. My mother told that story, and soon I felt the room becoming saddened by the events that occurred that day. I remem-

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ber how terrible that day was for my brother. In an effort to lighten the mood, I made a joke, "I saw that beagle still running across the field near our house on my trip home." My entire family burst out into laughter. My dad and brother laughed the hardest.

After the laughter died down, my brother spoke and told my family the best Christmas present he ever got was the one I gave him. He said the hours I spent that Christmas day looking for his dog meant very much to him and was the best present he ever received from me. He said he did not realize it when he was a child, but years later, as he grew wiser, he often reminisced about that Christmas and how much it meant to him that I spent my Christmas day looking for his puppy.

Notwithstanding our many differences, my brother and I realized how much we loved each other that Christmas. In some ways I resented my brother for not coming along on our hunts and sharing in our rabbit hunting adventures. I did not realize it when I was young, but inside my heart, I too felt like he was being left out. In some ways, I think those rabbit hunts caused us to never be close as some brothers were.

If it were not for a shy and scared rabbit dog, my brother and I might have never known how much we cared for each other. It will forever be the Christmas we loved, cried and laughed.

**"You know you're getting older when you light the candles on your birthday cake, and a group of campers form a circle and start singing "Kumbaya."

Sam Huffstetler, Huntsville**

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- 3 (6 oz) pkgs. frozen coconut, thawed
- 12 oz. whipped topping

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How Can I help You?

Hazel Green School, The Time was Then

by Betty Williams Gordon

I sat down at the kitchen table with my brother Carl Williams and his wife Anna at their home on Toll Gate Road in Huntsville, Alabama. Carl got the old box of photos out of the dresser drawer. Some of the photos were our friends and classmates at Hazel Green School. The photos were from the late thirties and early forties. A small photo holder fell to the floor. The holder was old and coming apart. I opened it up, it was mine! The boys basketball schedule was inside, the years were 1945-1946.

My mind started tumbling back to the years at Hazel Green School. It was just like yesterday. Hazel Green was a small rural community, just north of Huntsville. Most folks would call it a wide place in the road.

The crossroads had three small stores. One large general merchandise store, a cotton gin and a church. Mr. Towers owned one of the small stores. It had a post office inside. The wood porch out front was where the local men would come to whittle on a stick of wood with their knives and tell old stories. Atlas Cager owned one of the small stores. The other small store I can't remember who owned it. It was an old wooden building, years later it was torn down. A cinder block building replaced the old wood building and it still remains there today, but abandoned. Sutlowes owned the general merchandise store.



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Doctor Dickey was the community doctor. He lived in a house near the school.

Carl and I started first grade at Hazel Green School. I will always remember the school bus coming down the gravel road. Mama walked us out to the bus stop. Our brother B.W. was with us. He was trying to get Mama to let him stay home. He did not like school, but Mama stood by him with her switch in her hand and made him get on the bus. The bus pulled off down the road and onto the next stop. The driver opened the door, B.W. jumped off the bus and started running across the field back to our house. Carl and I stayed on the bus until it pulled onto the school grounds. My niece Gladys Sledge was there. I was a bit afraid going to a new school but Gladys was not. She was not afraid of any one or any thing. The old school was a two story building. One through sixth grade. At recess the girls jumped rope and played hopscotch. The boys played marbles to see who could win the most marbles and be champion for the day. The boys also played baseball.

The minister at the local church in Hazel Green would invite the class for the day (like a field trip). We all got to go. He would read from the Bible about Samson. He used my brother Carl to play Samson.

In the afternoon we would ride the school bus home. Mama would always give us a snack. She made tea cakes for us all. We had chores to do, some would go to the fields, some would feed the chickens and cows so that Mama could milk the cows in the morning. After

"Do you ever wonder why is it that doctors call what they do 'practice'?"

Sherie Jonas, Arab

school, Mama and I liked to listen to Stella Dallas on the battery-powered radio. Some times the old radio battery would get weak and we would have to turn it off, so the battery could recharge. At night before bedtime we got to listen to "The Shadow". The Shadow Knows!!! The only light we had in the house was oil lamps, so we played games by making shadows on the walls. We also played a game called guess my number, it was so much fun!

At school our principal was Mr. Simms. A tough one when necessary, but also gentle. He had a big paddle in his office. We all knew this, so the students respected him. Our first grade teacher was Miss Morris. She married and became Mrs. Kennedy. Second grade teacher was Ruth Dickey, Doctor Dickey's daughter. Third grade I can not recall the teacher's name. Fourth grade teacher was Mrs. Robertson. Fifth grade teacher was Mrs. Hill. Sixth grade teacher was Mrs. Bailey.

We graduated from sixth grade, all the students were so happy to get in the new build-

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ing. Our graduation clothes were originals made by our moms. The graduation clothes consisted of white skirts and white blouses. Our moms made most of our clothes. Gladys and I thought we were so good looking.

Mr. Dickey became our principle at the new building. I made the girls basketball team. I really liked playing ball. After practice, sometimes we would pull the curtain on the stage in the gym and dance. The jitterbug dance was very popular. The principal caught us, he said "What's wrong with you young people today? This jitterbug rug has you all stressed out." We all laughed at him for calling it the jitterbug rug.

The boys basketball coach was John W. Moon, the school year was 1945-46, for the home games. Hazel Green was playing a home game against West Huntsville. The gym was packed full with Hazel Green fans. They were shouting "Hazel Green! Hazel Green", over and over. The home basketball schedule was as follows:

- Nov. 20 - Madison
- Nov. 27 - Riverton
- Dec. 7 - West Huntsville
- Dec. 18 - Gurley
- Jan. 18 - New Market
- Feb. 1 - Joe Bradley
- Feb. 12 - Monrovia
- Feb. 15 - Rison (at 12:00 noon)

I made so many friends at school. Judy Cornell, Edna Averson, Dickey Mitchell, Nan-

cy Patterson, Gene Spelce, BF Hill, Billy Cummerime, Gracencell and Angus Sullivan, RD McBride. Gown Mitchell who was on the boys football team and so handsome. I think every girl at school had a crush on him.

The new kid on the block was Tommie Rigsby. He was different from the rest of the guys, or at least I thought so. He had that look about him. Big muscles and a motorcycle lover. One thing Tommie could not stand was to be punched in the ribs. The students knew this. When the bell rang, he would rush down the hall trying to get away from them. But someone would catch him and poke him in the ribs. He would let out a yell as a reflex. He would hit the person in front of him. He could not help

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it. They about drove him crazy. Tommie and I became best of friends.

There was not a lot to do in those days. Only a few had cars to go to the ball games, church, and some times we would catch a ride into Huntsville to go to the movies or to the county fair in the fall. There was decoration day at Charity Lane Church. All day singing and dinner on the grounds. We looked forward to that day. The girls would have the newest outfits on. Gladys and I tired to look our best. We knew the boys would be there. Also it's like boy meets girl. All of our friends would be there. It was usually a great day.

Tommie and I got together at friend's house. There was no McDonald's or Burger King to hang out at. We attended church revivals. The girls liked to get there early to get a good seat by the windows. There was no air-conditioning in those days. The windows had to be opened. We did that to see the boys outside. They asked to walk us home. The minister preached fire and brimstone sermons. Some of them scared us to death. I guess it done some good. Some of it still sticks with me today.

Tommie decided to go in the Navy. The war was on. The night before he left, he came to see me, to tell me he was leaving. We hugged one another and cried. I would miss him. We promised to write to each other, and we did. He got stationed on a ship out of California, in 1948. He was sent to Europe and got injured. A rumor got out that he was killed. I wrote Mrs. Rigsby (his mother) and she wrote me back saying he was only injured. I was so thankful, my prayers had been answered. Time passed, some how Tommie and I lost contact with one another. I made new friends and so did he.

The last time I saw him, he came to see me on his motorcycle. The same look he had when

I met him riding the motorcycle he loved so much. We talked, I had the feeling he wanted to tell me something, but he said good bye. He rode away and never looked back. I stood and watched him ride out of sight. Tears ran down my cheeks. I felt very sad. Gee! I would miss him. Some time later Gladys told me he was getting married. I sent him a message, to wish him well.

The days went by. Mama and Papa had a friend who gave us a ride to Huntsville. Mama liked to shop (most time just to look), money was always tight. My sister Stacie and I liked to go to the Five & Ten cent store. Papa went to the old court house square and sat on the benches along with his friends. They all talked politics and smoked. Papa did not smoke but chewed Red Apple tobacco instead. It was an all day thing. No one got in a hurry to return home. We were exhausted when we got home.

My friend Edna Lou Alverson married Clayton Britton, April the 12th, 1947. They had children and grandchildren. They still live near Hazel Green. Gladys married Cecil Bailey, and they have a son Larry. She now lives near Hazel Green also. Tommie married and had children. He died of cancer at a very young age. I had so many friends that I cannot name them all. Some of them moved away,

some passed away.

On a trip back home, I rode by Hazel Green School. The all new buildings, the cars in the parking lot. Just about all the students drive their own cars and have their own cell phones. The Hazel Green Class of 2009 will graduate in May. My great niece Karla Bramlett will graduate this year from Hazel Green. She drives her own car to school. My!! The times sure have changed over the years.

The community is still some what the same. Charity Lane is still a two lane road but paved. The same church is still there. As I ride by, I can almost see my old friends (especially Tommie). I wonder if they still have all day singing and dinner on the ground. As I look back, those times were some of the best in all our lives.

Notable Alumni:

Stuart Tate, baseball, former San Francisco Giants pitcher; Roger Hillis, football, played for Marshall after the plane crash; Keegan Bell, basketball, Vanderbilt Commodores, and University of Tennessee-Chattanooga; George Lindsey, actor, The Andy Griffith Show (Goober); Jim Greenich, tennis former ATP member.

"I drink to make other people interesting."

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City Happenings in 1923

*According to reports received here, George Macaloy, residing in Dallas Village, was beaten about the head and body with a flatiron in the hands of his son-in-law, Fred Maples, Sunday afternoon, during a fracas between the two men. Macaloy was rushed to Huntsville, where he received medical attention. No arrests were made.

* Strayed - white and black setter bitch. One year old. Medium size. Name Jessie. Liberal reward for information. Jeff H. Terry

* For Rent - one furnished room in private home. Call at 302. West Holmes street.

* For Sale - pedigreed Flemish Giant Rabbits. Phone 653 or 270. D. S. Blackwell, Special Agent located over Young's Drug Store.

* Overheard in the news - Fabulous riches sound better than they really are - John D. Rockefeller is obliged to wear

an overcoat all summer to keep warm.

* Improving - Mr. Charles Shaver is reported as doing nicely after having his tonsils removed at the City Infirmary yesterday.

* Mr. Milton Anderson, Harry Coons and James Wall have rented a cottage on Monte Sano, where they will spend the remainder of the summer.

