



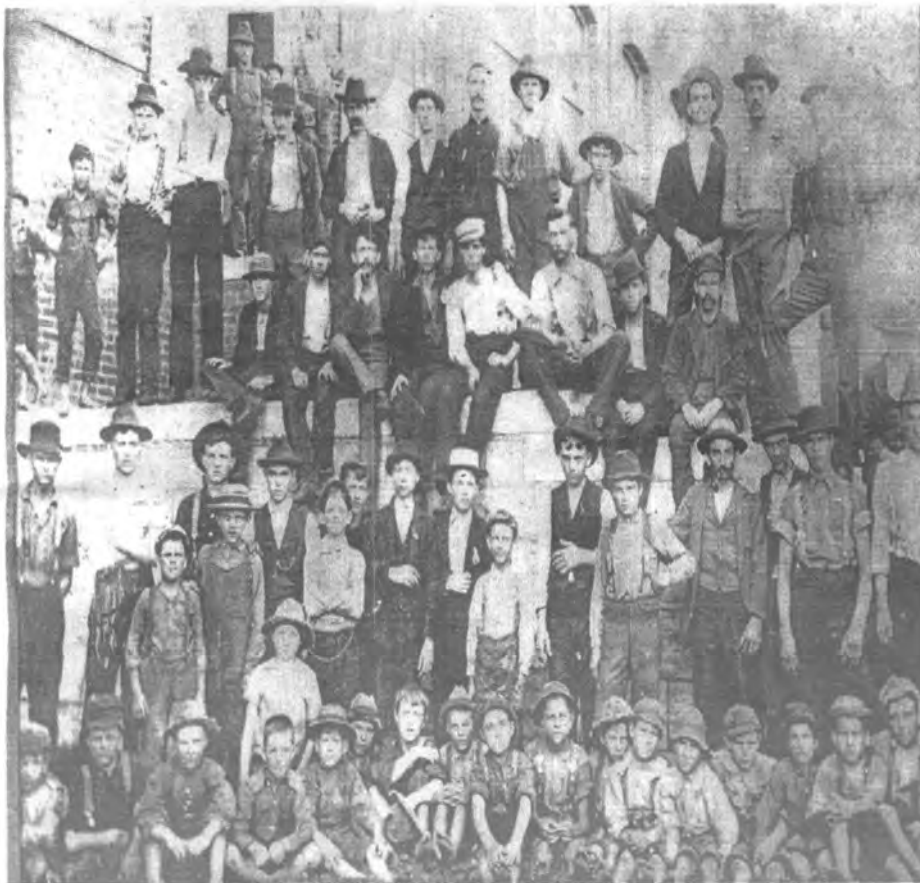
No. 232
June 2012



Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

Huntsville's Forgotten Children



In 1900, our city Mill owners were among Huntsville's elite society. Their lives of privilege and wealth afforded their families every conceivable luxury.

Just across the tracks lived the children who, toiling side-by-side with their parents, were the source of those riches.

Separated by scant miles yet worlds apart, these two classes rarely chanced upon each other ~ until the day that Susie Priest was attacked.

Also in this issue: Mill Village Music

Lewter's Hardware Store



In 1928 our great-grandfather, D.A. Lewter, and our grandfather, J.M. Lewter, started the family business in a small store on Washington Street. They believed in offering fair prices, treating each customer with special respect and hiring great employees.

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**A Hardware Store....
The Way You Remember Them**

*Domie Lewter
Mac Lewter*

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Huntsville's Forgotten Children

by Tom Carney

Another young girl, Susie Priest, a ten year old mill worker, had been brutally raped. Crimes of this nature had become almost commonplace in the Village but were usually ignored by most of Huntsville's citizens. Dallas Village was outside the Huntsville Police jurisdiction and the Sheriff, who depended on the mill owners for political support, rarely ventured onto their turf.

The mill owners preferred it this way, as it allowed for more control of the workers.

The newsspread quickly throughout Dallas Village. Like a brushfire caught in cyclonic winds, the story passed from person to person, building on its own momentum and stirring emotions of anger and frustration that had been repressed for years.

Anger among the mill workers had been building for months. Most of them were ex-sharecroppers who had fled the fields in search of a better life, lured by the promises of the mill owners in search of cheap labor.

The Utopian life that had been promised the workers never materialized. Wages of 68 cents a day in 1892 for an able-bodied male worker were reduced by 1900 to a mere 34

cents per day. Sixty-six hour work weeks were increased to 75. The female workers fared even worse, making on average 27 cents a day.

Even the homes that had been promised the workers seemed more like a fantasy than a reality. Dallas Mills had begun building a few "mill homes" in early 1900, but these were quickly claimed by the blue-coated foremen. The rest of the workers were forced to live in makeshift shanty towns, often with nothing but a piece of canvas to protect them from the harsh weather.

The worst thing for the village residents, however, was the feeling that they had become second class citizens. Families who for generations had been raised to be proudly independent now found themselves reduced to being referred to as "lintheads" belonging to Dallas Mills.

From the groceries bought at the company store to the firewood burned in the kitchen stove, to the mill whistle that woke you up at 4:00 in the morning, every aspect of life in the village was controlled by the mill owners.

But, however harsh the conditions were, it was the children who suffered the most. There were no child labor laws and many families were forced to put their children to work in order to survive. Making an average of ten cents a day, children would report to Dallas Mills at



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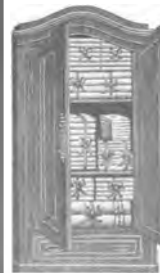
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5:45 in the morning and not get off until 6 that evening.

Mill owners actively encouraged the use of children as a "prime source of labor" and Huntsville newspapers praised the mills for teaching the kids "work ethics."

In Alabama, almost one out of every four mill workers were children.

A social activist of the times, Mrs. John Van Vorst, visited many of the mills and found conditions so appalling as to defy belief. One child, who was "going on twelve," had worked at a mill for almost four years. He had never attended school and worked a twelve hour shift, six days a week.

Another child, working as a sweeper for ten cents a day, was only six years old. He had been working at the mill for almost two years.

Whatever maternal instincts the parents had were often suppressed by the overpowering need to simply survive.

On July 23, 1900, two sisters, Nellie and Susie Priest, 10 and 12 years old respectively, were on their way home for lunch

break from Dallas Mills. As was their habit, they cut across the corner of a nearby field in order to save a few steps. Though they noticed a stranger loitering nearby, he was the last thing on their minds. They had been working since 6:00 that morning and all they wanted to do was to eat lunch and rest for a few minutes before returning to the mill.

The man approached them, as if asking for directions, when suddenly, he knocked Susie to the ground and grabbed Nellie by the throat. Screaming and fighting, Nellie managed to break loose, only to see the assailant turn his attention to Susie, who was lying helplessly on the ground.

Terrified, Nellie ran back to the mill for help.

Several men, enjoying a last smoke before returning to work, met her and after a brief ques-

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Maxine



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tioning, gathered a group of other men to go with them in pursuit of the attacker.

The men found Susie Priest lying on the ground, curled in a fetal position, crying hysterically and with a stream of blood running down her chin where she had been beaten. Her clothes had been brutally torn from her body and the ground bore evidence of the struggle that had taken place.

A brief round of questions established the assailant's name, Elijah Clark, a man twenty years old, and employed part time as a teamster for a local freight company.

Within minutes, more men had gathered at the scene. As they learned what had taken place, their anger began pouring out.

"It ain't right," one man said. "They treat us like slaves, work us like dogs, and even our children ain't safe!"

"If they would pay decent wages," another man cried, "our children would not have to work and this would not have happened!"

Suddenly the spell was broken by two mill foremen who pushed their way through the crowd. "Back to work," they ordered. "Anyone not going back

to work will be docked for the whole day!"

One of the men protested, saying that he was going to look for the assailant, "and the mill be damned!"

He was fired on the spot. Silently, the other men slowly returned to the mill. Regardless of how badly they were treated, the men could not afford to lose their jobs.

Though work resumed after lunch, there was a strong undercurrent of resentment among the workers. News of the rape was the topic of every conversation. After digesting what was already known, people's anger invariably turned toward the mill owners for their callous policy of child labor.

Less than an hour later, with excitement already at a fever pitch, a ten year old boy employed as a sweeper, was involved in an accident. A heavy piece of machinery had fallen and crushed one of his legs.

Again, the foremen were on the scene immediately, ordering people back to work.

As the workers watched the mangled boy being carried from the plant, the anger that had been building all day finally exploded. When one of the foremen grabbed a worker by

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the collar and ordered him back to work, the worker responded by knocking him to the floor. Within minutes over 1,000 employees of Dallas Mills walked out, effectively shutting the mill down.

News of the shutdown spread throughout Huntsville rapidly.

As the stockholders heard the news, they began calling the mill demanding that something be done. The mill manager, in turn, called the Sheriff demanding the culprit who raped the young Priest girl be apprehended, "and fast!"

Undoubtedly, the manager was hoping that with a quick arrest, things would return to normal.

Early the next morning, word spread around Huntsville that Elijah Clark had been arrested and was lodged in the jail. He had readily confessed to the rape, though not sure what everyone was upset about. "After all," he said, "it was just a poor little mill girl."

As was hoped by the mill owners, most of the employees returned to work. At first it seemed as if the affair was forgotten. Though disgruntled,

the employees went about their jobs.

As the morning wore on, however, people began remembering another case that had recently been tried in the courts.

Albert Thompson, a twenty-nine year old cavalryman stationed in Huntsville, had raped a woman and was sentenced to only ten years in the penitentiary. That very day, the same judge had also sentenced a Negro to ten years for "cursing" in the presence of women.

In their minds, the mill workers probably saw Elijah Clark receiving the same sentence -- a slap on the wrist, in their opinion.

Someone, no one is sure who, angrily declared that Clark should be lynched. With the unspoken words finally out in the open, giving the workers a direction in which to vent their

"A child's greatest period of growth is the month after you've just purchased new school uniforms."

Henny Youngman



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anger and frustrations, a mob began making its way toward the jail. Men, young boys, and in some cases, even women, were armed with shotguns, rifles and pistols.

At every street corner, the mob increased in size and anger as word spread. Wives who had been preparing supper for their families, left the food sitting on the tables and joined the mob. Storekeepers, mechanics and lawyers all abandoned their businesses and joined the Dallas Mill workers.

Within the hour, the jail was completely surrounded by a mob of almost two thousand people demanding that Elijah Clark be handed over to them.

Sheriff Fulgham had received word of the mob's intentions and had hastily deputized six men to help guard the jail. Though armed with repeating Winchester rifles, the deputies' bravado quickly disappeared when faced with the relentless and bloodthirsty mob. Deciding that discretion was the better part of valor, most of the deputies beat a hasty exit out the back door.

The Sheriff, however, decided to face the mob. Though inwardly sympathizing with the mob, he was never the less sworn to uphold the law. When one of the mob demanded the keys, Fulgham declared they would "have to walk over my dead body first!"

Angrily the mob surged forward. Several of the men, armed with a large piece of timber from a nearby construction site, began battering the front door.

As the door gave way, the mob was met by the Sheriff and the few remaining deputies, who immediately opened fire. Will Vining, an electric light worker, fell to the ground wounded by almost two hundred pellets of buck shot.

Cheered on by thousands of Huntsville's citizens, the mob next procured several sticks of dynamite which they placed next to the jail. Again they asked for the Sheriff to surrender and again he refused.

At this point, Milton Humes and Daniel Coleman, two respected Huntsville businessmen, mounted a nearby buggy and began an impassioned speech, imploring the mob to return home.

Their efforts were met by jeers and a fusillade of rocks.

The dynamite placed next to the jail had failed to explode and one of the mob, after checking the fuse, relit it and threw it inside the jail. The explosive wrecked most of the downstairs, but fortunately, the Sheriff and his prisoner had retreated to the second floor.

Sheriff Fulgham, realizing the seriousness of the situation, told the few remaining deputies they could leave if they wanted to. Both of the deputies left by jumping out a back window.

They then joined the mob besieging the jail.

Next the mob decided to try to smoke the Sheriff out. A barrel of oil, a large amount of sulphur and several bushels of chicken feathers were placed on the ground floor of the jail and

lit. Moments later, the jail was engulfed in a billowing cloud of nauseating smoke. The fumes were so bad that even the mob beat a hasty retreat.

Chief of Police D. D. Overton, who had been standing by and watching the crowd for several hours, now asked to be allowed to enter the jail and try to talk the Sheriff into surrendering.

After convincing Fulgham of the helplessness of his situation, Overton assisted the Sheriff out of the jail where he was placed in care of a doctor who treated him for smoke inhalation.