* New Homes

The erection of twenty new cottages at the Lowe Manufacturing company's mill is well underway with carpenters and other workmen being busily engaged on the work. The houses are of pretty design, modern and well constructed. The new homes will be occupied by employees of the mill and will add greatly to the appearance of the mill village which is kept scrupulously neat and sanitary in all respects.

Immediately in front of the entrance to the office of the mill there is a large bed of beautiful flowers upon which several spraying streams of water are kept constantly at work giving the flowers a fresh and inviting appearance.

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Christmas in the Forties and Fifties

by Austin Miller

In the forties and fifties Christmas was always lean for the Joe Miller family. We got something under the tree every year but it was very little. One year I got a BB gun that was so cheap it lost all its strength before the holidays were over. That was probably a good thing because two or three days after Christmas my cousin Howard accidentally shot me with okra seed a fraction of an inch below my right eye. I couldn't afford BB's and okra seed worked just fine, we had plenty of those left from the summer garden.

I always wanted a Lionel electric train but the closet thing I ever got to one was an off brand wind up. Like the BB gun it didn't last until the first of the year. Our tree was not much to brag about either, we cut about a three feet tall straggly cedar from somewhere on the place that was decorated with icicles, a few ancient balls, a well worn strand of garland and one string of large multi colorful oval shaped electric lights. Mama always took it down before Christmas day was over. My parents didn't get any gifts at all; I don't remember either of them getting anything for Christmas until I bought presents for them after I was grown.

Despite the meagerness of gifts and celebra-

tion, Christmas was my favorite time of the year. I loved the season. It was a good time for me. Mama always had fruit, nuts, and baked several cakes; these were things we didn't have the rest of the year. We usually had chicken sandwiches on Christmas day and at least once during the season we had hamburgers with a Double Cola.

I normally didn't like to go to church but I enjoyed the Christmas program at Shiloh Methodist Church. Hearing the congregation sing *Silent Night, It Came on the Midnight Clear* and other old favorites lifted my spirits and reminded me of what the season was all about. I would leave with awareness that this was a very special time of the year. Even today, my favorite church service is the annual Christmas Eve candle light and communion service at Holmes Street United Methodist Church.

But the best part about Christmas in my youth was the week off from school. It was my only vacation all year. We had split sessions so we could chop cotton in the summer and pick in

the fall. From one Christmas to the next we were either in school or working in the field, sometimes both because much of the year there was work to do after school. We worked on the fourth of July unless it came on Sunday and Thanksgiving Day unless the weather was bad. The first time I got off for holi-

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Maxine

days was when I went into the Army in 1965. We only got one week for Christmas and in my early years school didn't turn out for New Years. In those days Madison County, east of Huntsville, was rural from the city limits to the Jackson County line. Almost everybody farmed and having children out of school to work in the cotton fields as many days as possible was a necessary way of life.

My life now and the way I celebrate Christmas have changed considerably since my growing up years. When I look back the good old days were not so good. But there are things I miss. My father, who could not sing a lick and usually didn't, would sometimes stand on the front porch on Christmas Eve and bellow out a few bars of *Silent Night*. Mama would always have some special treat, usually candy that she passed out on Christmas Eve. Doing that for us seemed to delight her and be the highlight of her Christmas. I did learn an important lesson from those days. I learned that it's not what you get for Christmas, what you have to eat or even having time off; the real joy of Christmas comes from family, friends and being with the people you love. During each Christmas season, I try to contact every person that is special to me no matter where they live.

NEWS IN NEW HOPE - 1896

New Hope Man Killed Going for a Coffin
(Submitted by Chuck Bobo)

W. B. Cobb, of New Hope, was killed at Paint Rock by the Memphis and Charleston train No. 4, east bound, the night of 21 Nov. 1896 when he attempted to cross in front of the train. He was knocked down, his head crushed and one leg cut off.

He had gone to Paint Rock to meet the train and get a coffin he expected to be brought in for his father.

Cobb lived near New Hope and leaves a wife and four children.

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Heard On the Street

by *Cathey Carney*



Congratulations to **Bobby Norton** who correctly guessed the Photo of the Month for October - it was a young **Louie Tippett**, owner of United Fire, Smoke & Water Restoration. Bobby went to Huntsville High with Louie back when it was located in the current Annie Mertz center, and he worked with Louie when they were both firefighters at Station #10.

And then we had our first winner for the landmark mystery - many calls but only a few correct guesses - that picture of the 1938 imprint on a building was on East Clinton School - so congratulations to **Kenneth Norton**! He also wins a free year of Old Huntsville magazine - Kenneth worked for Coca-Cola for many years.

Donald and Kay Cornelius recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary with a special party in Honolulu. They have lived in Huntsville since 1958, and Kay is a very prolific writer. Congratulations you two!

Shelby Scott was only 72

when she passed away at her home as a result of a massive stroke. Shelby was a life-long Democrat, a Civil Service retiree and a huge supporter of Alabama Roll Tide football. In addition to being feisty, funny and outspoken, she was a loving Granny, Mom, sister and aunt. She leaves her daughter **Dianna** and son **John Troup** (wife **Stephanie Troup**) and grandkids **Hannah** and **Evan Troup**. Out of a large family only her sisters **Reba Walton** and **Susie Serio** are living. We send our deepest condolences to the family.

The Botanical Gardens are just beautiful this Christmas season, be sure and take your family out there to see the stunning lights.

A special hello to our friend **Bob Pierce** who has been sending some really good quotes, here's an example: "One type of surgery you never hear about is nose enlargement."

Happy Birthday to that beautiful **Jean Pitsinger** who celebrates her special day in December. She called regarding the disposition of the large 4-sided clock that was atop the Courthouse prior to it being torn down in the early 60's. She said she remembers that it was moved and then put on top of the First National Bank on west side square, they moved it by truck across the street. She said they carried the Confederate statue over there at the same time. But whatever happened finally to the clock (which is no longer on top of the bank) is still a mystery! If anyone can shed light on this, call me and I'll let everyone know!

On Saturday, Dec. 10 from 5-9pm you won't want to miss the annual **Spirit of Christmas Past Homes Tour and Luminaries**. The homes are on Franklin this year in Twickenham and it really puts you in the Christmas spirit! Call **Julia Wynn King** at 256.534.0429 for ticket info.

Happy Anniversary to **George & Marliese Huell** - they recently celebrated their Oct. date and are

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 Ryland writer loved his dog "Old Fuzzy."



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happy that they've had 35 years of bliss so far!

Hello to that handsome **Robert Watson** of Huntsville - he is really looking forward to the holidays and especially loves Christmas.

Happy Birthday to **Glenda Huffstetler**, she and her sweet husband **Sam** live here in Huntsville and are really looking forward to a cozy holiday with family & friends.

Recently we have all read about the **increased number of robberies** all over Huntsville in homes and businesses. Here are some special guidelines from the Huntsville Police Department that you need to know. If you see a crime in progress, need emergency services like the Fire Department or medical services, always call 911. If you want to report something suspicious in your neighborhood or have been a victim of a crime, call the non-emergency police number 256-722-7100.

A special hello to our good friends in Orange Beach, **Edna & Dub Pierce**. We love you guys!

There have been many more residents who are now buying alarm systems for their homes, adding dead bolts to their doors, etc. Some other tips from the police are, continue to lock your house, garage, and car doors. Never leave valuables in your car. Keep shrubs trimmed around your house, use exterior lighting, if going out of town have your

neighbors keep an eye on your home. Other items that act as robbery deterrents are barking dogs, alarm systems, motion lights, light timers, house alarm signs in front yard and windows. Stay aware, stay alert, watch your surroundings especially if you come home after dark.

Mary Dudley wishes her dear friend **Peggy Hutson** a happy December birthday. They met 44 years ago in Pirmasens, Germany and have been best of friends ever since!

When the Historic Lowry House held their first **annual Family Fright Night** in October, a strange thing occurred. A teenager was portraying **Jane Lowry** in the upstairs bedroom, where she would look out of the window and wave at the crowd. In the past there have been strange happenings in that upstairs bedroom and that was the room of Jane Lowry. The young lady was standing by the window when a friend of hers took her picture from inside the house, and when she looked at the picture there was a face on the sleeve of her dress. No one can explain it, it almost looks like a mask. Pretty scary. It has been posted on the Historic Lowry House Facebook page, and is really unexplainable.

David Hardwick wanted to notify as many of the **Huntsville High graduates of 1962** as he can that there will be a 50th reunion June 1-3, 2012. If you need more information call him

at 256.682.2180.

I wanted to send out a special Thank You to all our readers who have sent memories, stories, information and just kind words to help make this magazine the best it can be. You have helped me SO much, you'll never know. My sweet husband **Tom** would have been 65 December 15, his birthday.

Have a warm, wonderful **Christmas & holiday season** with your loved ones & think about helping those who just might need some company this time of year.

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A Sweet Christmas

Brazil Nut Chews

- 2 eggs
- 2 c. firmly packed brown sugar
- 1 t. vanilla extract
- 1-3/4 c. all-purpose flour
- 1/2 t. baking powder
- 1/2 t. salt
- 1 lb. ground Brazil nuts
- Sifted powdered sugar

Beat the eggs well in large bowl til thick and lemon-colored. Gradually add your sugar and vanilla. Sift together the flour, baking powder and salt, add slowly to the egg mixture. Stir in the Brazil nuts. Cover your bowl and chill for several hours.

Shape the dough by using a teaspoonful for each cookie, and shape the dough into 2-inch rolls. Place the rolls 2 inches apart on your greased cookie sheet. Bake at 350 degrees for about 12 minutes, then roll in powdered sugar while still warm. For a festive

look dip the ends of the rolls in melted semisweet chocolate, then in ground nuts.

Light Eggnog

- 2 T. sugar
- 1/2 c. fat-free egg substitute
- 4 c. scalded 2% milk
- 1 t. vanilla extract
- 1 t. sugar
- 1/2 c. light whipped topping
- Cocoa powder for garnish

Beat the sugar into the egg substitute, then slowly stir in the milk. In a double boiler, cook the mixture over hot but not boiling water. Stir constantly til the mixture coats the back of a spoon, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat, add the vanilla and cool. Chill for 4 hours.

Pour the mixture into a punch bowl. Fold 1 teaspoon sugar into the whipped topping, top each mug of eggnog with a dollop of the whipped cream and sprinkle with cocoa powder.

Royal Ambrosia Cookies

- 1 c. butter (2 sticks)
- 1 c. sugar
- 1 c. firmly packed brown sugar
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 t. vanilla extract
- 2 c. all-purpose flour
- 1 t. baking powder
- 1/2 t. baking soda
- 1/2 t. salt
- 1 c. flaked coconut
- 1-1/2 c. regular oats, uncooked
- 1 c. chopped pecans
- 2 c. chopped dates
- 1 T. grated lemon rind
- 1 t. grated orange rind

Cream your butter in a large mixing bowl and gradually add your sugars, eggs, vanilla - beating well after each addition. In another bowl combine the flour, baking powder, soda, salt, coconut, oats, pecans, dates, and rind - mix well and add it slowly to the butter mixture. Drop the

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dough by teaspoonfuls two inches apart on a greased cookie sheet and bake at 375 degrees for 10 minutes. Cool on wire racks.

Chunky Peanut Butter Delights

- 1/2 c. butter (1 stick)
- 1/2 c. chunky peanut butter
- 1 c. brown sugar
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1-1/2 c. all-purpose flour
- 1/2 t. baking powder
- 3/4 t. baking soda
- 1/4 t. salt

Cream your butter with the peanut butter, add the sugar and beat til light and fluffy. Add the egg, beat well. Sift together the flour, baking powder, soda and salt in another smaller bowl, add it gradually to the butter mixture and mix well.

Shape dough into 3/4 inch balls and place them 2 inches apart on your greased cookie sheet. Bake at 375 degrees for about 10 minutes, cool for a few minutes then remove to wire racks to completely cool.

Almond Crunchy Crusted Pound Cake

Almond Butter Crust:

- 3/4 stick butter
- 1/2 c. light brown sugar
- 1/4 c. flour
- 1 c. sliced almonds

Make the crust by combining the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl, mix well, add the flour and

blend til mixture is crumbly. Add the almonds, stir lightly. Butter the pan, then pat mixture over the bottom and halfway up the sides of a regular loaf pan (8-1/2" x 4-1/2" x 2-1/2"). Spread evenly and don't get it too thick in the corners. Set aside.

Pound Cake Batter:

- 2 eggs, room temp
- 3/4 stick butter, softened
- 3 oz. Cream cheese, room temp
- 1/2 c. sugar
- 1 c. all-purpose flour
- 1/4 t. salt
- 1/2 t. baking powder
- 2 t. almond extract

Preheat your oven to 350 degrees. Mix the butter, cream cheese and sugar in a bowl, beat til smooth and blended. Add the eggs, beat well.

Combine the flour, salt and baking powder, stir them together. Add to the first mixture and beat well, add the extract. Continue beating til the mixture is smooth, like a soft frosting.

Spoon batter into the crust-lined pan, about halfway up the sides. Bake for 50-60 minutes, check doneness by inserting broom straw in center of cake - it should come out clean.

Remove from oven, set on a rack to cool. When completely cool, run a knife between the crust and the sides of the pan and flip the cake out onto a serving board or platter. Serve in thin slices.



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JODIE A. ROGERS

BY AUSTIN MILLER

Jodie A. Rogers was born in 1876; his parents were slaves. Jodie came up in the South when black people had few rights. To survive, he had to be humble and kow-tow to the whims and wishes of white people regardless of their age or station in life. He bragged on everything we did no matter how unworthy of praise. He addressed me as Mr. Austin and said yes sir and no sir to me even before I started to school.

The first time I remember Jodie, at about age five, he and Daddy were running Mr. Wess Taylor's cows out of their partnership watermelon patch. The patch located on the hill over looking land that we rented from Howard Tipton to grow cotton is now a housing development. I can still recall Jodie running after the cows, waving his arms and yelling, "HU--UH--EEE get on out of here cow." This must have been an omen because in later years Jodie and I became friends and spent much time talking about watermelons and watermelon patches.

Jodie lived in a one room shack on about three acres (the shack still stands) at the intersection of Dug Hill Road and Wess Taylor Road. He raised cotton on his three acres; Daddy turned the land and did his planting every spring. Jodie in turn repaid Daddy by helping us chop cotton. When I got old enough the turning and planting became my responsibility.

He owned a 32-caliber pistol and two bullets for it that were no telling how old. He always talked about whizzing the bullets past somebody's heart if he caught them stealing his watermelons. We spent a lot of long hot summer days together chopping cotton. To help pass the time, I would tell him that he was the best watermelon grower around Ryland. Actually, he was the worst; all he could ever manage on his own was swiveled vines with a few fist busters about the size of basketballs. The best was another black man named Bus Ford. Bus planted his patch, about three fourths of an acre, in a different secluded spot each year. When it was time for watermelons to start getting ripe, I would search until I found where it was located. Finding it was a delight. There was magic about seeing various varieties of big watermelons prominently visible in a lush carpet of thick green vines. I can still picture the beauty of the patch with it's generous scattering of large round dark green Stone Mountains, round white-stripped Dixie Queens, oblong green-stripped Georgia Rattles Snakes and light gray/green Charleston Grays. In late July or early August when the oldest melons

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stated to ripen and the runners were still growing, you knew that you were viewing perfection cultivated by a master. As tasty as they were, I never took a single one or told anyone where the patch was hidden. I knew that if I asked, he would give me all the watermelons I wanted.

It always made Jodie beam when I bragged about him being the best. I don't know if he believed me but I do know he liked to hear me say it and I think saying it was a good thing. Although Jodie never went to school a day in his life, he learned to read and write. He was a voracious reader and was more articulate than some college graduates I have known. He was a 32nd degree Mason, which was a high honor among blacks as well as whites. He not only reached the top order but also held a position in the national organization. The benefit was that he got to travel by bus to meetings throughout the southeast. He often told me stories about his travels and the things he did at the meetings. It helped make the long cotton rows seem a little shorter.

He was married as a young man. I don't know what happened to his wife but I do know he had a daughter who lived up north and sent him presents at Christmas. When he worked for us, he ate with us but he didn't eat with us at the table. Mama, following the mores of the time, fixed his plate and let him eat alone outside under the old Elm tree by the well.

In the fall he picked his cotton and stored it in a little shed by his house until he got it all picked. It was my job to take him to the gin. I would usually come early on Saturday morning and help him move it from the shed to our trailer. This normally took us a couple of hours. When we finished I would drive him and his cotton to the gin. One year, when I

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was about 16, he didn't get it all picked until late November. It was so late in the season that the gin at Ryland had closed. This meant our only option was to take it to Maysville, about three miles away. We must have been a sight to behold. I pulled the trailer with Daddy's Super C Farmall (it is the one we still own) with an 80 year old black man and my eleven year old brother Berns riding on top of the cotton. At one point, we had several cars backed up behind our trailer.

When we got to the gin a fellow came out and said, "We are not running today, we only gin on Thursday." I knew the man by reputation. He was a notorious ruffian and thug who lived in Maysville. He routinely drove drunk, had many fights (fists and knives) and was once involved in a gun battle in broad daylight in downtown Maysville. I explained that we had come all the way from Ryland and needed to get the cotton ginned if at all possible. He responded by saying, "I didn't give a God damn, if you come from Mars." I told him we couldn't take it back because we didn't have any place to put it and it would surely get wet before we could bring it back again. I also told him that Daddy needed the trailer to gather corn next week. He was not persuaded and three or four more of Maysville's finest soon gathered to see what was happening.

The gin owner, whose name was Harry Nance, came out of

his office and asked, "What is the trouble?" The gin operator said, "He wants us to gin this nigger's cotton and I have told him twice we are closed." Mr. Nance, said, "Boy, what is your name?" I told him, "Austin Miller." He then asked, "Are you Joe Miller's boy?" When I said yes, he turned to the operator and said, "Gin his cotton!"

He didn't say a word at first, but when Mr. Nance was out of hearing range, he lit into a cussing fit that would make any sailor proud. It crossed my mind that he might cheat Jodie out of spite. I knew there were several ways for a ginner to short farmers. A dishonest one could close off a head and divert some of the cotton to a side bin or not dump all the cotton in the press before it was packed into a bale. The easiest way to cheat was related to the sample. When the bale was ginned and baled, the press man took a cotton knife and cut a long gash through the burlap wrapping. He then pulled out a handful of the ginned cotton, tagged it to identify the bale number and farmer's name. It was later sent to Huntsville for grading. If the gin sent the wrong sample

of less quality, the farmer got paid less per pound. It occurred to me that, out of spite, he might try to cheat Jodie. However, I don't believe he got cheated because the bale weighed way over 500 pounds and I watched carefully to make sure the right sample was taken to the office. I was glad to get out of Maysville that day.

When I started to college a few years later I worked at the A&P store in Huntsville. I left home at 6:30AM in the morning, commuted to Athens College, had classes until 12 noon, commuted back to Huntsville in time to be at work at 1PM, got off work at 6:30PM and had until bedtime to study. The fact is, after a twelve-hour day, I was usually too tired to do much serious studying. This was my daily routine except for Saturday when I worked from 5AM until 7PM. Sunday was my off day but I usually had to study. It took all my pay (about \$30 a week) for tuition and other expenses related to school. I had no money left for entertainment or extras.

Jodie soon learned that I was

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working at A&P. On his first visit, he went throughout the store telling the manager, the other employees and the customers what a fine person Mr. Austin was and how lucky they were to have me as a worker. He periodically did this as long as I worked at the store. He soon became a fixture, associated with me by coworkers and customers alike. He always sat on the ledge below the windows under the awning that went across the front of the store. He often stayed in Huntsville and would be there for hours during the day and be gone when I got off from work. Sometime, he would show up just before I got off from work to catch a ride to Ryland. He would regularly stop customers on their way in to the store and brag about me; other times he would walk around in the store telling whomever would listen that Mr. Austin was a mighty fine fellow. Nobody seemed to mind and I am not aware that anybody ever complained. It was for certain a kinder, gentler time.

One morning in January 1966, there was a foot of snow on the ground in Ryland and the temperature dropped below zero. I was at Fort Bragg but I was told that when Daddy realized how cold it was he looked out the back door toward Jodie's house and said I'll bet Jodie Rogers froze to death last night. They found him huddled inside his fireplace in a failed attempt to keep warm. He was 90 years

old. It saddened me greatly when the letter came telling me that he was dead.

It was my good fortune to know Jodie Rogers. He told me once that I was his friend and he was like an old Indian in that he was loyal to his friends through thick and thin to the death. I am probably one of the few people alive today who had the privilege of knowing and being friends with a black man who was the son of slaves and lived his entire life under the rules of an Old South society that is hopefully gone forever.

Considering the times in which he lived, he was remarkable in that he was a black man who could read and write, owned property and traveled to cities all around the southeast as a leader of his Masonic lodge. He did this at a time when travel outside Madison County or even Ryland was a novelty.

I often wonder what he could have accomplished if he had been born two generations later.

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A CHRISTMAS CHILDHOOD

by Chip Knight

Christmas was a strange and wonderful thing when I was a little child - it was the most antagonizing time of the year. I wanted all these things, and I knew that I would get some stuff, but I also knew that whatever was under the wrapping paper, it would not be quite as big or quite as pretty as it had been in my dreams. And then there was the Christmas parade.