With the Sheriff out of the way, the mob surged to the second floor where Clark was lodged in a cell. Fulgham had



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wisely thrown away the keys to the cell and the mob was forced to use hammer and chisel to break into the cell.

The men went to work with a vengeance, interrupted only by a steady flow of sightseers filing through the jail. The whole time Clark sat in a corner of the jail, softly moaning about the fate he was going to experience.

Finally the prisoner was taken into custody by the mob, and as they prepared to leave the jail one of its members mounted the jail steps and said:

"Now gentlemen, you must put up your guns. We are going to hang this man and if no one interferes, no one will be hurt."

Guarded by twenty armed men, Clark was escorted to the home of Susie Priest, who readily identified him. By this time the crowd had grown to almost 2,000 people.

At this point Clark, wrecked by terror, lost control of his legs

and had to be carried. When he made an effort as if to escape, a rope was placed around his neck and he was half-dragged the short distance to Moores Grove.

Waiting at the Grove was another crowd of almost 4,000 people. This made a total of nearly 6,000 people taking part in the mob.

The only pause in the mob's actions came when they called for Will Priest, an elder brother of Susie, to throw the rope over a limb of the tree. After asking if Clark had any last words to say, Priest slapped the horse on its side, leaving the accused hanging by the neck.

At first the crowd was silent, awed by the taking of a life. For a full ten minutes they simply stood and stared.

Suddenly, as if the hanging itself was not enough, the young Priest grabbed a gun and began firing at the dead body swing-

ing softly in the breeze. This served as a signal for the rest of the mob, who immediately began firing their guns also. A witness later reported that over 150 shots were fired at Clark's body.

The mob slowly broke up and began returning to their homes. The only excitement left was when an occasional young boy, egged on by his companions, would dart up to the body to cut a piece of fabric from the dead man's clothing as a souvenir.

Dallas Mills opened the next morning on time. The workers, though still embittered, realized nothing else could be done and

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the men, women and children wearily returned to work.

The owners and manager of the mill quickly took steps to regain control over the workers. The ringleaders of the mob, as well as anyone else who had voiced a complaint, were fired.

Susie Priest, along with her sister, brother and parents, were also fired.

In an attempt to pacify city officials, who blamed the mill for the destruction, the mill owners offered to pay for the rebuilding of the jail.

Needless to say, no one was ever tried for the lynching. Though there was an estimated 6,000 people at the scene, the official explanation given was "no witnesses."

Child labor, which had helped to spark the incident, was proclaimed to be non-existent at the mill. One owner actually explained away the diminutive size of some of his employees by calling them "Mountain Dwarfs."

In 1924, an exhibition of pho-

tographs taken by Lewis Hines was held in Huntsville. Lewis had toured America taking vivid photographs of children forced to work in subhuman and appalling conditions. The photographs, in their stark black and white reality, portrayed the brutal and callous treatment of young children enslaved by the cultural revolution.

The event was well received by Huntsville's elite, with many people commenting on the cruelty of a system that would allow such a thing to happen.

The only thing they missed were the captions on some of the pictures that had been thoughtfully removed.

Many of the photographs had been taken in Huntsville..... at the mills they owned.



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- Pesky weeds? Spray them with undiluted white vinegar. The acid stops them from absorbing moisture if it's warm and sunny. They'll die quickly. Spray regularly to keep weed seeds from resprouting. Be careful to keep off plants you want to keep!

- Create your own small water garden using an old kiddie pool. Place it, cut in a couple of drainage holes, and plant some favorite water-loving plants: astilbe, rushes, water cannas, etc. You'll be getting compliments before you know it.

- Start putting wet newspaper in your garden to keep away the weeds. Put layers around the plants overlapping as you go. Cover with mulch and forget about it. Weeds will get thru some gardening plastics but they will NOT get through wet newspapers.

- Keep those pesky squirrels away from your garden plants by sprinkling them with cayenne pepper. It won't hurt the plant but the squirrels will avoid them.

- A good mosquito cure when you're sitting outside at night admiring your garden: pour some water in a white dinner plate and add a couple of drops of "Lemon Fresh Joy Dish Detergent." Set the dish on your porch, patio or other outdoor area. Not sure what mosquitoes like about it - maybe the lemon smell - but after drinking the mixture they drop dead at the spot. Try it!

June Garden Tips

- Sit in the shade with a good gardening book to nourish your soul.

- Shop for Father's Day...a new trowel, shovel, garden tool?

- Lightly jiggle or tap tomato plants to boost pollination: fertilize tomatoes once a week when fruits begin to appear.

- Thin fruits on apple, pear and peach trees to produce larger fruit.

- Harvest leafy vegetables and herbs early in the morning while they are still wet with dew. Harvest vegetables close to preparation time.

- Pull weeds regularly, before they go to seed and spread.

- Watch for insect/disease damage on all plants. Begin control measures.

- Raise cutting height on lawn mower, especially if weather has been dry for more than a week.

- Freshen or change water in bird baths and ornamental pools at least once a week to reduce mosquito breeding.

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The Property of J. Emory Pierce

by Louise Manning

When I first saw the "mystery" picture in the March issue of OLD HUNTSVILLE, I immediately recognized the last remaining section of the old concrete and stone wall that once surrounded the Five Points property of J. Emory Pierce. Mr. Pierce built the Times Building located at the corner of Greene Street and Holmes Avenue in downtown Huntsville.

I well remember the house and other buildings that once stood at this site. The house and surrounding buildings were built on a large triangular piece of land at Five Points. The property faced Holmes Avenue (formerly East Holmes Street) and was bound on the east by Andrew Jackson Way (formerly Fifth Street) and on the west by Dement Street (formerly Second Avenue).

This triangular piece of land remains today and is now occupied by businesses. It helps form one of the most traveled intersections in Huntsville.

The shape and location of this land made it a very unusual place to build a house and, the house was even more unusual. It was a large square, three-story house built in tiers and to a child looked like a

fairy-tale castle. It was often referred to as the "wedding cake house". There were other buildings on the grounds. There were also formal gardens with benches and flowers, stands and containers.

But the most unusual thing was that the house, buildings, benches, flower stands and containers were all built of concrete and stones like the remaining section of the wall featured in the Old Huntsville "mystery" picture. Also, this wall completely surrounded the property.

This section of wall is all that remains of Mr. Pierce's grand house and gardens that once was one of Huntsville's unique show places and is a part of Huntsville's history.

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Wilson Matthews

by Nolan Myrick

There were two cotton gins when I was living at Maysville. One was in Ryland and one was in Maysville. In the fall of the year, there was a lot going on around the gin. Cotton wagons, with farmer names painted on the sides, were everywhere. There was a lot of cotton ginned. By November, the electric wires by the road were covered with lint and alongside the road were small pieces of cotton that had fallen off the wagons. It was an exciting time of the year for me.

At the gin in Maysville, I met a man who became a friend of mine for all my life, Wilson Matthews. His nickname was Pistol. Everyone had a nickname it seemed. My nickname was Crazy, and a lot of people still call me that today.

I bought a farm up in Hurricane in Berry Hollow back of Earl Blackburn's farm. I had 78 acres and a lot of trees on it. When the cotton was all ginned and Wilson had time, he helped me cut firewood to sell. I had a Homelite saw and Wilson taught me how to use it. He was calm and had a lot of patience with me. I was always in a hurry.

I guess he helped me cut wood off and on for 15 years. We cleared the whole farm with a chain saw. His wife, Phoebe, and a lot of other people helped me. Even now I can still sharpen a chain saw with just a round file. Wilson taught me.

Later on he began to help me in the hay fields. It got to the place where I just wanted him to be with me when I worked. Nearly every time we would go to work, I would have to stop and get a plug of Cannonball chewing tobacco for Wilson and a pack of Winston's for me and eight 16-ounce Double Colas. We were heavy on our drinking Double Colas. You could tell by the Double Cola bottles where Wilson and I had been cutting wood.

I sort of lost touch with Wilson when I moved to Fayetteville. Sometimes Phoebe would bring him up here to fish in our

pond. Wilson went to work at Maple Hill Cemetery. Every time I would go to a funeral, I would see Wilson. As I stood at the grave while the preacher talked, I would always be looking over at Wilson standing by the dirt trailer. Sometimes it was harder to look at Wilson than at the casket. After the funeral, he would always come over to me and we would give each other a long embrace.

I went looking for him and found he had passed away. He was one of Maysville's finest people.

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I planted some bird seed and a bird came up. Now I don't know what to feed it.

An Elegy for Me and My Tree

by Weldon Brown



Today I visited an old oak tree that lives where our front yard used to be many years ago. Its trunk is about six feet thick now and the little plot it grows in is hemmed in by a highway, office building and parking lot.

It surely has seen a hundred leafy summers and stood serenely silent through as many wintry slumbers.

We used to walk barefoot under the tree on our way to downtown matinees. Girls in long white dresses with modest faces and big eyes beguiled us with their provocative sashays. We passed grand rose gardens back then and heard the sounds of piano lessons and laughter from soiree's.

Life was full of grace and we were loved and safe in our cocoon of cotton mill provincial when the tree, West Huntsville and the children were young, unpaved and residential.

All those faces and places that gave us serenity flew away on the wings of time without me and my tree.

Back then God granted my prayers for better days, but now, adding to my sorrows, God refuses to put those best old yesterdays into the rest of my tomorrows.

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A Huntsville Street Kid

by G. W. Maynard

I am going to start my story on the saddest day of my life. It was a cold, dreary morning in March of 1948. I had gotten out of bed about 5 a.m. and walked across the room to the fireplace to warm myself from the cold of the night. My mother, younger brother and baby sister remained in bed. After warming myself, I went back to the bed to wake my mother. I could not wake her from her sleep, she just wouldn't move. I ran to the other room of the house to tell my two older brothers and my older sister, to come see what was wrong with our Mama.

She had died during the night.

My Daddy had come in for a visit during the night and had gone to the barn to check on some hogs that had been sick for a couple of days. The law came in to investigate and took my Daddy to jail while they investigated my Mother's death. I'm sure it took a couple of days for my Grandfather to come to where we lived at Courtland. A week or so later my Grandfather got my Daddy out of jail and they had buried my Mother.

None of us kids got to go to Mama's funeral and to this day we have not been able to find out where she was buried. My Daddy once said she was buried in Blackburn or Blackmon Cemetery wherever that is, it should be around Moulton or Courtland, Alabama. If anyone has any idea where this place

might be, please get in touch with me through the "Old Huntsville" magazine.

A week later we moved from Courtland to Owens Cross Roads to another cotton patch. My older brothers and my older sister were all old enough to chop cotton that summer and I joined them in the picking in the fall. I got to start school at Owens Cross Roads in the fall.

When cotton picking was over we moved to Kildare Avenue in Huntsville where I continued first grade and my brothers and sister hit the cotton patch to chop cotton. After the cotton chopping was over we moved to Brooks Street in the Lowe Mill area. We all moved into a 3-room shotgun style house that Daddy that thrown together with my sister handing him the material that we had put together. There were 6 of us kids, Daddy and our stepmother.

He built another house 10 or 12 feet from the shotgun house. He left us 6 kids in the old house that had cracks so large in the sides of the home, you could stick your fingers in them. Daddy and our stepmother and

her 2 kids who had been living with their grandmother and grandfather moved into the house next door.

My oldest brother who was 17 at the time had the responsibility of seeing that we 6 kids were fed. My older sister was 15 years old and had to watch after the rest of us kids. Daddy had made them quit school when

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Show me a man with both feet planted on the ground, and I'll show you a man who can't get his pants off.

they were about 12 years old.

I went to school at West Huntsville Elementary on 9th Avenue for 4 years beginning with the 2nd grade. I never had books of my own and had to hustle to get paper and pencil for school. I often stopped and carried in 2 buckets of coal for a lady on my way to school who would give me a nickel or dime to buy my paper and pencil for school. My older brother and I often hauled off trash for people in the neighborhood to make money for our needs.

I started going to the Courthouse on Saturdays to shine shoes for people. I would make my way around to all the car lots on Meridian Street and Madison Street to shine the salesmen's shoes. It was Saturday and I was ten years old and some of the things I remembered that I really liked to do was to see a movie at the old Elks Theatre, the Lyric or Grand Theatre, or hang out at the City Drug Store and read a comic book and eat a 5-cent double dip of ice cream. Sometimes I made enough money on Saturday to buy a pair of shoes or a pair of jeans or a shirt for school.

I have to say that I loved all my teachers because they helped me through school, helping me with lunch tickets, loaning me their books to do my homework while the other kids were out playing at recess and lunch. I'm proud to say that I made the Honor Roll at least 3-4 times each year in each of the grades; second, third, fourth and fifth. There was a Bible in the bookcase in the back of the room in third grade and I must have read it from cover to cover because it had so many exciting stories in it.