I believe the City of Huntsville used to sponsor it back then. It wound from wherever it started, through downtown, and eventually to wherever it ended, and we watched it from my father's office, on the second floor of a building on East Side Square, and it was absolutely fascinating.

I remember the Alabama A&M marching band, marching with precision that I found unbelievable and with little lights on their uniforms - and then, there was Santa Claus, parade variety. It sent us into a proper frenzy of Christmas spirit.

I had probably been told about Santa Claus since I had been born, and, I swear, I believed in him with all my heart. He was the one who came down the chimney and left all the presents that weren't wrapped - and they weren't there when I went to bed on Christmas Eve. But I was a skeptical little kid, and I wondered how such a jolly

old fat man could get down the flue of our chimney and do that in eleventy million houses in one night in a sleigh drawn by reindeer, of all things. And I wondered a little more about the toys he left. If his elves made them at the North Pole, why were they the same things we could buy at Montgomery Ward or Sears?

I didn't say anything, but the jig was up when I began to see boxes which had held things that Santa had brought at the curbs of my neighbors. My own parents were careful about that; I don't know what they did with the boxes of the stuff left at the Knight house. I didn't say anything, of course, being afraid that I would stop the flow.

We used to always put up a cedar tree - a sticky thing at best. I guess

we just didn't have the firms available from all over the place that we do now. They used to sell them in the grocery store parking lots - Hill's, at Brandon Street and Longwood Avenue, Piggly Wiggly, where Whitesburg and California Streets come together, and, of course, at Star Market in Five Points. Somehow we always managed

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to have at least a seven foot tree in a house with eight foot ceilings, and it's a wonder that the lights we put on them didn't set the things on fire as they were the size of what we now know as night light bulbs, but they would burn you fairly badly if you touched one of them.

Speaking of those little bulbs, one night, not related to Christmas, I, the six year old electrical engineer, took a night light with one of those little bulbs in it and decided to roast a peanut, sort of as an experiment. Not wanting my parents to know about my august experiment, I placed the night light, suitably connected with an extension cord, under my pillow. Later, I was dragged out of bed and water dumped on the mattress to put out the fire. Perhaps I was an evil child. At the very least, I was an experimental one.

We lads always had this thing about when was the proper time to open presents. We opened ours on Christmas morning, which was, obviously, the proper thing to do, but many of my friends told me about opening theirs on Christmas Eve, which seemed a sacrilege to me. That was just not proper at all.

One of my strongest memories about Christmas was my excitability. I would work up to it, probably from the time of Thanksgiving Day. Finally, we would get out of school for Christmas vacation, about a week before. By the time I was seven, we had a television, a big black and white affair in a mahogany case that looked like a bar when the doors were shut. Everyone who had been in Vaudeville or had otherwise

been a popular entertainer in some medium had a Christmas television show. We watched the Perry Como Christmas show, the Jack Benny Christmas show, the Bing Crosby Christmas show, and I believe even Bob Hope had one. All of them were really pretty neat. These people who usually ran around making fools of themselves came together and sang carols and held hands and hugged each other and loved each other. This was really touching to me, because it was really foreign; we didn't do too much hugging in my house. In fact, we did very little of that.

Back to the excitability. Christmas Eve was the one night of the

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year when I just could not go to sleep. I would lie there, hour after hour, not really waiting for Santa to come, but just wanting to sleep, but sleep wouldn't come. One time, I guess my parents heard me stirring around, and my father came to check on me. He asked, "Chip, are you asleep?" I replied "yes"

Enough said. I guess the high and the low points of the day began when we got up on Christmas morning, usually about six o'clock, and did kind of a random shuffle of trying to get everyone up so we could go into the living room together, as that was where the presents were laid under the tree, and where Santa had left his stuff by the fireplace. Of course, I had previously reconnoitered the area, at least by sticking my head around the corner of the room, and, if time permitted, by inspecting more closely.

The high point was the "My God, it's Christmas morning and the waiting is over," and the low point, the realization that it was just not all that I had built it up to be in my mind. It was both ecstasy and disappointment. I sound disparaging, but I should not. It was just a matter of being brought back to reality. I always got one really nice present. When I was six, I got a Lionel electric train set. When I was seven, having learned how to ride one, I got a bicycle, a great big one which I used years later to run over a boy who needed to be run over. But the reality was never quite as big as the dream.

We had the morning to play with our new presents, the toys, and to set aside the ones we weren't all that excited about, the clothes. Then we had to get ready for Christmas dinner. We had this little tradition; Thanksgiving dinner was at our house, and Christmas dinner was at my Aunt Jane Lowe's house on Williams Avenue. It was a great big imposing place, and we dressed up, which meant that I wore a coat and tie, even as a little fellow. But it was wonderful. Dinner was both cooked and served by Ophelia, an elderly gray haired black woman who lived about a block and a half away on Gallatin Street. She would let my sisters and me hang out in the kitchen before dinner was served, and then would serve the Christmas dishes at the table as if we were at the Waldorf Astoria.

I have never since had such an elegant dinner to this day.

After dinner was over, we all "retired" to the sitting room, which meant that the adults talked and we children kept our mouths shut. It was usually fairly cold, but we would have wanted to go outside and play, but, of course, we had our good clothes on and couldn't do that. Finally, about two o'clock or two-thirty, we would get back in the car and go home and change clothes and begin to play with our now not so shiny toys, and the day would end on a much lower key than it had begun.

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January 30, 2012	6:30 p.m.	Clint Mountain	Tort Law
	7:40 p.m.	Mayor Tommy Battle	City Government
February 6, 2012	6:30 p.m.	Phil Price	DUI Law
	7:40 p.m.	Connie Glass	Elder Law
February 13, 2012	6:30 p.m.	Perry Shuttlesworth	Nursing Home Law
	7:40 p.m.	District Judge Claude E. Hundley, III	The Court System
February 20, 2012	6:30 p.m.	Amy Tanner/James Ezell	Bankruptcy/Social Security
	7:40 p.m.	Josh Hayes	Roll On 18-Wheeler
February 27, 2012	6:30 p.m.	Jonathan Lush	Divorce Law
	7:40 p.m.	Benton White	Trial Tactics
March 5, 2012	6:30 p.m.	Jim Richardson	Insurance Law
	7:40 p.m.	Jacob Maples	Injuries in the Workplace
March 12, 2012	6:30 p.m.	Matt Glover	Industrial Accident Investigation
	7:40 p.m.	Ed Gentle	Mass Torts
March 19, 2012	6:30 p.m.	Kerri Riley	Employment Law
	7:40 p.m.	Jeremiah Hodges	TBA
April 2, 2012	6:30 p.m.	Bob Prince	How Insurance Companies Defend Claims
	7:40 p.m.	Mike Wisner	Tax Law
April 9, 2012	6:30 p.m.	Micah Adkins	Identity Theft and Your Rights
	7:40 p.m.	John A. Brinkley, Jr.	Criminal Law
	8:40 p.m.	GRADUATION	

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HAZEL GREEN GIRLS, 1930-31

BY JOHN PRUETT

Memories tend to fade over 70 years. Yet certain things linger a lifetime, as indelible now as the day they happened.

"I can't remember what I had for breakfast this morning," says 86-year-old Violet Campbell Bendall, a former schoolteacher. "But I can remember almost everything about that championship team."

That championship team, the 1930-31 girls basketball team at Hazel Green High School, is still regarded by many as the finest in the history of the school.

Violet Campbell was a starting guard of that special group. Reba Knowles, a tall girl at 5-foot-8, was the starting center. Violet, Reba and four other seniors - Ruth Dickey, Evelyn Harwell, Attie Mae Kenney and Helen Milan - formed the nucleus of a team that won 18 of 22 games and routed Pulaski Pike, Lincoln and Monrovia in the Madison County Tournament near the end of the season.

"We were hell bent to win," said Violet Bendall, who met with former teammate Reba Knowles Cornell last week at the Huntsville home of Mrs. Bendall's son, Charles. They talked about kids, grandkids and Christmas. But mostly they reminisced about the 1930-31 basketball season.

"I just wish Ruth and Evelyn could be with us," Mrs. Cornell said. "We could really tell some stories then."

Ruth (Dickey) Oldham of Atlanta and Evelyn (Harwell) Taylor of Meridianville are the only other surviving seniors from the 1931 team.

Aside from its outstanding win-loss record, the 1931 Hazel Green team is widely remembered as the first girls team in northern Alabama to dress in lettered jersey tops and short shorts. The uniforms were a daring departure from the black bloomers and white blouse tops that set the standard for girls teams in the 1920s and early 1930s.

The new uniforms were proposed by Hazel Green coach Gilbert Dickey, whose sister played on the team. The idea was approved, apparently after some debate, by school administrators. Dickey later became

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the Hazel Green principal.

"Mr. Dickey passed out those new uniforms just before the season started," Reba Cornell recalled. "You couldn't believe how happy we were. Oh, how we strutted. We knew those uniforms were going to cause a sensation."

"I think they helped inspire us to win the championship that year," Mrs. Bendall said, "even though we'd always had good teams at Hazel Green."

In fact, the Hazel Green girls had won six straight county championships dating back to the mid-'20s, but the community was bracing for a rebuilding year when the team opened the 1930-31 season on Oct. 24 against Rison School.

"They entered the game a bit nervous for there were only two regulars back on the squad from past years," reported The Huntsville Daily Times. "With the loss of Dema Towry, Mable Wicks, Dorris Carter and Nella Williams, the Hazel Green squad looked as if it would have a hard time winning any games. But with Attie Mae Kenney and Reba Knowles, two veterans back from last year, they went into this game with the zeal and pep that Hazel Green always shows."

Hazel Green beat Rison 33-6 and went on to win 14 of the next 18 regular-season

games. In the Madison County Tournament played at the old Huntsville Recreation Center near Big Spring Park, the Hazel Green girls won the championship by rolling past Pulaski

Pike (57-9), Lincoln (42-21) and Monrovia (41-23). A 25-22 victory over Boonehill, Tenn., the following week brought the season to a close.

"Gilbert Dickey was so proud the night we won the tournament," Reba Cornell said.

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"I think he was even happier than the players."

Mrs. Cornell still has "very clear memories" of the championship game.

"What I remember most," she said, "is how hard the girl from Monrovia fought me. She went all-out on defense. She was a preacher's daughter, but she played tough. She was pushing and shoving the whole game."

"She was upset about losing the game, but I think she was more upset when I was given the trophy as the most valuable player."

Shortly after graduating from high school, Reba Knowles married Verne D. Cornell, a carpenter. The union lasted 50 years. Cornell died in 1981 on the day after Christmas.

Mrs. Cornell was the bookkeeper at Lowe Planting Company in Hazel Green for more than 30 years. She has two children, Judy Mitchell of Pulkaski, Tenn., and Ruth Kittleson of Huntsville. There are five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Mrs. Cornell has been married to Clifton Brewer for the past 11 years.

Violet Campbell attended college for two years, first at Montevallo and later at Florence State. Not long after beginning her 38-year teaching career, she married Franklin Bendall, who became the principal at Buckhorn. He died in 1974.

Mrs. Bendall later married Granville Kratsch, who died in 1993. She and her dog, Max, live on a sprawling farm near Hazel Green. An ardent traveler, she has visited Germany, the Panama Canal, the Holy Land and Alaska. She recently returned from a trip to colonial Williamsburg in Virginia.

She has two children, Charles (born on Christmas in 1941) and Mary Frank Cole, six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

"All of us who played on

that 1931 team went on to lead interesting lives," Mrs. Bendall said. "But whenever we ran into one another over the years, we always came back to one thing - that championship season. And we still do."

Postscript: Mary Violet Bendall, 96, of Hazel Green died March 23, 2011.

This column was published in The Huntsville Times on Dec. 24, 2001 By John Pruett

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HUNTSVILLE NEWS THROUGH THE YEARS

Huntsville in 1919 - Grand Jury Reports on conditions in Huntsville

Bootlegging is alive and well in Madison County. It exists in every part of the county, especially in the city and outlying areas, with the exception of Merrimack. Most of the county officers and city commissioners offices are bought and sold outrageously.

Night hacks and omnibus lines help supply the bootleggers. Two restaurants, one near Southern Railway Station and one near the N.C. St. L., are termed "dens of vice." Near one of these a Negro, carrying \$40 he had gotten from sale of his cotton, had been reported murdered during the past year. The city has been asked to revoke the licenses of the cafes, one of which was selling five barrels of illicit whisky a week.

The jail situation is a pitiful one. The old portion of the jail that is still in use is a "horrible reminder of the dreadful dungeons of the Dark Ages" and the removal needs to happen speedily.

The poor house is in condition of neglect and its 23 inmates, white and negro, run out of food regularly at different intervals and are unable to obtain any doctors services when required.

The Courthouse is a positive disgrace, with the Grand Jury room a germ-laden hole. It is the recommendation of the Grand Jury that this courthouse be torn down. The only reason that the county commissioners have not been indicted was because of the pleas of the solicitor.

County packs the Square as End of the War Announced - 1918

News of the end of World War I was loudly celebrated around the public square of Huntsville recently. Such a crowd of people from every portion of the county never assembled so quickly as did the one that gathered around they public square on Monday morning last, when the glorious news of peace was received. By nine o'clock the streets were so crowded that one could scarcely walk along the street without pushing through. All were in a joyous good humor.

Prisoner eats \$442 worth of food - 1841

In spite of the allowance for food being limited to 40 cents per day, William R. Hunt, jailer, was refunded \$442 for feeding prisoner Jefferson Dance, a rather large man and a voracious eater, who was housed in the jail for 1,105 days. It took a legislative act to obtain the refund, this being a very unusual circumstance. In spite of his many days in jail, the prisoner is still waiting to be fined and the food bill of the state will eventually be lessened by the amount of the fine, if any.

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HUNTSVILLE POLICE BEAT FROM 1919

The police rounded up about 25 men in Mason's and Lee Lowry's pool rooms last night and were up before Mayor O'Neal this morning charged with loitering.

The police have had much complaint caused by the rowdiness in these dives lately and have resolved to break up the loafing and disturbance created in these joints by the throngs of young men enjoying themselves by loud laughing, fighting and confusion.

Many of the men who were captured in the bunch had not paid their street tax and the Mayor seized upon the occasion to exact from them the necessary toll. Thirty three dollars in all was collected from them in fines and for street taxes. Fines were assessed as follows:

Glen McLain \$5, Robert Blount \$5, Reese Powers \$5, John Gray \$3, William Bailey \$3, Robert Joiner \$3, Larras Derrick \$3, Percy Williams \$3, and Walter Derrick \$5.

Charles Eeks, Harry Gas-

ton, Bob Sloan, Jim Donegan, Charles Fleming, Mart Mastin, Lumos Ross, Richard Burks, Robert Bonner, Luke Walker and H. Davis were released on account of having paid their street taxes or were not of age and were given warnings to go to work and stay away from the negro dives.

Robert Patton, Will Jones and Walter Powers were arrested this morning at 4 o'clock at Vaughan's Restaurant for gaming and fined \$5 each. Dewey Harris was fined \$10 for interfering with the officers in making the arrest.

Stiff Ewing was fined \$10 for being drunk and disorderly, making \$68 total fines in this morning's police court.

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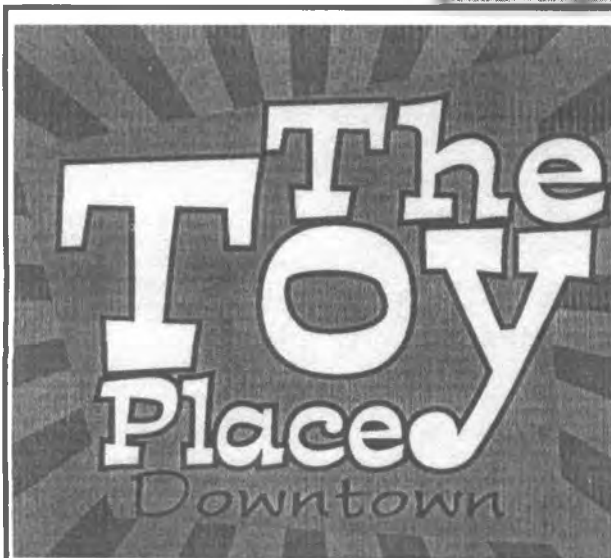
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WE'VE GOT YOUR GOAT

By David Hardwick

I will never forget the 1953 Huntsville Christmas Parade. We were eager to enter our newly acquired Goat & Wagon. Brother JOEL age 8, myself age 10, and from Morgan County our 9 year old cousin Sandra Hardwick (now Dr. Sandra Sims-deGraffenried), from Morgan County, would also take part in this Parade.

My father and mother (Dr. George Hardwick & Doris Hardwick) had purchased ten acres at the corner of Meridian St. & Quietdale from Max Luther earlier that summer. On it they had just built our new home & a very nice barn. These ten acres were just north of Huntsville's then city limits. The New Lee High School is presently being built on this property they recently took from me.

On this mini-farm, I was feed-

ing our nine Hereford steers. I fed them before & after school each day to earn money for college. We also had Bob, a highly trained cattle horse Granddaddy Charles Hardwick had given me after I had polio at age 7. Bob & my 9 steers had gained local celebrity status around town for watching

Woody's Drive-In movies. As soon as the movie started every night, they would all line up, side by side along our fence and watch until the movie ended. We were also raising seven Boxer dogs for sale. We even had a delusional pet pig who, having been raised among these dogs, never knew he wasn't a Boxer.

As if a horse, 9 steers, 7 boxers and a delusional pig wasn't enough, my Uncle Thomas Berry felt to really have fun on our new mini-farm, we kids needed a goat & wagon. He saw a Winchester, Tennessee ad for a black Goat (with large white spots), and its very fancy red & white Wagon. For only \$75, we could acquire all this, complete with leather harness. We wasted little time getting up there and purchasing it.

This weird looking "Billy" goat was as wide as he was long. He absolutely looked like the most pregnant "Nanny" goat anybody ever saw. The seller informed us this goat had won first place (two years in a row) in their Winchester Christmas Parade. He strongly encouraged us to enter our Christmas Parade.

But, it wasn't so easy talking



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our safety-conscious mother into letting us enter this extremely stubborn "Billy". Fortunately my father, being a veterinarian, had much more experience with goats than us. He wisely insisted we not ride the goat in the Parade. Instead, Daddy had us load onto a large truck, this black goat wearing an old straw hat along with its very fancy red wagon.

Jimmy Barnett helped load, tie & secure the goat & wagon on the truck's large bed. He would drive it in the Parade for us. Along each side of the truck's large flat bed, we hung a huge 8-foot wide sign Mother had made saying "We Ain't Kiddin - WE'VE GOT YOUR GOAT".

After everything was loaded and tied down, we 3 highly-decked-out kids all scrambled aboard the truck and onto the red wagon, which we had decorated with green crape paper. To prevent this old "Billy" from getting untied & deciding to make a sudden departure, Daddy convinced Sandra's father (**Burl Hardwick**) to ride along in the truck's cab.

Riding in the Parade, cousin Sandra looked oh so cute wearing her Dale Evan's cowgirl hat & outfit. Joel & I absolutely felt ten feet tall wearing our Davy Crockett raccoon skin caps & Roy Rodgers cap-pistols & holsters. Riding on the wagon's front seat, I held a buggy whip in one hand & a carrot on a stick in the other. The goat was far much more interested in eating his hat than my carrot. Joel, holding a toy buffalo rifle, road on the goat's back. Joel was continuously having to get off & tear the straw hat out of the goat's teeth in order to put the hat back on the goat's head.

You never saw so much vigorous laughter as when we rode the length of the Parade route through all the packed crowds along Church Street, Jefferson, around the Square, & finished by going up Washington Street. About half way through the Parade (in response to our sign) the crowds started chanting "Give us our Goat - Give us our Goat!"

Needless to say, we Won First Place. This has become one of

our fondest childhood memories.

Uncle Burl & Jimmy Barnett often said they never had so much fun as watching all the hearty laughing crowds having such a ball watching us & our very wired Billy Goat.

NINE YEARS AFTER THIS PARADE, I GRADUATED FROM HUNTSVILLE HIGH. COME THIS JUNE 1-3 MY HHS CLASS OF 1962 WILL BE HOLDING OUR 50TH. REUNION. IF YOU KNOW OF ANYONE WHO HAS GRADUATED FROM HHS IN 1962 WITH ME, PLEASE HELP ME LOCATE THEM. HAVE THEM CALL ME DAVID HARDWICK AT 256-682-2180 AS WE TRULY WISH TO SEE ALL OUR OLD FRIENDS!

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MERIDIAN STREET MEMORIES

BY DONALD GIPSON

Meridian Street, before the Parkway changed Huntsville's face forever, was the main road leading into our small, cotton mill filled Southern town. It stretched from Highway 231 North down past Alabama A&M University, through the once bustling mill district of East Huntsville, ending finally as it connected with Jefferson Street in downtown Huntsville.

But, for a small boy growing up during the Post-World War II days, it was much, much more. It was his entire world.

It had everything a young, impressionable boy could want. An ice cream store (two, if you count Roger Williams' drug store), a baseball field (Lincoln Park), for as many games as one would ever want to play; a creek (Pinhook) for a boy and his friends to fish and wade in; and a hamburger stand that only Big Spring Cafe could

compare to today. Yes, Meridian Street had everything.

Most of all, it had style. You could walk down the street and everyone you passed would smile and say "hello". You could ride your bicycle on the wide sidewalks and each store you passed had a certain style and atmosphere of its own.