I saw so much in my days on the street and I guess my mind tried to absorb it all. I wish my brothers and sisters had had the opportunity to get more schooling than they did. I don't think anyone knows better than I do what my Daddy stole from my sisters and brothers. He took their childhood and their education. I am so thankful for every teacher I ever knew. God Bless you all.



Editors Note: G.W. is trying to find where his Mom is buried. Her name was Sinea Beatrice Eaks. If anyone has any information on her or her burial location, G.W. would be so very grateful. Please notify him in care of "Old Huntsville".

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Heard On the Street

by *Cathey Carney*

Congratulations to **Tommy Gipson** of Gurley. He was the first correct caller to identify the photo of the month in May, who was none other than the famous **Floyd Hardin, Mayor of Five Points!** Tommy wins a full year of "Old Huntsville" - free! Tommy is a retired carpenter & builder.

Tom McKee, who works in the Bulk Mail unit of the Post Office on Governors Drive, is very proud of a new family addition. He has a new beautiful grandson, 5 weeks old, named **Samuel Eli McKee**. Parents are **Tommy** (Tom's son) and **Rachelle McKee** of Pisgah, AL. Samuel joins big sister **Gracie Lorelei**, who's 7. Congratulations to the sweet family.

We were so sorry when we heard that **Susie Serio** had passed away, at the age of 89. We send our condolences to her husband **Andy Serio**, sons **Michael, Robert and Joseph** and their families, her sister **Reba Walton**, 10 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren. Her gentleness and sweet spirit will be missed.

Happy May Birthdays to **Jodi and David Nutall**, who are artists with studios at Lowe Mill.

John Bzdell let us know that his sweetie, **Margaret Watson**, has a June birthday and their granddaughter, **Annali**, will be 4



in June. **Margaret and John** have been together 5 years in May - congratulations to you lovebirds.

Happy 42nd wedding anniversary to **Ken and Diane Owens** - you guys are the best.

Happy April birthday to my dear friend **Cheryl Tribble** in Woodstock, GA!

We probably have a recordholder in Huntsville. **Angelica Wilhelm**, a lovely lady who has been living at Redstone Village for several years now, had a birthday in mid-May. How old you say? Angelica turned 106. Congratulations to a healthy happy lady!

Special congratulations to **Kelly Barringer**, who just graduated from Calhoun College in Dental Assisting. She is the smart daughter of BB&T's own **Jane Eller** and they live in Hazel Green.

Lola Stutts Braxton just celebrated a birthday in early May at her home in the Shoals. She had several friends & family members celebrating with her who just love her to pieces!

Linda Goldman just had a May

birthday as well - I know that her sweet hubby **Darryl** made sure it was a great one.

Kathy Hunt was only 57 when she died, way too young. Her dear friend **Joy McKee** said that Kathy was the fairest and most honest person she'd ever known. Kathy has overseen the City of Huntsville's trash pickup program for the past 10 years, and was really respected by everyone she knew. We send our deepest condolences to her husband **Rex**, and their many friends & family.

For 10 years now, **Floyd Hardin** at the Jackson Way Barber Shop has been hosting the annual BBQ event with some fabulous food and entertainment. **Robert Madison** was there and was so proud of his friend **Anita Palmer** who played guitar and sang. Anita's husband is **Bruce Garoppo** and he calls himself the "free roadie!"

There were so many people at the event, even though it looked like rain for a while, it turned out great. In addition to **Floyd Hardin** there was the Huntsville City Mayor, **Tommy Battle**. **Earl Thompson** was taking pictures and said he's turning 82 in July - Happy early birthday to you!

Allen Brinkley was there, **Danny Banks** was holding court

Photo of The Month

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Hint: This boy spends a lot of time at his business on North Side Square



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with **Curtis J. Hall**, **Mr. Sam Spry** looking VERY handsome, **Glenda Luna**, **Roger Jones**, **Bobbie Leslie of Leslie's Garage**, **Robert Patterson and Buddy Currey**, who told me he's 82 but he waterskis all the time! He's in great shape. **Buddy** is a retired school teacher (Lincoln and Chapman) but still volunteers for teaching classes at Calhoun. **Jan Dorning** was there sampling some of **Sheriff Blake Dorning's** BBQ chicken!

Gwen Michael is **Floyd's** sister and aunt to **Kristi Brewer**. **Scott Bishop** and his son **Josh** manned the BBQ fire all night long at Jackson Way, along with **Floyd** who stayed up til about midnight. We saw **Mark Craig** there, **Dan Childress** with his mom **Mae Dean Childress**. I met a beautiful lady named **Dawn Smith** who is Vice President at North Alabama Bank and is a cancer survivor.

Back to the food - there was BBQ pork, chicken, catfish, potato salad, cole slaw, fabulous hushpuppies - you should have seen how much food was on some of those plates! And many attendees went back for seconds! **Sheriff Dorning** was responsible for that great BBQ chicken, retired Sheriff **Joe Whisenant** cooked the fish, **Chief Edwards** provided the homemade hushpuppies that were great, **Kristi Brewer** (**Floyd's** daughter and wife to **Jeff**) cooked the BBQ pork that was just mouth-watering. **Aunt Eunice** used to attend each of these events during her life and would have been very proud of all the food!

And of course there was **Doug Martinson, Sr.** and his son **Doug, Jr.** **Doug Sr.'s** wife is **Kathryn**

McWhorter Martinson and is a cousin of a Pulitzer prizewinning author **Diane McWhorter** who is a Birmingham native, has been to Huntsville many times and has written a Civil Rights book called "Carry Me Home".

Sheila Cole is another gorgeous lady I met who retired from working at Jackson Way Barber Shop. She thinks the world of her son **Beau Cole** who heads up Cole Properties and wants to send out a special hello to him!

I talked with **Stephanie Patterson** who is the proud daughter of **A.D. Hillis** and wants to write a good story about him. There was **Anthony Daniels**, that tall handsome man who works at Alabama A&M as Corporate & Foundations Relations Rep. I caught up with **Gary Evans**, whose Mom is **Verna Evans**. And of course **Sam Keith** was there from Five Points.

I met the Sheriff of Limestone County, **Mike Blakely**, very nice guy. Also **Lt. Marion Bulluck**, and **Greg Gray** who's been a friend for years.

I think the world of **Jeff Walker**, of Southern Sealing, and he promised to write up some stories about him and his brother **Joe**, who passed away a couple of years ago and is still terribly missed.

A single friend of mine was saying the other day that she thinks the best-looking men in Huntsville all work for Huntsville Utilities! One good example is **Steve** and we won't reveal his last name.

Benny Hale is a good friend of **Jim McBride** who has a story in this issue called "Mill Village Music." **Jim** is a well-known song-

writer who has written songs for groups including Alabama.

We were so saddened to hear that **Harvey Cotten** had lost his wife **Margaret**. She had just turned 55 years old. We send our deepest sympathy to **Harvey** and sons **John** and **Andrew** of Huntsville, along with their many other relatives and friends.

The **Old Town Hidden Garden Tour** will take place on June 3 from 1-5 and tickets are \$10. There will be about 12 beautiful gardens for you to look at and get ideas from! Tickets available day of the tour, just come to Old Town!

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Father's Day Snacks

Marinated Vegetables

- Broccoli
- Cauliflower
- Squash
- White mushrooms
- Carrots
- Red and Yellow Peppers
- 1 large bottle Kraft Zesty Italian dressing

In a large bowl, break up the washed vegetables into bite-sized pieces. Pour the whole bottle of dressing over the vegetables and mix well. Seal and keep overnight in fridge, turning at least once. Drain and serve with toothpicks.

Baked Cheese Bites

- 2 sticks margarine
- 2 c. self-rising flour
- 2 c. grated sharp Cheddar cheese
- 2 c. Rice Krispies
- 1 t. cayenne pepper

1/2 t. garlic powder
 Mix all ingredients together well, will be very stiff. Roll the mixture into small balls - about the size of a large pecan - and flatten gently. Bake on greased cookie sheets at 300 degrees for 30 minutes or so. These are good warm but also freeze very well.

Deviled Mushrooms

- 2 lb. mushroom caps (no stem)
- 1 8 oz. pkg. cream cheese
- 6-1/2 oz. can deviled ham
- 2 t. garlic powder

Mix the cream cheese, ham and garlic powder. Grease a casserole dish with butter and place mushroom caps in. Spoon the cheese mixture into the caps and bake at 350 degrees for 20-30 minutes.

Rolled Tortilla Bites

- 1 8 oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened

4 oz. can chopped green chilies, drained

4 oz. jar chopped pimiento, drained

- 1/2 c. chopped ripe olives
- 10 6-inch flour tortillas

In a small bowl combine the first four ingredients and mix well. Spread a heaping tablespoon on each tortilla and roll it up. Place, seam side down, on a plate. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours.

Cut each roll into 6 one-inch pieces and serve with salsa and toothpicks.

Mini Cheesecake

- 3 8-oz. pkgs. cream cheese, softened
- 5 eggs
- 1 c. sugar
- 2 t. vanilla

Mix the above ingredients til smooth and pour into foil cupcake liners that have been placed

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in the cupcake tins. Fill the liners 3/4 full and bake at 325 degrees for 25 minutes.

- 1 8-oz. carton sour cream
- 1/4 c. sugar
- 1 t. vanilla

Mix together and put 1 teaspoon of the mixture on each cupcake while hot and back in oven for 3-5 minutes. Top with maraschino cherries.

Stephanie's Spicy Deviled Eggs

Boil 12 eggs

When eggs are cool, peel, slice in half, scoop out yolks into a bowl and add:

- 1/4 c. mayonnaise
- 1 T. yellow mustard
- 1/2 t. Chili powder
- 1/2 t. cumin
- 1/8 t. cayenne
- 2 minced jalapenos
- Salt and pepper to taste.

Mix all together well (I use a fork to mash up the yolks) and spoon mixture into egg halves. Sprinkle paprika and chopped cilantro on top.

The above measurements are just a guess. You can add more or less of each ingredient to taste. Add enough mayo to make it the right consistency.

Refried Bean Dip

- 1 can refried beans
- 3 T. olive oil
- 1/2 c. chopped onion
- 1 T. minced garlic

1 c. shredded Cheddar cheese
In a pan heat your oil, saute the onion and garlic til it begins to caramelize. Add the refried beans and cook with the onion/garlic in the oil over medium heat, til it is very hot but not boiling. Scrape all out of the pan into a serving bowl.

Add 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese and mix in - the beans should be hot enough to make the cheese melt. Serve with whatever - chips, vegetables, whatever you like! I like it hot so I'll probably add a sprinkle or two of cayenne to the top.

Another Layer Dip

- 1 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese
- 1/2 bottle hot salsa (or mild if you prefer)
- 1 small can chopped green chiles
- 1/2 c. chopped green onions
- 1 can Refried beans (or use the above recipe perhaps to be REALLY sinful)

2 c. Cheddar cheese, shredded
1 t. granulated garlic powder
In a metal or glass large pie pan layer as follows: cream cheese, green chiles, refried beans green onions, salsa, cheddar cheese.

Sprinkle the garlic powder over the cheese. Toss in oven and bake at 350 degrees for 20 or 30 minutes and cheese is melted.

Use as dip with chips and serve with sides of chopped cilantro, lettuce, chopped tomatoes, guacamole, sour cream, chopped onions, etc.



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Sarges's Brother

by Janet L. Miller

He should have known from the beginning that I was in charge. After all, I was two years older, twice his size and in my mind a whole lot smarter. He just would not listen.


Early in our lives, our father, Alton, was "The Insurance Man" in and around Ryland, Brownsboro and Maysville. We lived at Cedar Gap in a small frame house overlooking 72 East and backed by Old Gurley Road. We had bottle-fed goats, a pig and a little garden. One day while "helping" Momma in the garden, Duane, age two, would not give me the hoe. A rake to the top of the head helped convince him that I needed it worse than he did. I also got him several stitches. The war was on!

It had to be a premonition that Duane would eventually be a race car driver at the Huntsville Speedway. I had to be "Joe" to his "Martin" on the floor or in the yard dirt with all his little race cars. Heaven help him if his car won the race. That couldn't happen. I was older and smarter. He was probably afraid to win. Fortunately he fared much better years later at the speedway.

Duane was my partner in crime. Rarely did he get into trouble on his own. Most often it was some hair-brained scheme that I had talked him into, yet both of us got into trouble. Of course I always blamed him. How could anyone have more fun than to aggravate JoAnn, our oldest sister, until she threatened to beat us?

When we were age three and five, our parents built a house on a hill off Jordan Road. For many years there was a black man we called Preacher Battles who lived near the bottom of the hill. He did a lot of work for Daddy, including plowing our garden with his mules. It didn't take us long to figure out that mules spoke a certain language. Every time Preacher Battles told his mule "Gee", we in unison would yell "haw." And of course every time Preacher Battle called "haw" we screamed "gee." It was hilarious until we looked up, and there stood Daddy.

About fifty yards from our house was a huge fenced field that was owned by the then Tax Collector, George Culps. At some point he had put cattle and a pony in the pasture. We had always wanted a horse because we watched the Gene Autry/Roy Rogers Theater every Saturday morning and were convinced we needed one. I talked Duane into helping me catch the pony, and seeing as how neither of us was tall enough to get on it, we decided to put Gwen, our six-year old sister, on it. About the time I slung her up on the pony, the pony slung



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her off, kicking and bucking as he crossed the pasture. Apparently while flying thru the air, one of his hooves made contact with Gwen's neck. After Gwen came home from the hospital, we found ourselves in lots of trouble again. It was Duane's fault of course.

One afternoon during our pre-teen years, we decided that a friendly game of croquet was in order. After a hard game that included whacking each other's ball all over the backyard, he finally beat me. Well, obviously he cheated! I was older and bigger and smarter and he could not have possibly beaten me fairly. What would any indignant, self-respecting sister do? I whacked him in the back with my croquet mallet. I mean..... he deserved it, didn't he?

Time marches on and in a few short years Duane joined the United States Army. When he came home from Boot Camp with a shaved head, I noticed that he had a large scar across the top of his head (I had never seen it. It was covered in hair all his life.) When I asked, "Bubba, where did you get that scar?" he raised one eyebrow, and with a slight smile he sarcastically said, "I wonder." Only then did I realize that I was responsible for that.

You would have to go a long way to find a closer sister/brother relationship than we shared in our young adult years. We talked nearly every day, and although miles apart, seldom did one not know what the other was doing.

One day several years ago, Kristi, our youngest sister, came into the house with a quizzical expression and handed me an old croquet mallet. She had asked him why he was sending me a mallet, and all he said was, "Janet will know." It was to be my last gift from him. Several months later he passed away.

To my mixture of humor and irritation, my brother called me "Sarge" for most of our adult life.

Reckon what he meant by that?



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WHAT I REMEMBER

by Tillman Williams

A collection of short stories about growing up in Huntsville, Alabama.

Keeping Clean

In the early years it was not as easy to keep clean as it is now. You had to heat your water and put it in a number 3 wash tub to take a bath. The men and boys could go to the barber shop and take a bath. There, a bath cost a nickel and then they went up to a dime. But the women had to use the number 3 wash tub.

It was not uncommon for someone to have lice, bedbugs or the 7-year itch. A health nurse would come to school and check everybody's head. If you had lice you went home and got rid of them.

We never had lice or bedbugs. I will never forget my mother each morning as she made up the beds, pulling the ticking down on the edges of the mattress and looking for bedbugs.

Today I never go to a zoo and see a mother monkey pick up her little monkey and start looking in his fur for fleas. It reminds me how my mother used to grab me every time I got close enough for her to grab me and look my head over to make sure I did not have lice.

I said my family never had lice or bedbugs, but we all had

the 7-year itch. One time in particular I remember my mother had us rub down in sulfur and grease.

A few years earlier, my uncle had gotten killed in an accident at Lowe Mill. He had 3 kids and one of the teenage girls had come to live with us. She could be hell on wheels sometimes.

Back to the 7-year itch. My mother had just gotten us all cured of the 7-year itch with sulfur and grease when my cousin threw a mad fit and went to stay with some friends of ours over on Lincoln Avenue. Unfortunately, they had the 7-year itch and my cousin brought it back to us.

The process you went through to get rid of it is well remembered. You had to wash all your clothes and the bed sheets. Then everybody took a hot bath and rubbed down in sulfur and grease.

This one particular time, it was cold winter. One by one the water was heated and put in the number 3 wash tub. After one of us would take a bath, the tub was taken to

the back yard and dumped. More water was heated and the next one would take a bath and be rubbed down in sulfur and grease. My Daddy was the last to take a bath.

As I said it was very cold so we took our baths in front of the wood cook stove in the kitchen. We had the most beautiful cook stove I have ever seen. It was white porcelain with a big warmer on top and a water reservoir on the end. It had a beautiful chrome rail in the front of it. We cooked on it up to the 1950s.

When we moved from Barrell Street to Meridian Street we got an electric stove. I don't remember what happened to the wood cook stove but I would give anything to have it today. I can close my eyes and still see every detail about that stove.

Well, back to my Daddy getting rid of the itch. My Daddy was built just like I am. He had a big chest, big shoulders, good arms but a skinny butt. He was standing up in the tub drying off with a towel, bent over and bumped his butt on that beautiful chrome rail

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on the front of the stove. He started to holler and scream and everybody ran into the kitchen. There he stood, buck naked and very mad. Needless to say he gave my cousin hell for bringing the 7-year itch to our home.

Many years later, we had many a laugh over the incidents of that day.

General Jack

Very early in World War II, I served under a very tough general, "General" Jack McCulley. General Jack came to me with an idea that seemed to be a very good way to pick up a few dollars. The general was two years older than I and had a good business head on him.

At that time, Western Union Telegraph Company was the best way to get a message to someone out of town since very few people had telephones. The telegraph company ran their lines on poles down the railroads from one town to another. They had taken down their old poles and put up new ones.

The old poles belonged to anyone who would go after them. The ones where people could drive a wagon or truck to did not stay there long. But the poles from Oakwood Avenue to Miller's Crossing were still there.

So the general said what we needed to do was to start us an army and saw the poles up and split them into kindling to start fires with. By this time the mill was running 3 shifts a day, 6

days a week and we could sell the kindling wood easily.

Jack was going to be the "General" and I was to be the "Lieutenant." We organized a pretty good sized "army" and went to work. We used my Daddy's crosscut saw, and sawed the poles up and got them off the railroad. We began to make money hand over fist and we would buy dinner for the army every day.

But the day of honor and glory was when the general and myself went to the store and bought sun helmets, like the ones you wear in the jungle, for the whole army. The general marched us down Barrell Street with R.F.C. Egee Fisher as flag bearer carrying the American flag.

We all were very proud. We marched to the rock fence and into Mr. Peeler's yard, where we ate and had a good time. Then General Jack and myself got into a fight and everybody got mad and went home. The army busted up. All good things have to end.

But I think everybody won. The troops had a good time; good food, a sun helmet, good work experience and their people had not had to fix them dinner for a month or two. The

It seldom occurs to teenagers that they will grow up and know as little as their parents one day.

telegraph company got rid of the old poles. Those who had bought the kindling had gotten a good deal, and I guess Jack and myself had done all right after we split what money that was left.

Sometime in the 1980s, General Jack McCulley presented me with a certificate that promoted me to full Colonel in the Lincoln Militia. That made me very proud.

A Lesson Learned

After I quit Dillard's Cafe and went to the Huntsville Times, a girl in my class got the job I had at the cafe. She lived about two and a half blocks from the cafe and got off at 10:30 or 11:00 at night. I started walking her home, but could not go all the way to her house because of her Daddy. I would walk her to a fruit stand around the corner and say good night there.

I didn't like the idea that I could not go to her house. I asked her one night if her



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Daddy would whip her if I went all the way home with her. She said, "No, he wouldn't whip me, but I don't know what he'd do to you."

I thought about that for a day or so. I guess the way you learn to do things when you are kid sets a trend that stays with you all your life.

I thought, what is the very worst thing that can happen to me? I decided that the worst thing was that he would give me a good beating. I had already had a few good beatings by now and it was not that bad after it was over with. So I told her that night I was walking her all the way to her house. This was in the hot summer, and everybody sat up on the porches until it got cool before going to bed. When we got closer to her house I saw that her Daddy was sitting on the porch swing. We had been holding hands but we stopped that. I think our hands were wet because she was scared and I could hear my heart beating very loudly. So loud that I was sure her Daddy could hear it, too.

Well, we walked up to her house and I spoke to her Daddy. I asked him now he was doing and I said something about how hot it was. The girl said good night and went into the house. He started to talk to me some, mostly just "small talk." I stayed a few minutes and left.

I could not have been treated more nicely and I walked her home many more times after that.

I think the moral of this story is when I am confronted with bad times, I try to think about what is the worst thing that could possibly happen to me. If I learned to accept the worst thing that could happen, then I could go hit it head on. I have used this approach all my life and it has worked out pretty well so far.



Jim Britt Buried Here

Son of Yankee Spy Was Inmate of Poorhouse For 66 Years

Jim Britt, who has been an inmate of the County Almshouse for the past 66 years, died yesterday at the age of 72 years old, after an illness lasting for four weeks.

Jim Britt was the son of Kinch Britt, an infamous spy in the employ of the Federal Government during the Civil War. Kinch Britt was rumored to be the cause of many atrocities committed here by the bushwhack-

son in the County Almshouse before hastily leaving town. Jim Britt was 6 years old at the time.

Jim Britt spent the next 66 years, with no friends or family, as a ward of the county and a resident of the poorhouse. It is believed that Madison County holds the record for maintaining a person in the poorhouse for the longest period.

From 1933 Huntsville Newspaper

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MEMORIES OF DALLAS MILL VILLAGE

MY MEMORIES OF RISON

by Ann Schrimsher Franklin

While working on the Rison-Dallas web site, I oftentimes looked at a picture of Rison School and remembered. In today's computer age technology, one can go to a web site, click on either a picture or a subject, and "enter" that site. I asked myself, "If I could enter the hallways of the old Rison School of my youth, what would I see?"

So, that's what I'll do - I'll mentally enter Rison School and tell you what I will see.

The first thing that I'll see is what seemed to be a long, long, sidewalk leading up to the front of the building. Somehow in my adult mind's eye the sidewalk doesn't seem quite as long as it once did. One thing that is perfectly clear is that I wouldn't be able to take those steps with the quick stride of my youth. But then neither would I be in such a hurry. I might even stop to look at the beautiful trees, the beautiful setting, the beautiful building, and I would most certainly stop and have a drink at one of the two water fountains. The water from the fountains was almost as good as the well water at my home on McKinley Avenue.

Since my last visit to the school was as a senior, I would take the sidewalk to the right and enter the high school side of the building. I'll go through the brick and stucco breezeway and up the steps to the wooden floors.

To the left was our Principal's office, Mr. Fain. I'd look inside and see familiar sights. I'd see the desk to the left at which I sat many times doing "volunteer" office work that consisted of updating the school record ledgers, answering the phone, and anything else that Mr. Fain called upon me to do. Those ledgers are in my keeping at the present time, waiting for some city or county office to agree to their safekeeping. (Editor's note: In August 2005, the Record Room of the Huntsville City School System agreed to accept and store these ledgers.)

To the right of the steps coming into the building is Miss Monroe's classroom. While I'm certain that Miss Monroe was a very learned teacher, some of us students had

a problem absorbing that which we should've learned. I still can't diagram a sentence and you probably could very well find some grammar mistakes in my writings. Miss Monroe was very dramatic and could recite poetry in a fashion that could both inspire and scare you.

Memorizing poetry was one of her main assignments, a talent that I just couldn't master. Several of us girls would study and practice



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"Have you ever seen a man in a beer commercial with a beer belly?"

Jason Johnson, Athens

at the breezeway between the building and the girl's rest room. My favorite poem was "The Village Blacksmith", by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. It went,

"Under a spreading chestnut-tree

*The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands."
And so forth.*

The most difficult poem for me to learn was The Raven, by Edgar Allen Poe. It was,

"Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered weak and weary, Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore, While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping, As of someone gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door. Tis some visitor, I muttered, tapping at my chamber door. Only this, and nothing more."

And so forth.

Can't you just see and hear Miss Monroe dramatizing this poem in a loud voice?

Miss Monroe could lose herself in these poems and seemed to transport herself to wherever the poetry would take her. While I thought that it was somewhat strange at the time, over the years I have learned to appreciate poetry even though I probably would be no better at memorization than I was then.

Moving on from Miss Monroe's classroom I'll veer slightly left, walk into the auditorium and reflect on the many hours that I spent there.

There was the first-thing-in-the-morning assembly time when Mr. Fain told us whatever it was that he needed to say that day. There was little noise in the auditorium; all Mr. Fain had to do was to walk into a room and there was an immediate hush. Was it respect or was it fear? Probably some of both.

I remember the many operettas that we had, many in which I participated - never the star!

There were the during-school-time shows by a magician or a yo-yo expert or some other talent. It cost us a small fee to see the show.

I remember winning a speaking contest about "Fighting Infantile Paralysis," and I remember the speech to this day. Don't remember the award, just that I won. Bud Adcock helped me write the speech.