The atmosphere, or should I say aroma, I remember most was the one that surrounded Keel's Cafe.

That wonderful smell of

onions, hamburger meat and mustard cooking would literally reach out through the screen



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

door and pull you in to the small, box-car like structure that sat just across the railroad tracks from Ward's Store.

Once inside you could sit at one of the eight or ten round top stools lining the long, narrow counter. Ketchup and mustard bottles, napkin holders, salt and pepper shakers and a special "red-hot pepper" concoction were always spaced evenly along the counter top.

Mr. Keel in his white shirt, white slacks and white apron and Mrs. Keel, dressed in white also with her hair in a tight bun on the back of her head, hurried up and down behind the counter, waiting on what was usually a standing-room only crowd.

Daddy always seemed to be a special customer of Mr. Keel's, or maybe he just made everyone feel special.

As you sat down on one of the round stools that always seemed to lean to one side and ordered a burger and a Dr. Pepper, your mouth would begin watering in anticipation.

Those hamburgers, oh, those hamburgers! I never expected to find any burger as good as those. The meat (real beef) covered in fresh onions, cut by

hand, splashed with mustard and the bun, toasted lightly in the grease on the grill was washed down with the ice-cold Dr. Pepper from the box-like freezer underneath the counter

If my memory serves me correctly, the drink and the hamburger were only 25 cents. There was no charge for the atmosphere which was always

warm, friendly and appetizing.

The last time I saw the building that housed the cafe it was years ago, it was weatherworn, boarded up and leaning toward the track side of the street.

Standing there, I thought how lucky I was to have experienced the life that was once inside and how I will never forget those hamburgers.

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* A lump of camphor in your clothes press will keep steel ornaments from tarnishing.

* Coffee burned in an open fire or a few grains on a stove is the best deodorizer.

* The pulp of a lemon, rubbed on the roots of your hair, will stop ordinary cases of falling out.

* In laying away of fine white gowns for any length of time, they should first be wrapped in blue paper, then in a sheet or in muslin wrap of some kind.

* Witch hazel is a great way to tighten skin of the face, just moisten a clean pad with it and wipe your face.

* Cornmeal and salt, mixed well, make one of the best brighteners for carpets during sweeping.

* Stale bread will clean kid gloves.

* Vick's VapoRub has been shown to be very affective for toenail fungus. Wipe the nail first with white vinegar, then with the Vick's.

* Gloves can be cleaned at home by rubbing them with gasoline.

* A lump of soda laid on the drain pipe will prevent the pipes from becoming clogged with grease; also, flood the pipes once a week with boiling water to which you've added a little soda.

* White marble can be cleaned up with water and soda.

* A little Vaseline, rubbed in once a day, will keep the hands from chapping.

* Drinking half a cup of tart cherry juice each day will significantly lessen the pain of gout and arthritis.

* Gargle daily with plain water to cut the number of colds and respiratory infections you get.

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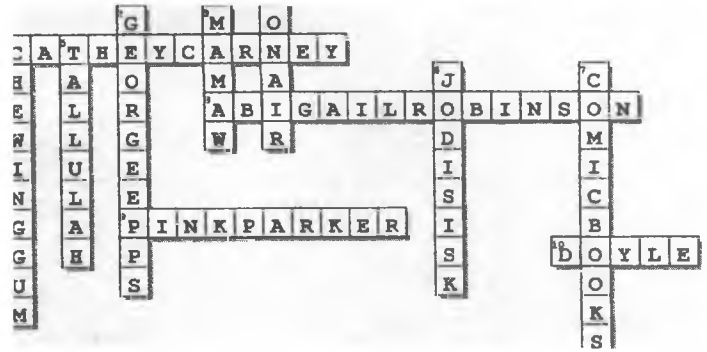
Old Fashioned Mulled Wine

Mulled, or warmed, beer or wine used to be heated in the old days by simply sticking a red-hot poker into the drink. Heating this way the alcohol did not evaporate, which happens when you boil this liquid.

Stud a lemon with 4 cloves. Put in a saucepan with 2-1/2 cups red wine, 7 tablespoons brown sugar, and two 2-inch cinnamon sticks.

Bring to simmer and continue for 10 minutes. Remove from heat, add 2/3 cup brandy and serve in front of a roaring fire.

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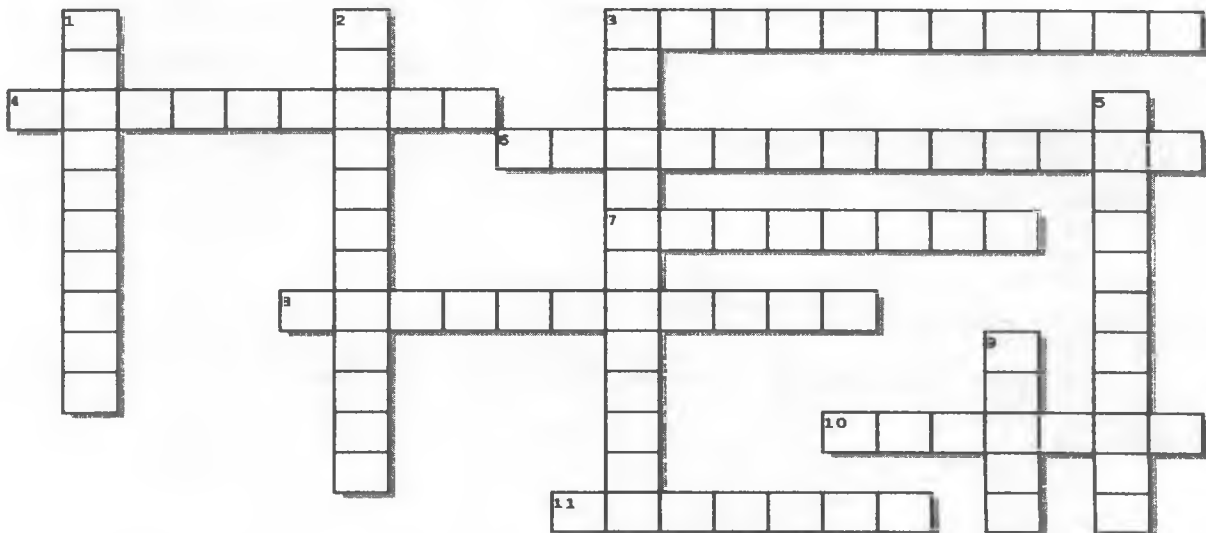
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Old Huntsville Crossword Puzzle

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

- 3 God does not promise this
- 4 Use this for a summer glow
- 6 Drink wassail in her honor!
- 7 Mona Lisa has none
- 8 They should wear uniforms like NASCAR drivers
- 10 Canned cure for diarrhea
- 11 Hazel Green principal

Down

- 1 He ran over a boy who needed to be run over
- 2 Leader of his Masonic Lodge
- 3 Had his tonsils removed at City Infirmary
- 5 Alive and well in 1812
- 9 He cost \$25 in quarters

ITALIAN LENTILS

- 2 c. dry lentils, soaked overnight
- Water to cover
- 2 c. stewed tomatoes
- 1 chopped onion
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 3/4 t. salt
- 1/2 t. oregano
- 1/2 t. cumin
- 1/4 t. cayenne pepper

Place lentils in saucepan and add water to cover. Add remaining ingredients and simmer til done. Add 1 teaspoon olive oil, and serve over rice.

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Bill Ornburn, ASL #683

Charles Thorpe, ASL #392

Tweetie's Pet Tips

Tweetie needs to print a retraction. In last month's column he added the tip about using double-sided sticky tape to keep your kitten from scratching the furniture. What he DIDN'T mention was that your kitten can become completely wrapped up in the tape and it can actually be very dangerous!

Not sure how this passed through my edits but Tweetie slipped it in somehow as he is not a big fan of cats!

* Never give chocolate to your pet! It is pure poison to all our furry friends and could be fatal. Dr. Robert Johnson, DVM, mentioned an emergency procedure that he has used with success if your dog swallows chocolate: put about a teaspoonful of hydrogen peroxide on the back of the tongue, the fizzing will cause the dog to vomit up the chocolate. But as always, avoidance is the best policy.

* Garlic and onions, chives and shallots are all bad for dogs and cats. They contain an ingredient called thiosulphate which causes hemolytic anemia. Some people feed their pets garlic thinking it will prevent fleas but Frontline is a much safer option.

* All driveway de-icers are toxic to your pets feet! The salt




or chemicals in these ice melters may burn the pads or cause a fungus. Your pet may even lick his toes and get sores in his mouth. Be sure and wash your pet's feet after a run in the snow.

* Kittens should like milk, right? NO! Cow's milk contains lactose which is what gives them the runs. OK to use either half and half or evaporated milk, but not regular milk.

* You often see dogs riding in the bed of a pickup truck. Don't do this in winter, when it's really cold - your dogs paws can actually freeze in a metal truck bed.

* Sonya writes us that to cure diarrhea AND constipation in dogs, give him canned 100 % pumpkin. Based on size of your pet, use anywhere from 2 spoonfuls to 1/3 can.



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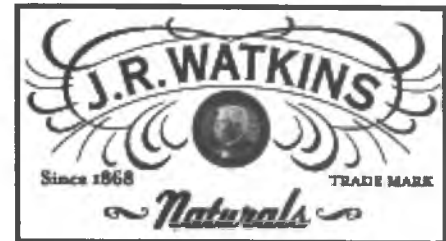
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From the Desk of Tom Carney

THE STORY OF JOHN HUNT



For well over a hundred years, John Hunt, the founder of Huntsville, has been shrouded in mystery. Where did he come from? Where and when did he die? Was he the illiterate backwoodsman that history has made him out to be?

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

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

In 1769, John Hunt married the daughter of William Holbrook, a close friend of his father. The following year the Holbrook family moved to Hawkins County, North Carolina, and John moved with them. Within a few years the Larkins, and Acklin families had joined with them in the new settlement.

With the advent of the Revolutionary War many of the settlers took up arms to fight for their new country. Many historians would later contend

that John Hunt served as a captain during the war. This mistaken claim would later lead to confusion in trying to establish Hunt's early years. In fact, Hunt's only military service consisted of several months enlistment as a private under Captain Charles Polk of the Company of Light Horses, in Salisbury District, North Carolina.

Although John did not see much service, records seem to indicate that his father was a member of the Colonial Army while his uncle served as a Colonel in the British Army.

Short service periods of a few months were common in North Carolina as the settlers had crops and Indians to deal with and could not be gone for long periods of time.

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

In 1779, John Hunt was appointed a Lieutenant in the State Militia, serving as a paymaster.

As the young community grew in size, the North Carolina government began to realize the need for some type of civic

jurisdiction. John Hunt had established himself as a leader of the community and in 1786 was appointed the first Sheriff of Hawkins County. It was required at that time for a Sheriff to post a bond as a prerequisite to taking office. The bond, in the amount of "1000 pounds current money" signed by John Hunt and four sureties, can still be seen at the North Carolina Archives, located in Raleigh.

In 1789, when North Carolina voted to ratify the Constitution, John Hunt was a delegate at the convention.

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

Everyone living in the territory had heard stories about the new, rich land lying across the Clinch River. This was Indian

land and supposedly protected from settlement by the treaties with the federal government. Many families, ignoring the treaties, began to move into the new lands.

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

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

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

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

Basically it was a get-rich-quick scheme that worked for many people.

The other alternative was to wait until the lands had been "opened" for settlement and bid for them at auction. Few pioneers could afford to acquire prime land in this manner. John Hunt had carved a respectable homestead out of the wilderness when he learned, to his dismay, in 1797, that President John Adams had sent 800 Federal

troops to evict the settlers. In an attempt to stall his eviction, and probably using his title of Captain in the Tennessee State Militia to help his cause, he wrote the newly-elected Governor, John Sevier, asking for help.

On November 25, 1797, Governor Sevier wrote Hunt:

"Yours of yesterday, I am honored with and am sincerely sorry for your embarrassed situation, and would I, to God, I had it in my power to render you relief. You may assure yourself that everything will be done for you that is possible for me, but it is in the president's own power to do whatever he may think best on this very important and alarming occasion. I hope in three or four weeks to hear from Congress and whether or not anything is likely to be done in your favor. In the meantime, I earnestly beg the people, for their own interest, to conduct themselves in a peaceable, orderly, and prudent manner."

Shortly afterwards, the squatters' claims were recognized. By 1801, the land John Hunt had settled became part of Claiborne County. When the new community held its first election, David Rodgers was elected sheriff, but was unable to post bond. Hunt was elected in his place. There were no facilities for the new government

in Tazewell at the time, so the first term of court was held in the home of John Hunt. (This log cabin later became the first school in Tazewell.)

The sheriff was not only responsible for keeping the peace, but was also responsible for administering justice. A book describing the early days of Tazewell included the following description of the Sheriff's duties:

"A whipping post stood between the jail and courthouse. As near as I remember, it was made similar to two ox yokes, the one below fastened in a frame and turned upside down; the one above to fit down and form two holes large enough to confine the head and neck. Debtors were taken out two at a time and the duty of the sheriff was to whip them until they would promise to go to work and pay their debts."

Not exactly a job for the fainthearted.

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

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

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

By the time Hunt's term of Sheriff was up on September 1, 1804, he had already made plans to leave Tazewell. For the previous six months he had been selling off land holdings that he owned in Tazewell and the adjoining areas.

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

John Hunt was determined to have squatter's rights.

Early in September, 1804, John Hunt and Andrew Bean left their cabin in East Tennessee and struck out into the wilds on foot (not on horseback, as many historians have claimed). They traveled in a southwestward direction, guided only by the sun and the stars. Almost a month

later they arrived at the stream of water now known as Bean's Creek, at a spot near where Salem, Tennessee, now stands. At that place they made camp for several days in order to make observations and investigate the surrounding country. According to legend, it also became necessary to replenish the larder. Their unerring rifles soon procured several bear and fat deer, the choice parts of which were jerked and packed for future use.

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

The next morning, Mrs. Criner made bread for their journey and the men left to seek out the big spring.

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

The cabin was a rough one-room affair. People searching for it today will find only a parking lot across from the present-day Huntsville Utilities. The area where John Hunt settled would be beyond comprehension to a resident of Huntsville today. The area above the bluffs, where the courthouse now

stands, though reasonably flat, was a maze of thick vines and bushes. Below the spring, toward Meadow Gold Dairy, was an endless swamp inhabited by bears, geese, and rabbits. Where Huntsville Hospital is now located was a thick hardwood wilderness teeming with deer.

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

The early spring of 1805 found Hunt occupied in selling off the remainder of his land around Tazewell and making preparations to move his family to the "Big Spring." Other families, upon hearing of John's upcoming departure, also made plans to move.

Accompanying Hunt when he returned to the spring was his wife and three of his sons, William, George, and Samuel, as well as members of the Larkin and Black families.

It was early summer, 1805 when Hunt returned with his family. He spent most of that summer clearing and fencing a small field, which lay in what is now the best part of the city of Huntsville, running from Gates Street as far south as Franklin. The land was exceedingly fertile and produced bountifully in return for little labor. William would recall years later how he had killed a bear between the present location of the First Alabama Bank and the courthouse while clearing the field.

The brave old pioneer, scout, and hunter was now happily fixed; his farm gave him employment during the spring and summer. Hunting, fishing, dressing meats and skins, and prospecting occupied his time in the fall and winter. Other pioneers were coming in and settling in other parts of the val-

ley. Neighbors were few and highly valued in those primitive days. When the proper time arrived in the fall, all the hunters for miles around went out together to lay in their stores of meat for the year. Whenever a settler died, his family continued to share in the proceeds of the hunt when a division was made, a proportionate share of bear and deer meat was always taken to the families of widows. These rough men knew charity as well as courage. Legend has it that John Hunt was always foremost in providing for the poor and helpless. One Christopher Black, an Irishman, who assisted Hunt in removing his family from East Tennessee, was famous for delivering game to the fatherless and the widows.

Hunt's Station, as the spring was now called, was fast becoming the center of the community. More and more settlers were pouring into the valley. Much evidence suggests that Hunt, who had already enlarged his cabin, ran a public house at this time. A public house was where a traveler might get a meal or purchase a few basic supplies. This probably explains the persistent rumor today that Hunt operated a shop that sold castor oil.

In 1807, his daughter, Elizabeth, moved to Huntsville from Tazewell along with her children, husband, and five slaves. They had been delayed from joining Hunt until they could dispose of the inn.

Elizabeth and her family moved in with Hunt in anticipation of the land sales. Congress had already called for a land sale, with squatters being given preemptive rights to one section of land each. With the Hunts occupying the best land in the valley, it seemed as if their fortunes were made.

Unfortunately, when the sales were held, it was discovered that John Hunt had not registered his claims. The

wealthy planter LeRoy Pope outbid the other purchasers and ended up with legal title to all of John Hunt's dreams. Hunt was forced to move from his beloved Big Spring.

With all the prime land in Huntsville already taken, Hunt purchased a quarter section of land far outside of town by paying eighty dollars as down payment. This parcel was located at approximately where the old airport on South Parkway is now. His daughter and son-in-law purchased the adjoining land.

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

The next few years of Hunt's life are well-documented. He joined the Masonic Lodge, served on juries and was appointed coroner. In 1809 he sold his land to Absalom Looney. By selling this land, he also lost the right to vote or serve on juries in the very city that he had founded.

According to the law of that period, a man could not do any of the above unless he was a landowner.

An old man by now, Hunt moved in with his daughter and son-in-law. In 1820, Hunt, probably prompted by his grandson who was studying law in Huntsville at the time, applied for a Revolutionary War pension, but was turned down because the unit he served with was not considered a part of the Continental Army.

Like old men everywhere, Hunt probably spent his last days recounting tales of when he was young and adventurous, hopefully surrounded by his grandchildren.

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

Ironically, the grave of John Hunt, the man who founded Huntsville and who settled on some of its most beautiful land, lies unmarked, just a few feet from the city dump.



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Christmas with Carol

By Shirley Nolen

One night in December, 1971, our doorbell rang. It was Carol Bankston, delivering a basket filled with all the makings of an English Christmas dinner. The basket contained HP sauce (Carol said "no self-respecting British family would sit down to dinner without it"), Bisto gravy (this still appears on our own Christmas table), plum pudding, mince meat, English tea, and other goodies. My girls were fascinated by the Christmas Crackers, little gift-wrapped tubes that "cracked" when you pulled them apart to find the little surprises inside.

Carol and I had talked a few times before about our Christmas memories.

My memories were mostly of my Mother, the meals she served, and our stocking treats. However, Carol's stories were so exciting to me because her family was steeped in traditions of England and an exotic-sounding land called "Rhodesia."

Carol and I sat at my little kitchen table that night and talked for hours about Christmas memories, me in my night robe, hair in curlers, very pregnant with my youngest

child, Scott.

Once, Carol tried to help me make an authentic English "Christmas Cake" and Yorkshire Pudding. I gave up trying after Carol's Mum, Winifred, came to live in America, or as she put it "the God-forsaken colonies," and showed us how it was really done.

Our families celebrated Christmas together for more than 20 years. And always, when the little ones' eyelids were so heavy, in that magical moment, Santa arrived with a bag of special goodies. Then all of the girls would sit down to the piano with the Reader's Digest Songbook for a hearty singalong. "It's a long way to Tipperary" was a favorite. Harrison would regale us with "Why don't you haul off and love me" among others.

Carol was always the epitome of a perfect English lady, a treasured Southern neighbor, and an incredibly loving and fun friend. She is no longer with us, but her memory is with our family every year during the holidays.

Let's have a cup of Wassail in her honor!

Wassail

- 2 quarts sweet apple cider
- 2 cups orange juice
- 1 cup lemon juice
- 2 #2 cans pineapple juice
- 1 stick cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon whole cloves

Bring to a simmer. Strain. Sweeten to taste. Serve hot.




Pumpkin-Ice Cream Pie

- 1 pt. vanilla ice cream, softened
- 1 baked 10" pastry shell
- 1 - 16oz. can pumpkin
- 1-1/2 c. sugar
- Dash salt
- 1 t. ground ginger
- 1 t. ground cinnamon
- 1 t. vanilla extract
- 1-1/2 c. whipping cream, divided

Caramelized almonds
Spread ice cream in bottom of pastry shell; freeze til firm. Combine pumpkin, sugar, salt, spices & vanilla, stir. Beat 1 cup whipping cream til light and fluffy; fold into pumpkin mixture. Spread over ice cream layer; freeze til firm. Beat remaining whipping cream til light, use to garnish frozen pie just before serving. Sprinkle with Caramelized Almonds.


Caramelized Almonds

- 1/4 c. sugar
 - 1 c. slivered almonds
- Combine sugar and almonds; cook over low heat til sugar and almonds have browned. Stir constantly. Spread mixture in a thin layer on a buttered cookie sheet; cool. Break into small pieces.



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A Family Christmas Tradition

By Eugenia Pitsinger

Christmas is almost here according to TV programs and the stores are decorated so early. How different Christmas was celebrated when I was a child so many years ago.

I remember so clearly - one frightful event that took place - I must have been very young because my father was there. He died during the flu epidemic of 1918-19 when I was four years old.

I remember the tall cedar Christmas tree that stood in the parlor on Christmas Eve - waiting to be decorated after my baby brother and I were asleep. It was the custom in those days to place small lighted white candles, along

with other decorations on the tree.