I was a cheerleader during my sophomore and junior years, something that

I enjoyed very much. I didn't try out for cheerleader in my senior year because by that time I was "in love" and had better things to do. I married that love, William Edward Franklin, in February of my senior year. Ed

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had the privilege of signing my report card at least once! As a parent, I would have been upset had one of my children married at such a young age.

Outside the auditorium, turning left, to the right, was our senior class sponsor, Mrs. Velma Hanvey, a very expressive lady, very dramatic, with big eyes. She seemed to enjoy spending time with the senior girls in our class. At recess, lunchtime, or other down times, she would sit at her desk with some of us girls sitting around her listening to her "life stories." We hung onto her every word.

One story that she shared with us was that when her husband touched her on a certain place on her back she would just melt. As she told the story, she shuddered and rolled her eyes. Well, after I married, I told my husband about her story; we never did find that spot on my back! Years later when I saw Mrs. Hanvey, I recalled the story that she had told us and she said, "I have no idea what you're talking about!" Oh well.

Now for some random memories in elementary grades:

Going down to the SW part of the yard to hide behind a big tree near Oakwood Avenue, ashamed to let someone see me eat a sausage and biscuit for recess. Most of the other kids had snacks like cookies or peanut butter and crackers. How times change.

Volunteering to lead singing in my class and the first song that the teacher chose was the "National Anthem". I pitched it too high and the teacher said, "Sit down - you can't sing!"

Poor little girl.

Being selected to sing the song, "I'm a Little Teapot" with two other girls, Connie Fisher and June Fitch. When we came to the part, "though since then..." I could never get it right because I didn't know what a "thoughsensethen" was!

Taking notes to a male teacher from a teacher whom I adored, Helen Mathison, and feeling special for the privilege. Being asked to read aloud for a teacher who had laryngitis and pronounced the name of a type of road, "ma-cad-am" "MAC a dam," that made the teacher laugh in a squeaking sound.

Well, my visit to Rison School is over; I've enjoyed the visit. I didn't recall all of my memories but I think I'll save them for another time.

I'm just sorry that I can't

actually enter the halls of the school and take off my shoes and socks and walk those well-oiled wooden floors; I wouldn't even mind seeing the black on the bottoms of my feet.

I'm sorry that I can't hear the school bell ring and see if I could once again fit into one of the school desks.

I'm sorry that there are people whom I will never see again.

But.....

I'm glad that I have the memories of the school - even the smells from the oiled floors.

I'm glad that great lessons were learned from the experiences in Rison School.

I'm glad that I am who I am and that I've never been ashamed to say, "I grew up in Dallas Village!"



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Dallas Memories

by David Sims

My name is David Sims; I live with my wife in Mobile County.

I'm not sure of the year, but I lived with my Mom, Dad, and sister on the corner of Andrew Jackson Way and Halsey Avenue. The 2 years we lived there can be placed by the opening of Lee High School; I was in the seventh and eighth grades there; I want to say 1960, but not sure. My Dad, like most in Huntsville's boom era, worked at Redstone Arsenal.

I remember a Royal Crown Cola bottling facility across from us on Andrew Jackson Way and a huge Baptist church directly behind us. I remember that when the church had a funeral I would have to cease shooting hoops in my backyard (making noise).

There was a small store adjacent to the bottling company where a kid could buy comic books at reduced prices and something called a "pig in a poke" for a nickel, a small bag of candy and surprises. There was a family-owned cafe next to the store that sold good but greasy hamburgers.

The homes had an alley way behind them, a single lane for, I can only suppose, deliveries made in an earlier era. Even when I lived there many homes had privies (outhouses) still standing near that alley way. I think we had 3 fireplaces in our house, all connected to a single chimney.

Further toward the mill was an old church (may have been a school at one time, I don't know), frame constructed that had a football field where most of us went to play touch football. Inside that white clapboard abandoned church was a full size gym and a bowling alley of sorts, duck pin I think. It was a neat place to explore.

I played pee-wee

football for the Boy's Club at the Optimist field, and junior varsity at Lee until injured. I was one of the school patrol boys who greeted you each morning at the entrance of Lee.

As such we got to go to the Lyric Theatre for 25 cents on Fridays. There was a Krystal burger cafe somewhere close to the theater, where for a dime you could hop the bus to town, then get yourself 10 Krystals, go to the movie (sometimes a double feature), and get a soft drink all for less than a buck fifty.

By the way, I never could eat 10 Krystals, maybe 8 max. I also directed parking at a concert at Lee one night and got to meet a gal named Skeeter Davis, and I think Brenda Lee was there as well.

I did have to take a math class for 2 semesters at Rison to make up for failing at Lee. Lee would drop a grade each year until it became a full fledged

"I don't know why some people change churches. What difference does it make which one you stay home from?"

Eddie Fry, Decatur

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high school. So at lunch I would walk over to Rison for a class.

That year we had 2 tragic deaths at Lee. One was a boy named John Cris, who was run over by a hit and run driver; the other I can't remember his full name - Leland or Leeman - drove a Harley 165 motor bike - was hit at a train crossing, I think.

Does anyone know where I can get a bio on Miss Elizabeth Monroe? I think of her often all these years; she was an inspiration in a way. I don't say this out of disrespect, but Lord was she ever old and ancient. I remember her shooting a big chicken hawk out on her farm and bringing it to school for all of us to see.

She told me personally once that I would get by in this world if I just read a good newspaper every day; I think she had her doubts about me back then and could foresee things! She did "pass the torch" though, through her many years of teaching of us kids.

Also, just for the record, every morning without fail we had either a devotional or prayer; sometimes over the loud speaker during morning announcements, always Christian-Judea based.

I have lived to 58 years young now, been all over America and some foreign places. I want to state that I don't think it hurt me a single iota.

In fact, in my own way, I want to say to the staff/teachers, Mr. Fain, Mr. Jones - thanks!



These stories are from the Dallas/Rison website at www.rison-dallas.com/history to preserve the history of Rison School and Dallas Mill Village

What's NOT Good for your Body



- Alcohol - deadens the nerves and the brain, weakens the will, blunts the conscience, and arouses the animal instincts. It is habit-forming.

- Tobacco - is a narcotic to nerves and brain, weakens the will, and blunts the conscience. It is habit forming.

- Tea, coffee and cola drinks - injures the nerves, interferes with the function of the brain, weakens the will, and are habit-forming.

- Cocoa - is the same as coffee but not as strong in habit-forming.

- Spices - irritate the nerves.

- Pain-killing remedies deaden the nerves and the brain to some extent.

- Dope - the derivatives of opium, and similar preparations, injure the nerves and the brain cells.

- Sour stomach - makes clear thinking very difficult and the best thinking impossible.

- Constipation - by causing toxins to be absorbed into the blood, contributes to a dull mind.

- Worry - has a disastrous effect on both nerves and mind.

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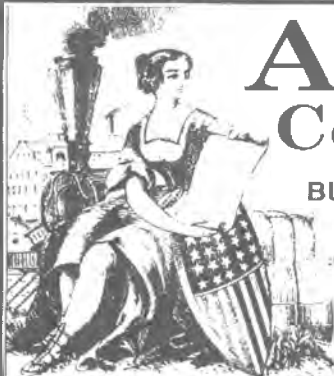
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- Give a dog a piece of meat that you have had in your shoe for 4 days and the dog will follow you.
- If anyone steps over a dog, he will not grow any more.
- If you are in your teenage years and put cream on your face and let a cat lick it off, you will have a heavy beard. (We hope you are a man) .
- If a rabbit crosses your path from right to left, be very careful not to walk alone in the dark for three days.
- If a bride and groom see a gray horse on the way to the wedding, they will have good luck.
- You will have bad luck if you kill a toad.
- If you see a white dog you should be silent until you see a white horse.
- If you do not spit when you see a toad you will be sure to grow a wart on your hand.
- It is said that horses can see ghosts, and if you place your head between his ears you will see them also.
- Your dog will not stray from home if you pull three hairs from his tail and put them under the doorstep.
- It is said that if you wish to see stars, place your head close to the hind feet of a kicking horse.
- When your dog lies down with his tail toward the house, a man is coming.
- It causes bad luck to move a cat. A cat draws lightning.
- A horseshoe hung in the bedroom will keep away nightmares.
- If you see a dog chase a cat up a weeping willow, your sorrows will go up in the tree, that is, they are gone.
- Good luck will come to your house the next time a white cat comes to stay.
- A bird that flies into a house, foretells an important message.
- A white bird foretells death.
- Bird droppings landing on your head are a sign of good luck.
- A bird call from the north means tragedy; from the south is good for crops; from the west is good luck; from the east, good love.
- If the first calf born during the winter is white, the winter will be a bad one.
- If an offer was made to buy cattle which was not for sale, this would lead to the cattle's illness or death.

- If you kill a daddy long leg spider, there will be rain soon.
- If you throw back the first fish you catch you'll be lucky the whole day fishing.
- Some fisherman believe that it's bad luck to get married when the fish aren't biting.
- If you dream of fish, someone you know is pregnant.
- You can get rid of warts by rubbing a peeled apple and giving it to a pig.
- A rabbit's foot is a symbol of fertility.

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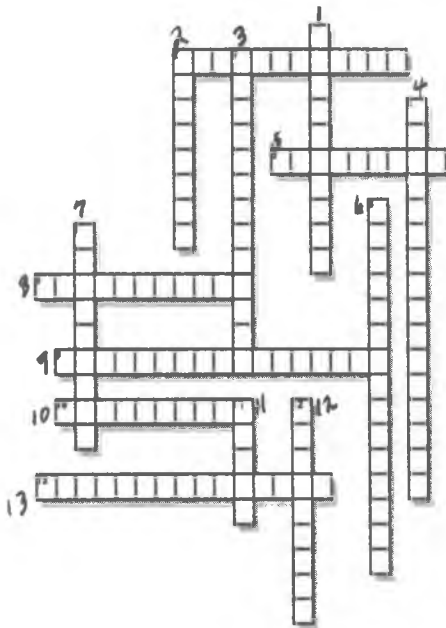
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Across

- 2 He built the Times Building.
- 5 If you did this, Grandmother would wash the sheets.
- 8 Folks made sweet music there.
- 9 Do this to complete the puzzle.
- 10 Wilson and Nolan drank this heavily.
- 13 Cures the 7-year itch.

Down

- 1 She inspired and scared her students with poetry.
- 2 Spent most of his life in the poor house.
- 3 Makes a perfect composer.
- 4 Happy 42nd anniversary!
- 6 He worked for Janet's Daddy.
- 7 Stephanie's spicy secret.
- 11 They wet their plants!
- 12 Why take a chance on it?

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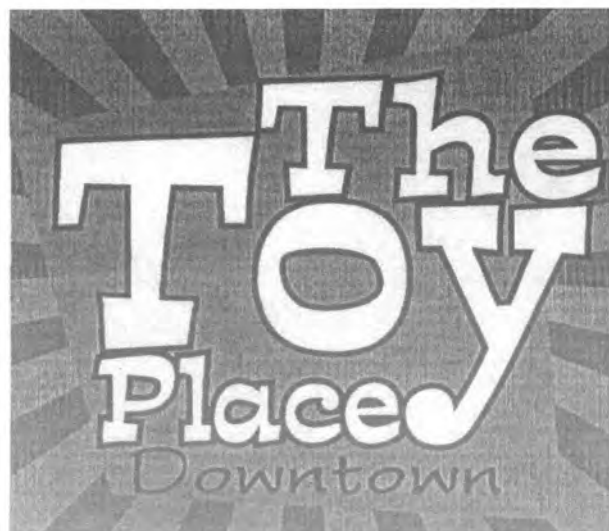
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TROUP 69

by Don Broome

My scout troop was Troop 69. We had a rocky start in the late 1950s because we were 26 strong and very loud. After Mr. DeShere became our Scout Master, and that was about the time I joined, we went through 4 places to meet before we found our home at the Church of the Nativity downtown. Originally, we met on Wednesday nights but it only took one night. Instead of the sorry "NO!" they said "Not on Wednesday. How about Thursday?" We had found a home, big open area plus meeting rooms and even had a storage room that we could use.

Mr. DeShere was an avid camper and we were welcome to come anytime. I remember camping at the ruins in Monte Sano State Park one September night and as we set up our tents that afternoon, it was 76 degrees. That night it sleeted 2 inches. The next morning, the sun came out and the sleet melted. All our wood and kindling was wet and no one could get a fire started. Mr. DeShere set up his fire pit and while he tried to hide it, squeezed his can of lighter fluid onto the fire and pulled out his Zippo and in 5 minutes we were all surrounding the fire in a great mood. By that afternoon it was 75 degrees.