Christmas morning, I was very happy since Santa Claus brought me a wicker doll carriage and a beautiful doll. I had a white kitten that followed me into the parlor that morning. I tried to put the kitten in my doll carriage, but he escaped and climbed to the top of the tree. While my father tried to retrieve the kitten from the tree, my mother quickly blew out the candles. I danced with glee at the complete pandemonium.

That was the end of candles on our tree. It was a stupid idea anyway!

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A CHRISTMAS I REMEMBER

By **CHUCK BOBO**

I awakened early on the morning of December 25 in 1937 and went scampering to the Christmas tree in the living room. Dad had a roaring fire going in the fire place and he was waiting to see my reaction.

Santa's gifts were unwrapped under the tree and I shouted with glee. There was more than I ever dreamed of.

A Roy Rogers cowboy hat! A set of Buck Jones cowboy chaps! Real raised heeled cowboy boots! A real rope lariat!

And, what's this a small bridle and a real leather western saddle with the rope lariat?

I screamed at the top of my lungs and made a break for the door, but Dad grabbed me and said, "Put some warm clothes on before you go to the barn." You've never seen a kid jump into a pair of jeans and flannel shirt quicker.

He took me by the hand as we headed to the barn, but I broke away and rushed to the stable. There on a warm bed of straw was the prettiest Shetland pony I had ever seen.

I was so nervous, I approached the pony with hesitation. He rose to his feet and backed away slowly, but stretched his neck and head as if to get a smell of me. I was frozen in my tracks, not knowing to move forward or what. Dad reached in his jacket pocket and pulled out a sugar cube.

He said, "Hold out this in your hand and see what he

does."

I nervously extended my right hand with the sugar cube and the pony nuzzled it and his lips went around the sugar and it was gone. Slowly I reached out and touched his head.

I remembered that my Dad had told me that a horse or mule can't scratch between his ears and that was one way to get their trust. I gently extended my hand and rubbed the pony on the top of his head between his ears.

He moved forward and nuzzled his head against my side.

Dad said, "See, you have gained some of his trust. It will build as he becomes accustomed to you. Treat him gently."

I yelled, "Where is the saddle and bridle? I want to ride him. What's his name?" as my

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"There are many intelligent species in the universe. They are all owned by cats."
Anonymous

thoughts rolled out. "Where did you get him? Is he really mine?" I was so happy that tears were rolling down my cheeks. I was laughing and crying at the same time.

Dad handed me a brush and instructed, "Brush him gently. Gain his trust before you even think of riding him." I brushed him and used a curry comb which Dad handed me to get the tangles from his mane and tail.

Dad cautioned, "Be careful if you get behind him. I don't know if he kicks or not. He hasn't been ridden or handled much before, so you be really careful until he gets used to you. We'll get him accustomed to a bridle and saddle before you attempt to ride him."

"I'll just call him Pony," I exclaimed. "That is what he is!"

"Let's think on that awhile," Dad said, and he walked outside the barn and returned with a pail of water from the rain barrel. "He may be thirsty and ready for a drink."

I was so excited that I hardly noticed. I would brush and then run my bare hand over his skin. Apparently he enjoyed it for he pushed closer against me as if to

say, "Do it some more."

Dad helped me saddle up. After I had finished the brushing, he said, "You had better go back to the house and put on your riding clothes and I'll have him saddled when you get back."

I ran to the house and jumped into my new western

clothes and was back at the barn in minutes. Pony was saddled and I was ready to ride, cowboy ride.

It was the greatest Christmas of my life.





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OH COME LET US ADORE HIM!

by *Margarette Adams,*
Submitted by *Leo Larkin*

The year was 1927. Talk about cold, snowy and bad weather. A little boy stood on the corner with his arms full of newspapers. "Need a paper tonight?" was the cry from his heart. You see there was no Daddy, for he had left his family - a wife, two little girls, and two boys - and it was Christmas Eve. They lived in two rooms. There was no food and no money, but there was lots and lots of love.

As I think back to that night, I can remember my mother saying to me, after she had tucked me into bed and we had our prayer. "Margarette, I need to talk to you about Christmas. First remember always that Jesus loves you and this is a very special night, for tomorrow is Jesus' birthday. We do not have

much, for there is only flour in the kitchen to eat, but we know that Jesus will provide for us. We must always remember that. Some day you will have a baby doll, I promise you. Sleep tight and when you awake in the morning it will be Jesus' birthday. We will sing Happy Birthday to our dear Jesus, and just trust the rest of the day will bring lots and love and happiness." How it must have broken my precious mother's heart to know there wasn't going to be gifts and food, but the best she could give was plenty to love. How could she make me understand?

Meanwhile, my brother was crying to people passing by, "Paper today!" Newspapers were not selling, business was slow. About 11:45 Cy kept looking in the window at a baby doll, praying for someone to buy his papers, so he could buy the little doll for his baby sister. All at once a big man appeared. "Son, I need a paper. Business seems

to be slow; it is late for you to be out."

Cy said, "Sir, tomorrow is Christmas, and I have a baby sister that isn't going to have a doll. See that doll in the window? I will be here on my corner until I can buy it for my baby sister."

The man took Cy into the store and told the owner he wanted to buy the doll, the buggy, and the little table and chairs. The owner checked them all out, put them in a box, and the man paid the owner. It was less than the items cost wholesale. Needless to say, Cy was a happy little boy. Just as they started out of the store, the man said to Cy, "I'm sure your mother could use this," and he placed into Cy's hand a twenty dollar bill, gave Cy a big hug and sent him home.

My older brother, who worked in a neighborhood grocery store, had finished his last delivery and was closing up. The owner said to him, "Kelly, I have sacked some groceries for

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you to take home for Christmas dinner."

It is needless to say, this truly was the most wonderful Christmas I ever had. Our brother Jesus was truly faithful:

*He came with all His love,
He came as an Angel
He came and fed us all from the bounty of heaven!
What wondrous love is this - Oh my soul!
The work of the Lord Jesus is mighty and great.*

While searching through some of my writings, I found this article that Margarete D. Adams wrote. Her husband Morris Adams was an architect in Dallas, Texas, when he was sought out to design the NASA Headquarters building (4200) at Marshall Space Flight Center. He completed the drawings and it was built by the Corps of Engineers. When it was time to build the other two buildings that accompanied 4200, he was hired to be the supervising architect. This meant a move from Dallas to Huntsville. Margarete's church was praying day and night to block the move, but it was God's plan all along. There was a housing shortage, but they finally found a house in the old Crestwood area, where there were open sewers. Margarete's comment was, "We left Dallas for this?"

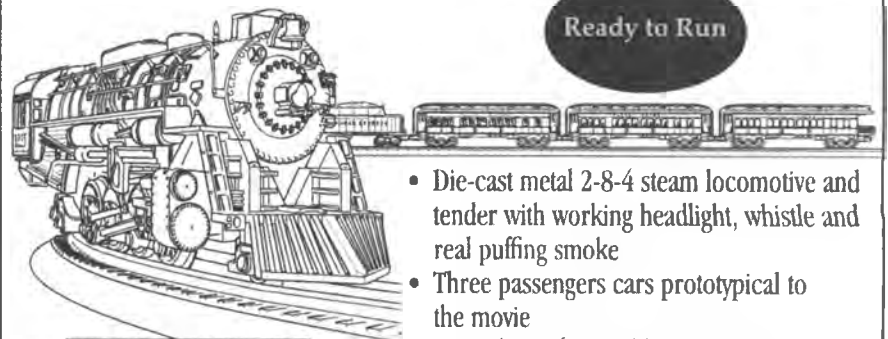
Margarete had prayed for Morris for 27 years to meet the Lord and at our United Methodist Church's camp (Camp Sumatanga) he did just that. It changed his life and he gave all of himself, business, and family to honor God. Consequently, he built many churches in the area; three of which are College Park Church of God, Calvary Bible and University United Methodist.

Their ministry consisted of the Gideons and coordinators of the United Methodist Lay Witness Mission and became known as "Mama" and "Papa" throughout the world. They traveled to Costa Rica and Mama went to Africa and Australia. Mama was also a certified Christian Counselor. They were residents of Huntsville throughout the rest of their lives.

Leo Larkin, Huntsville

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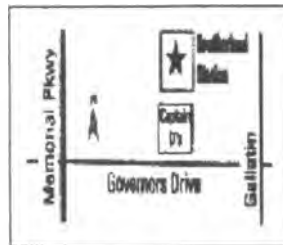
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My Best Christmas

by Malcolm Miller

I believe my best Christmas was nineteen thirty-three when I was six years old. Some of my older brothers had gone out to the pasture to cut a cedar tree and we had all worked at decorating it, with whatever we could find. There were locks of cotton; paper we colored and cut into strips and pasted into loops with paste made from flour and water to make a pretty chain to circle the tree; also popcorn was popped and sewed into a chain with a needle and thread, making a garland to encircle the tree.

You see, back in those days we had no store-bought ornaments to put on our tree so we had to be innovative and use whatever we had. Electric lights, no we couldn't use them if we had them because we had no electricity. No matter what we had I was so proud of that tree. To me it was wonderful and the prettiest tree I had ever seen.

At that time all of us, seven brothers, wore caps and just before bed time on Christmas Eve all the caps were set around the Christmas tree with our names in the caps so Santa wouldn't get mixed up. I finally went to sleep dreaming of all the wonderful things I had been seeing in the Sears Roebuck catalog - there were bicycles, red wagons, BB guns and all kinds of wonderful stuff and I couldn't help but wonder why I had never received any of those things from Santa.

The next thing I knew I was waking up, it must have been three o'clock in the morning. I jumped out of bed and it was freezing cold in that old tenant house but that didn't slow me down. As I got into the room where the Christmas tree was, I ran to my cap and there among

the apples, oranges, nuts, and candy was a shiny new harmonica. I was so happy I didn't think of all the other things I had seen in the catalog. To me this was the most wonderful gift of all. Within minutes I had awakened every one in the house by blowing on my new harmonica.

Before long I was getting a tune out of it, however, by this time I had tried to play so much that the corners of my

mouth were rubbed raw and the backs started to come off the harmonica. But that didn't slow me down at all.

I developed a love for the harmonica that Christmas that has stayed with me my entire life. I now have a harmonica for every key there is and it all started on that wonderful Christmas morning back in nineteen thirty-three. The best Christmas I ever had.

"When blondes have more fun, do they know it?"

Jason Smit, Arab



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Corner of Clinton Avenue & Jefferson Street, was the McGee Hotel, built in 1877 and burned on Dec. 25, 1924. It is where the Kaffeeklatsch is now located (building with balcony.) The building directly across the street was the City Hall/Opera House. The rumor of the day was there was a ghost often seen on the balcony of the McGee Hotel.

(From "A Walk Through Downtown Huntsville, Then and Now", by Fred B. Simpson.)

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