Mr. DeShere had been paying for a lot of our expenses himself and as you can imagine it was costly over time. He came to us and said he had talked to the manager of the Walgreens Store in Parkway City and that he could order Johnson and Johnson First Aid Kits that we could sell and keep one third. We had incentives; leading sales got a tent or other prize choices. Twenty-six boys all sold over or near \$2000 worth of kits. We had money to burn. My brother Joe and I each had a rubberized pup tent and we camped all the time. If you joined our troop, you were issued a tent, a mess kit and anything else you needed to fit in. Compared to other troops, no matter how well off, we were rich.

Once, we camped for a week in the Little River Canyon. About the 4th day, we were all pretty ripe and Mr. DeShere declared we were all to take a bath. If you've never taken a bath in a mountain stream, you have no idea how cold they can be. The plan was for us to strip down, get in, soap up,

rinse and get out. RIGHT! We got in, we soaped up, we rinsed and that's when the Girl Scout troop showed up. Maybe, over the years, in my memory the time in that water gets longer but we were all turning blue. The scout mistress was trying halfheartedly to rally her girls on their way but Mr. DeShere in a very loud voice told her "We are coming out" and they ran off laughing like crazy.

Sadly, Mr. DeShere's company transferred him and we all lost a great friend. The noise and ruckus

didn't bother him at all and he did teach us so much. We had 5 scout masters in 3 weeks and the council dissolved our troop and took our treasury.



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MILL VILLAGE MUSIC

by Jim McBride

"I was raised in the shadow of an old cotton mill

Back when believin' was the style

Small town heaven and a big eyed boy

Made sweet music for awhile."

From "Dixie Boy", written by Jim McBride and recorded by the group Alabama

Forgive me for quoting myself but no one knows how wonderful my childhood was better than me. Huntsville was indeed a small town when I was born there in 1947. It was idyllic to me, especially Dallas Mill Village. Looking back I wouldn't change a thing. We lived with other people in their houses the first 5 years of my life. My parents were living with the McNeal family on O'Shaughnessy Avenue when I was born.

Later we lived with Mrs. Reed at the corner of O'Shaughnessy and Dement Street. "Blab" Little owned a grocery store across the back alley from us and the Campbell family owned a much larger store directly across Dement from our back yard. Anytime I had a penny I was off to one of the stores to buy a pack of Kits, four in a pack in chocolate, vanilla or strawberry flavors. Life in the village was sweet in every way.

"My Daddy worked hard down at the factory

Nights he went to G.I. School Didn't know nothin' 'bout a silver spoon

But he lived by the Golden Rule"

James Alvin McBride came home from the Navy after the war and married Helen Lucille Hillis. He was a country boy from Meridianville and she was

third youngest of the twelve children born to Virgil and Mary Lou Hillis. Papa Hillis ran a wood yard on lower Stevens Avenue across from The Big Field which was bordered on the north side by The Big Ditch. My Dad got a job as a spot welder at Martin Stamping and Stove Company and went to night school on the G.I. Bill. The classes were held at Huntsville High School on Eustis Avenue which later became Huntsville Middle School. I remember Barney Pearsall was one of his teachers.

*"Summer nights he was gone
Me and Momma stayed home
Out on the front porch swing
Wishin' on the stars in the
Southern sky
And sometimes we used to
sing"*

My Mother was always singing and my Dad whistled and hummed a lot. I guess that was the start of my love of music. We went to Plainview Church of Christ in Hazel Green three times a week all my early years. My Grandfather McBride had helped build the building. Many of the founder's children had later moved to town but felt they needed to support the congregation they grew up in. I went to Lincoln and East Huntsville Vacation Bible School every summer. I remember the snacks were always good. My sister Teresa was born while we lived on O'Shaughnessy the second time. I love and appreciate her a lot more now than I did in childhood. She is grateful I did not maim her permanently during those years.

It seems everyone knew everyone in those days. Folks sat on their front porches before bedtime on warm summer nights. I think television and air

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conditioning did their part to bring an end to the days when people actually conversed with one another. I could point to almost every house in the Village from Oakwood Avenue to Beirne Avenue and tell you the name of the family living there. I could do that on both sides of Fifth Street. (Andrew Jackson Way, to you late comers.)

"Got my real education from the TV station

And good ole boys down at the park.

Then 'Say Hey' Willie and those rockabillies

Played their way into my heart"

Our closest neighbors, while living on O'Shaughnessy for the third time, were the Lamberts. Joe "Gobby" Lambert was a few years older than me and loved baseball. He decided I loved baseball too. I took to it immediately and he taught me a lot about the game. He could have been a pro prospect but had a bit of a problem with authority figures like teachers and coaches. We would gather at his house with his two sisters and listen to a radio show called "Tops in Pops." That's where I first heard Elvis Presley and a lot of the other early rock and roll singers.

The Walker, Benson, Pickett, Cagle and Golden families lived right around us in the 500 block of O'Shaughnessy. Massey Tolten, the Huntsville Fire Chief, lived three doors away. Mrs. Renagar lived across the street and she had a daughter who attended Butler High School. Her name was Wanda and she married Reek Wilson. She was also my eighth grade science teacher

years later.

The Beirne Avenue playground was my second home during the summer months. There were days when we played three nine-inning baseball games with full nine-man rosters. We started as soon as the dew burned off and took a short break for lunch. We parked our bicycles along either base line and it was a dangerous thing to

go after a pop foul.

Many times the fielder would become entangled with a bike which could cause all manner of harm. To avoid this situation we would yell "bicycle, bicycle" to remind the fielder of the danger. We were especially vocal if it was the opposing team's guy you were trying to make give up on the play. To this day, I will sometimes still yell "bicycle,

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Still think dogs are smarter than cats? How many cats have you ever seen pulling a sled through the snow?

bicycle" when a player is chasing a pop foul. People just look at me like I'm crazy.

Other than lunch we only stopped to climb the stone fence at Goldsmith-Schiffman Field to retrieve a rare over-the-wall home run ball or to gather our coins to buy a new baseball at Houston Goodson's Five and Dime when the cover came off the old one. Any bat we had was already broken at least once. Usually some of Dad's tacks or small nails and some black electrical tape would put the bat back in play. That tape sure got sticky on a hot summer day. There were always a lot of kids at the playground.

We usually had a cute female college student who was in charge of the playground. That made the older boys hang around even after they had pretty much outgrown the monkey bars, the swing and the slide. Huntsville Parks and Playgrounds would show a movie once or twice every summer at the playground and that was kinda cool. I drive by that playground sometimes when I'm back home and there's never a kid in sight there. Sad.

My third home was Optimist Park. What great memories I have of that place. My Dad and I watched the major league teams that would stop some years for one game on their way north to start the season after breaking spring training in Florida. The Birmingham Black Barons, the Indianapolis Clowns and fast pitch softball are among other games I saw there. I played my first year of Little League there.

Later I played Babe Ruth and Lee Jr. High and Lee High School baseball there. I met some guys there who would become great friends and I played for coaches like Kennybrew Daniels and Coach Hubert Myhand. I took my cousin Eddie Echols to his first Little League practice there. Eddie starred at Lee and later was a first round draft choice of the Boston Red Sox. His brother

Ricky also played for Lee as did both my nephews Daniel and Joseph Prince. Eddie's grandson Tyler is on the current Lee roster. Our family loves baseball.

Several of my friends got Huntsville Times paper routes and so did I. We were twelve years old with money in our pockets. What a deal. We spent a great part of our money at Mullin's Drive-In and I don't regret a penny of it.

The paper shack was beside Fifth Street Barber Shop and across the street from Mullin's. If the papers were running late we would often borrow Kevin Rice's football and play a game of touch in the vacant lot behind the paper shack and beside Kevin's house. He was smaller then and we would never let him play even though it was his football. Turns out maybe we should have. He was a great player at Lee later on.

As I write this, family after family name comes to mind. Clarence Carroll was a wonder-

ful barber and an even better man. He brought us Floyd Hardin and provided a place where menfolk could gather and tell tall tales and talk about things important to village folks.

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The years on Rison Avenue were good ones too. We lived on the banks of The Big Ditch and I can't believe I didn't catch some horrible disease from playing in it so much. Yes, the Rison boys and the Lincoln boys were still "rocking" each other during that time and I once had to wade the ditch to get away from three Lincoln boys who came across the track after me. Whoever heard of that? That wasn't supposed to happen.

A year later they built the Dement Street bridge across the Ditch. I sure could have used it that day. I graduated from Rison while living there. Some of my teachers were Ms. Womack and John Moon. I remember Mrs. Hucks also. The principals were Mr. Fain and Mr. Simms. Best school years I ever had were at Rison. Shooting marbles out under the huge oak trees, eating lunch in the auditorium before we got a cafeteria and just generally being a carefree kid. I was on the safety patrol with Tommy Fisk, Jed Stephens, Bobby Alverson and others. We got Best Patrol in the city when we were in sixth grade. The music was good, life was good and the memories of those days turned out to be solid gold.

We were like a lot of people in the Village in that we never talked about vacations because we couldn't afford to take one. I didn't really miss that because I didn't know what it was like. I had the best parents ever, a loving extended family, and all of life's necessities. Dallas Village will be a part of me till the day I leave this earth. How fortunate I was to grow up there. I was and continue to be blessed.

*"We were leaning, leaning on
The everlasting arms of love
Livin' all the simple joys
This Dixie Boy is made of."*



Jim McBride



Don't let your Dog Bite the Hand that Serves You!

More than 2 million dog bites are reported each year in the U.S. It is a very serious problem for everyone - not just the 2,700 letter carriers who were bitten last year. It's a problem we all can help solve. Here are some safety tips for you and your family:

How to Avoid Being Bitten

Don't run past a dog. The dog's natural instinct is to chase and catch prey, especially if it's on the run!

If a dog threatens you, don't scream. Avoid eye contact and try to remain as motionless as possible until the dog leaves. Then back away slowly until the dog is out of sight.

Don't approach a strange dog, especially one that's tied or confined, or one that is in the back of a pickup truck.

Always let a dog see and sniff you before you pet it.

How to Be a Responsible Dog owner:

*Spay or neuter your dog - unneutered dogs are more likely to bite.

*When your

letter carrier comes to your home, keep your dog inside, away from the door in another room or on a leash.

*Don't let your child take mail from the letter carrier in the presence of your dog. Your dog's instinct is to protect the family.

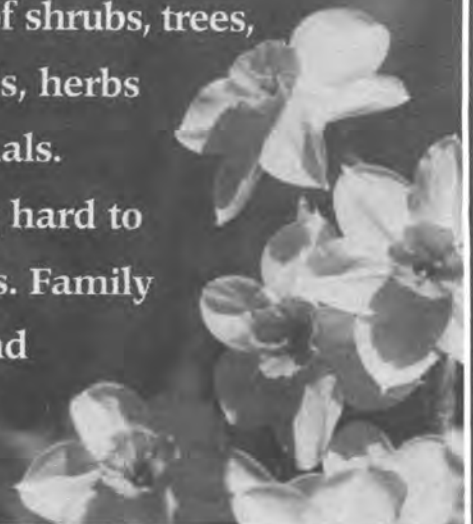
*Obedience training can teach your dog proper behavior and help you control your dog in any situation.

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INTERESTING CITY NEWS - 1924

Captured Man Escapes

A man who gives his name only as "Branch" and who had been sent to the street gang 3 months ago and escaped shortly thereafter was re-captured yesterday at his home about 4 miles from Huntsville. The officers, who had long suspected his whereabouts but until yesterday had been unable to get their eyes on him, finally managed to finish the job. Several of the officers yesterday went out to the man's home and, learning that he was on the premises, surrounded the place and finally effected a capture. He was brought to the city and locked up, to be again returned to the street gang. Branch lived alone, and seemed to have no friends to speak of.

Muzzle your Dogs

Owners of dogs must not permit them to roam the streets without muzzles. If they do they may be brought up before the Mayor and fined for their neglect.

Bound to Bed in his Cell

Theopias Brown, also known by the name of Scruggs, and who was arrested on a charge of drunkenness, yesterday was placed in a cell in the city jail. He became so violent shortly after being locked up that he had to be bound to his bed. Before this, however, he had broken up considerable of the meager furniture in his cell. It is supposed the stuff he drank was of the "mean" variety and made him temporarily crazy.

Injured when Car Turns Over

When the car in which Jim Nash and his daughter Stella

were driving Sunday afternoon turned over on the Whitesburg Pike, near Lily Flagg, the young lady suffered a broken arm and the father sustained severe body bruises. The accident occurred when Mr. Nash turned to the side of the road to permit the passage of another car and went too near the edge.

1924 Buick is on Display

The new 1924 Buicks are here in Huntsville. Announcement was made late yesterday by Mr. Edwards, of the Edwards Buick Company, that the new models

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have arrived and were on display at the showroom. The new series of Buicks have many changes and improvements, the most striking being the four wheel brakes. Every wheel on the car has brakes. The front wheels have a brake drum and when turning a curve, the outside front wheel brake automatically releases, while the mechanism of this improvement is striking in the extreme. The hood of the new car is also changed. The surface is more of the square type with square corners and is very beautiful. Much interest has been aroused in this new series and the car is attracting much attention in this city.

Hit by Car

While attempting to cross Washington Street near the Yarbrough Hotel corner Sunday afternoon, during a congestion of traffic at the point, Ed Frame, fearing the he was about to be hit by a car driven by Mrs. John Bullard, grasped the auto and was thrown several feet against the curbing. He was somewhat stunned but not seriously hurt.

Broke up Two Stills

Federal dry agents report breaking up two stills in Limestone County on Saturday. Berry Horton and Willis Stanley, both Negroes, were placed under arrest.

Crowd sees Big Still Destroyed

Quite a crowd gathered on the Green Street side of the county jail yesterday afternoon to witness the destruction of the big still captured Tuesday. This resulted in three arrests, as related in the News yesterday morning. The still was of 150 gallon capacity and appeared to be of modern construction.

It took hard blows to break it up, the job being accomplished only after half an hour or more of work with a sledge hammer.

Must be Sixteen to Drive

Mayor Adams desires it to be known that hereafter children under the age of 16 will not be permitted to drive automobiles on Huntsville streets unless ac-

companied by a parent and are clearly capable of handling a car themselves.

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A LOUSY STORY

by Leo Larkin

When I was just a child, over 60 years ago, my maternal grandmother (Mama Thomas) and I made a bus trip from Muhlenberg County, KY to my parent's in southern Indiana. Mama Thomas and I slept together and, in a day or two, we started scratching our heads incessantly. Upon examination, Daddy found (to our horror) we had lice. Not just any lice, mind you, but the worst kind: the ones that start with a "C." Now, I was too little for that to be explained to me, but I can remember Daddy laughing as he scrubbed the heads of "Miss Vannie" and me with kerosene. They speculated that maybe we had gotten those bugs on the bus trip.

Many years went by, and I visited my folks in Kentucky with

my small boys. We went to see Uncle Howard and his family. His brother-in-law, Punk, came in and I've never seen the like of such an arrogant, pompous you-know-what. He strutted around in his suit and treated me as if I was dirt. That night, at the supper table, I told my grandparents Daddy and Uncle Bill about it. Grandmother Wilcutt let out a "Hrumph!" and made a disparaging remark about the offending party. Uncle Bill began to shed light on the mystery of the lice.

It seems that he and Punk were both students at the University of Kentucky. They were staying in a boarding house which was full of the said lice. He always disinfected before coming home to Grandmother Wilcutt's. However, Punk, who came with him to spend the night, did not go through the procedure of getting rid of the pests. They went back to school and I showed up to

spend the next night. I went from there to Mama Thomas'. In the meantime, Grandmother Wilcutt found one of these critters. She called a friend of my Uncle Bill's and told him what she wanted. Bring her something to kill the bugs and if he told anyone, she'd kill him. When he got there, she was wrapped in a quilt. Now, there never was a more fastidious housekeeper than Grandmother Wilcutt. Matter of fact, I recall my grandfather saying that, if you lay on a bed and "broke wind," Grandmother would wash the sheets.

So, the mystery of the lice was solved. As with many mysteries, the unraveling came many years later.

Things happen to the best of us; illnesses, divorce, wayward children and, of course, LICE! I've always wondered if the head-washing with kerosene caused my deficiency in math!



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Tweetie's Pet Tips

Cat Body Language

Birds have much more interesting body language than cats, but that's for another issue!

Here are some indications of how your kitty is feeling. She will give you clues from her ears, tail and eyes.

* When a cat's ears are pricked up, forward and slightly outward, she is relaxed and listening to what is going on around her. She'll also have slanted eyes and regular sized pupils.

* When something catches her attention the ears become more erect and the eyes become wider.

* If your cat is fearful or anxious, the ears go to the side and flatten. The pupils are dilated, indicating fear.

* When she is annoyed and feels defensive, the ears are turned and go back. This is a warning for you to back off. The eyes are dilated.

* When a cat becomes both fearful and aggressive and ready to fight, she will flatten her ears straight back. It is believed this is to protect the ears during an actual fight. The eyes



are greatly dilated since the more fearful the cat is, the more the eyes dilate.

* When the cat's tail is straight up she is proud and content. A mother's upright tail is a signal for the babies to follow her.

* When your kitty is relaxed, alert and confident she will walk with her tail horizontally behind her or even slightly drooping.

* If you notice a hook at the end of your cat's tail, she is being cautious and shows a degree of uncertainty.

* When your cat feels positively threatened, the tail will become bushy. When she begins to swish her tail from side to side, that indicates serious annoyance with you or something else. Watch OUT!




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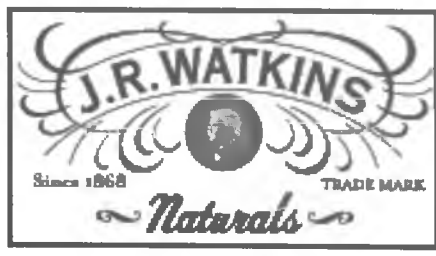
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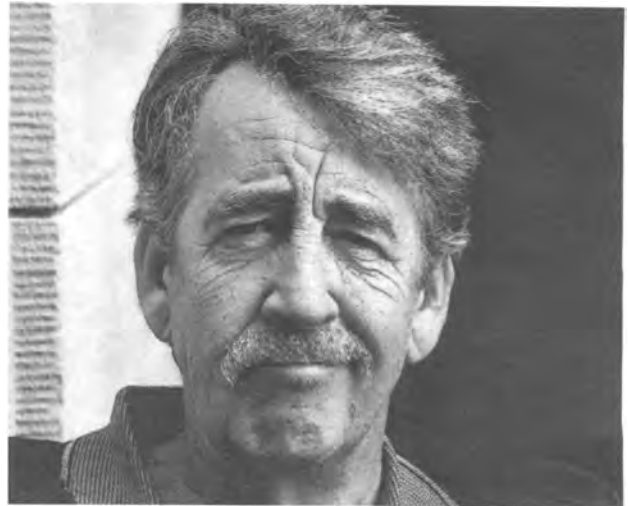
by Tom Carney

As Anna waited for the waitress to bring her a glass of wine she casually glanced around the restaurant lounge. The Fogcutter was a popular place in town and already it was starting to fill up with the after-work crowd. Anna knew she was early but didn't really care, this was her 42nd wedding anniversary and she wanted to spend it dancing with her husband.

The couple were popular at the restaurant. The waitresses called them "Mrs. Anna" and "Mr. Bill" and would often stop to watch as they danced to the music of Roberta and her band. Anna smiled as she thought of her husband Bill. He was tied up with a late appointment at the office but promised he would be there as soon as he could get away.

Anna had often tried to imagine what her life would have been if she had not met Bill. In 1945 she was a displaced person, living in a camp near Salzburg, Austria and he was an American soldier. She had no family or friends. Her only possessions were a pair of Luftwaffe overalls she had salvaged from an abandoned German Army truck.

Anna Kempka was born in 1923 near a small village in southwest Poland. Her family were ethnic Germans who, although they had lived in Poland for over two hundred years, still considered themselves to be Germans. In 1939 the Nazis invaded Poland and the farm they lived on was



confiscated. It became part of an artillery range and the family was forced to move.

Everyone was required to work for the "war effort." Anna was assigned to a factory that made shoes for the German Army where she labored ten hours a day, six days a week. Her job was sewing the soles on the boots, but the machines were so old and worn out that often they would break down for days at a time.

The machinist assigned to repair her machine was Hans, a young man only a year older than her, with bright blue eyes and a shaggy mane of blond hair. The couple began seeing one another after work and within a short time had fallen in love.

In 1944 the couple was married and life would have been perfect except for the war. They still considered themselves lucky though as Hans' job was considered vital to the war effort and there was little chance he would be called up.

Germany was losing the war and basic necessities were almost impossible to obtain. Air raids had halted the transportation of food and many people were starving. Hans began stealing leather from the

factory to trade on the black market for food. It was small amounts, just enough to trade for a few potatoes or a piece of fish.

Exactly six months from the day they got married, Hans was arrested as he attempted to sneak some leather out of the factory. Germany was experiencing a severe manpower shortage, so rather than being sentenced to jail, he was assigned to a penal battalion. These units were often assigned to the German Army as ammo carriers, freight handlers or ditch diggers, thereby freeing more German soldiers for combat.

Anna never saw Hans again. Although she spent days walking from one office to another, no one had any information of his whereabouts. He was just another name, among millions of others, who had been swallowed up in a horrible world war.

In the final days of the war the Russians began entering the city. There were still some die-hard German units who refused to give up and the Russians began obliterating large parts of the city with bombs and artillery. Anna's apartment was destroyed and both

parents killed. With nothing but the dress on her back she fled to the safety of a nearby train station that had been turned into a refugee center. Anxiously she searched the crowds trying to find someone she knew, but there was no one. She was alone with no friends and nowhere to go.

Her home had become about twenty square feet of a bombed out railway station.

At that time, in the closing days of the war, it had become a custom to place small notices on the walls of the train station inquiring as to information on missing loved ones. People who had been bombed out would post a notice to let their family know where they were. Soldiers returning from the front, if they had a comrade from that city, would tape up notices letting families know what had happened to their sons or husbands.

As Anna searched the walls for the notice she had placed for Hans weeks earlier, her worst fears were confirmed. Someone had written on the bottom of it: "Killed in Cracow."

The following months were an unending, horrifying nightmare - searching garbage cans for a scrap of food, drunken Russian soldiers dragging screaming women off into the darkness, stepping over dead bodies to get a drink of water.

Every morning she would join long lines of people hoping to be selected for work in clearing the war damage. The only reward was a bowl of thin porridge, but it was enough to keep thousands of starving people coming back every day.

Anna met a truck driver who made trips back and forth to the American lines. After much pleading and begging he agreed to smuggle her across the border in ex-

change for her wedding ring and a few other pieces of jewelry she had managed to hold onto.

Several miles from the border the truck stopped on a dark side road. After opening the rear door the driver motioned for her to get out, telling her in no uncertain terms that he expected her to be nice to him before they went any further.

Screaming and fighting, Anna struggled to escape and began running into the darkness. Daylight found her at the edge of a large forest where several German Army trucks had been abandoned. There was no food but she salvaged a pair of Luftwaffe overalls which she put on in place of her ripped and tattered dress.

That afternoon while walking across a field she was picked up by American troops and sent to Salzburg, Austria where a huge camp for displaced persons had been set up. Going from the Russians to the Americans was like leaving Hell and going to Heaven. Things were still bad but there was now hope for a future.

That night as she lay on an army cot she began to listen to the conversations around her. Everyone was talking about where they were from, what

they had lost and the horrors of the war.


Anna made a silent vow to herself that night. She would forget the past, erase it like it never happened, and live in the future.

After weeks of searching, Anna got a job as a cleaning woman for the American Army. The pay was almost nothing but occasionally some G.I. would give her a pack of cigarettes or a piece of worn out clothing which she could trade. Her boss was a young red-headed soldier named Bill, who was always playing practical jokes on everyone. Despite her misgivings Anna found herself attracted to him and when he finally asked her out, she readily agreed. On their first date Bill gave her a dress, "So he would not be seen with the enemy."

The overalls quickly disappeared and Anna and Bill began seeing one another regularly. When he proposed getting a room in town and living together she did not hesitate. Being a soldier's mistress was better than starving to death.

Bill never asked questions about her past. Several times Anna tried to talk to him about her experiences but it was too painful. She was afraid to tell him about having been married before for fear he would

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ask if she still loved Hans.

Almost from the beginning Bill had talked about getting married but Anna never took it seriously. Every soldier told every girlfriend the same story. Much to her surprise, right before Bill's enlistment was up, he announced that he had started making arrangements for her to go to the United States.

In 1947 Bill was discharged. Eight months later, after countless interviews and stacks of paperwork, Anna joined him in Chicago where they were married. She still was not sure if she really loved him but was determined to live in the future and make the best of it.

Years passed. Bill became an engineer and they had two children. In 1966 he was transferred to Huntsville where he worked on missile development. They made friends and became active in the community.

From all appearances they were a happy couple, but there was a dark secret constantly in the back of Anna's mind. Regardless of how long she was married to Bill, Hans would always be her husband.

Anna and Bill had always enjoyed going out for dinner and dancing and when the Fogcutter opened it became a favorite of theirs. Oftentimes if he worked late, she would go on ahead so they could get their regular table.

As Anna waited for Bill she glanced casually around the dimly-lit lounge. It was still too early for most of the regulars. Most of the people there were business people from out of town, having a quick dinner before going back to their hotel rooms.

She didn't notice him at first - it was more like she felt him staring at her. Curious,

she shifted her chair to get a better look at him.

He was a handsome elderly man, tall, well dressed and sitting by himself. She would have turned away had it not been for his bright blue eyes - they reminded her of someone whom she had known a half century earlier.

Suddenly she felt as if she was about to pass out.

The man got up and walked over to where she was sitting.

"Anna....." he said. It was half question and half statement. "I knew it was you as soon as you walked in."

Anna was stunned but finally managed to say the name, with tears in her eyes.

"Hans.....is that you? I thought you were dead!"

The words came pouring out. Hans told of being arrested, being sent to the front lines where he worked unloading trucks. When the Russians swept through he was captured, given a Russian uniform and a rifle, and sent back to the lines. The war ended but instead of being released he was sent to Russia where he was tried and convicted for allegedly helping the German war effort.

The next eight years were spent in a prison camp where he worked in a lumber mill. When he was finally released he went home but no one was there. Neighbors told him that everyone in the apartment had been killed during

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the war.

He told of emigrating to the United States and living in Chicago, ironically only a few blocks from where Anna and Bill had lived.

Anna finally managed to explain how she had found a notice at the railway station saying he had been killed.

Almost as suddenly as they had began, the words quickly died out with neither knowing what to say.

After what seemed like minutes of silence, Hans asked her, "Are you married?"

"Yes," replied Anna. "Two children." Noticing the ring on Hans' finger she asked, "You too?"

"Yes. Two boys and a girl." Hans instinctively reached for his wallet as if to show their pictures, then decided against it.

More silence passed as Anna stared into his eyes as if trying to remember someone from long ago. There was nothing else left to say. They sat there silently for the next few minutes just watching each other, both thinking of questions they knew they would never ask.

Suddenly she saw Bill walking into the lounge.

"Is that your husband?" asked Hans.

"Yes."

"Do you love him?"

In an instant, Anna thought back about all the years she had known Bill. She thought about the hours he had spent patiently helping her learn English and about all the times he had been there to comfort her when she felt so sad. She remembered how proud he was when their children were born and how he never let a day go by without saying he loved her.

Finally Anna replied, smiling for the first time. "Yes,"

she said in a soft voice, "I love my husband very much."

The look on Anna's face answered all of Hans' questions.

"It is best I go." Hans said, as Bill approached the table. There was a trace of tears in his eyes. Taking a napkin from the table he wrote something on it before placing it gently in her hand and walking away.

When Bill sat down he immediately sensed something was wrong. "Are you all right?" he asked.

"I'm fine," Anna replied. "I want to dance. I just want you to hold me."

As Anna and her husband danced to the slow tunes of the music she watched over his shoulder as Hans paid his check and walked out.

Late that night, hours after her husband had fallen asleep, she got up and went into the den. After turning a lamp on she retrieved the napkin from her purse. The words were simple but beautiful; a poignant reminder of what might have been.

"I will love you forever."

Just one of millions of sto-

ries from World II. One that would have been lost forever if she had not told her daughter.



On June 16, 2011 my husband Tom passed away of lung cancer. A day hasn't gone by when I haven't grieved for him and I miss him so badly. I feel so fortunate that I was in his life for 24 years, and for the happiness we had with each other.

We all have to die, but it's so hard when it happens to someone who is so dear to us and has made such an impact on our lives.

Over the past year I've written about many in our community who have died, and I just wanted to say that I'm thinking of you, the families that are still here. I know that we will see our loved ones again one day.

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A STORY ABOUT A BIRD

A young bird sat on the bough of a tree, and from pure gladness of heart he thought he would sing. His father was quite a beautiful singer, and his mother quite a tolerable chatterer, so he inherited a fine voice and all he needed to do was to give it proper cultivation.

He had begun to strike a few notes when the "bow wow" of a small dog frightened him, and away flew the bird in great chagrin, without waiting to see if the dog was barking at him or at his own tail.

For some time he would not try to sing again. He

"Men are brave enough to go to war, but not brave enough to get a bikini wax."

Sharon Neils, Arab

had noticed that the grove around him was full of birds. But as he gargled out a few notes, he noticed at a little distance a fine concert in progress.

"Oh," said he, "I'm not going to practice among all these old singers. How they would laugh at me! No, indeed, I'm not going to give them a chance to laugh at my blunders."

So he became silent while the charming concert went on the whole season through.

The other young birds warbled, and chirped, and tweeted, trilling the notes as they could, gaining a little every day, without at all thinking of who heard

them and so, in time, became truly accomplished singers.

Our poor little bird, who was so foolish to be afraid to try before folks, because he was not already perfect, never found the time to practice much alone, and when he did, it did not seem to amount to much.

So with fine, natural powers, he grew up to be a very dull and dissatisfied bird, for want of true courage and independent character.

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Jeff Walker, Proprietor

Sounds of Sunday

by Billy Stone

As we get older, the memories of special events of yesteryear that we had forgotten seems to come back to us in living color. However, there are memories of special feelings or events that stay with us everyday.

To me, that special memory was the "Sounds of Sunday" in Big Cove. I have always known that Sunday had a special feel about it. Maybe it was just me, or maybe it was because my father was a preacher and Sunday was a special day for the family. On the other hand, was it because I was raised in the country where everything slowed to a snail's pace on Sunday, and I could feel the change? Maybe it is something that some people feel instinctively. Maybe the cave dwellers woke up on Sunday morning and said with a yawn, "It must be Sunday, I can feel and hear it, maybe one day somebody will name one of the days Sunday". Do city people have those memories of Sunday when they were young? Well, I live in the city now, I am much older than a kid is, and I still have that "it is a Sunday feeling."

Sunday in the country has a special sound. When I was a kid, it was the sound of Sunday morning radio playing everyone's favorite gospel music. Gospel quartets of yesteryear, The Chuck Wagon Gang, Statesmen Quartet, Blackwood Brothers and the John Daniel Quartet would be singing the old Southern gospel standards. Then, there were the Sunday morning radio preachers preaching the old time religion and a local quartet singing three or four songs to give them Amen support.

Sunday in the country also had a quiet sound that was peaceful and spiritual. Sometimes it had a feel about it that was not seen or heard. I would just wake

up knowing it was Sunday.

Sunday in the country had a smell about it like no other day of the week. It was the smell of bacon, ham, sausage, biscuits, eggs, and fried chicken, drifting across the valley.

It had the sounds of everybody in the family waiting their turn to get a bath for Sunday church services. Sunday had a special sound coming from the old country church worship services with good singing and preaching drifting out across the countryside.

After church, there were the sounds of children playing, adults fixing lunch for their visitors, and talking about the good worship services they had. It had the sounds of some of the young adults getting together at some neighbor's house and singing their favorite songs.

In addition, it had the sounds and the feel of love. That is, boy meets girl and girl meets boy and the sparks fly as they walk down the country road on a Sun-

day afternoon pushing, shoving, talking loud, and picking at each other in an "I love you" manner. Sunday just seemed to bring boys and girls together and that is when romance would bloom.

The animals and birds also seemed to know it was Sunday. They sounded different and had a peaceful look about them. The Sunday morning wake-up calls from the roosters were different and the barking of the dogs was friendlier. Every home and farm had its unique sound and when it all came together in the early morning and late afternoon, it harmonized beautifully.

Sounds of Sunday in the country had it all; the sounds, smell, love, and the feel of serenity Sunday. Something tells me that it was not only a country thing. I believe some of the people that were raised in the city and even the ones that do not believe in God know about the "Sounds of Sunday".

They, too, had that feeling and heard the sounds when they woke up on Sunday morning.





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Maxie Wilbourn

by Austin Miller

In was late in the summer of 1960 and I wanted to go trotline fishing one more time before I started to Athens College. The problem was I couldn't find any bait. The crayfish and minnows all seemed to disappear from the tributaries and puddles of Flint River. I had heard there was plenty of bait in the Creek. The Creek is the local name of a shallow branch that runs about two miles through the mountains of Possum Hollow and two more miles through relatively flat farmland before it empties into Flint River at Moon Town.

The part of The Creek in Possum Hollow was infested with rattlesnakes. I tried seining in the Hollow for crawfish but soon left because there were snakes in every direction I looked. Also, there was a rumor about a giant rattlesnake that several people claimed they had seen. Some said it was as big around as a stovepipe, others said it was big as a telephone pole. They all concurred that the snake was too big to kill without a gun. Mr. Ben Lawler, who owned the land, saw the snake when he was on his tractor and was afraid to run over it. A survey crew from TVA saw it and refused to go back in the area. As far as I know, this legendary snake was never killed.

The rattlesnake range did not extend to the lower part of The Creek. This land was owned by Maxie Wilbourn. Maxie did not allow outsiders on her land or her part of The Creek. Everybody said she was quick to tell you NO if you asked and just as quick to run you off if you didn't ask. I had heard of her but I had never met her that I remembered.

I don't know why I thought there was a chance she would let me on her land but I was desperate and decided to ask. Her house, built around 1900, was located a little east of Yankee Town toward Gurley right off highway 72. It is a white frame house with a high-pitched roof and a long front porch that extends across the front of the house. A cotton field surrounds about an acre of yard that in 1960 was filled with several large oak trees. It all looks today about like it did in 1960 except they recently changed the roof color and some of the trees are gone.

I remember going down her gravel drive bordered on both sides by rows of almost waist high cotton. Sun-brightened pink and yellow blooms were visible at the top of the stalks all the way across

the field. There was a light breeze out of the west and my green 1951 Chevrolet Deluxe stirred up a cloud of dust that drifted to the left side of the drive. When I knocked on the front door, the breeze had stopped and there was not a leaf or blade of grass stirring.

A lady about 50 years old answered and coolly said, "Yes?" She was the most attractive middle-aged woman that I had ever seen. I looked for any sign of friendliness and saw none. I knew I had made a mistake but I was able to ask her if I could go down to the Creek and seine for crawfish.

I was backing off the porch before she said, "No, I don't let people come on my land!" As I stepped off the porch, she asked me my name. When I said Austin Miller, her whole disposition and



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manner changed.

She said, "Well honey, why didn't you say so? You can come here whenever you want to. All I ask is that you close my gate and tell me when you are down there so I will know it's you."

Before I left she went on to say that Joe Miller, my father, could come there and take off the whole place if he wanted to.

When I got home that night, I relayed what had happened to Daddy but he didn't say much. I knew that he liked this family and that they were neighbors in the 1920s and 30s. I found out there was also a connection on my mother's side. One hot summer afternoon in the early 1920s my Granddaddy, Hugh Mefford, and Maxie's father was plowing cotton in the field across The Creek when it came up a severe thunderstorm. My Granddaddy tried to get Mr. Wilbourn to go to the house because of the lightning but he kept staying, trying to finish the plowing before it rained.

Finally, when the rain started, they headed to shelter but it was too late. Before they got out of the field Mr. Wilbourn was struck by lightning and killed instantly. My grandfather was not hurt and headed out of the field to get help. By the time he got to The Creek the water was rising and he had to grab on to a low-hanging tree limb and pull himself across. They couldn't get Mr. Wilbourn out until the next day. This was the same creek where Maxie gave me permission to seine. As a note of interest, Maxie's father was the grandfather of former Circuit Judge Laura Jo Hamilton.

After 1960, I did not see her again until Daddy was terminally ill in the summer of 1990. She came to see him at least once a week. One Saturday morning, I was standing by the front porch when she came up. Instead of

going directly into the house, she stayed behind and chatted. She said, "I hear you live in Douglasville, Georgia?" When I said yes, she named a family and asked me if I knew them. It was a name I didn't know and can't recall now. When I told her I didn't, she explained that years ago she had met a construction worker from Douglasville who was working on Highway 72 and had visited him and his family in Douglasville several times.

This was only the second conversation that I had with her in my life and my thoughts went back to our unusual meeting thirty years earlier when she was a cold unfriendly stranger whose disposition suddenly changed to warmth when she heard my name. As she turned to go in

the house, she stopped and said, "You know, I have known your father for almost seventy years!"

It occurred to me that there was great irony in all this. In 1960 when I appeared at her door this woman of mystery, whose heart had a warm place for Daddy, knew about a small town in Georgia that I would not hear about for ten years. A place where I would live, go to church, have good friends and raise my children.

I never found out the rest of the story about her and my father, maybe nothing romantic. All I know for sure is that she cared for my father and there was a bond between them that lasted to the end of their lives.



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