



No. 247

September 2013



Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

A RIDE THROUGH DALLAS VILLAGE

My dad and I left, hopping aboard a four-door sky-blue and white Ford Fairlane 500 with gold trim. It was a three shifter on the column regarded by my father as the next best thing to a Thunderbird, and I remained ever confident we were aboard a stealthy ride. Proudly I sat beside my dad in the front seat and after the rumble of one of the best 289 cubic inch V8 engines known at the time, we'd travel three houses away to pick up Mr. Jim Barrett.



Also in this issue:

Traveling to Huntsville in 1931

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Domie Lewter
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A RIDE THROUGH DALLAS VILLAGE

by Frankie L. Preston

In the early 1960s my daddy was always a frustrated farmer but he made our living working for the Huntsville Times. From age 17, departing briefly to temporarily work for Meadow Gold Dairy, he soon returned to "the Times," where he remained for 43 years, retiring at age 63 and dying at 64. Often he bragged about working for seven years, seven days a week, without taking a sick day or vacation. My dad was a reliable worker and well known as a "character among characters" at the Times and in "the Village."

When I was approximately five years old my dad bought a 20-acre plot situated between Hazel Green and Harvest, Alabama on Bobo Section Road. Upon purchasing the totally wooded land my dad began clearing it, digging a pond, fencing half of it and planting the remaining half with a rotation of corn, cotton, and soybeans. We made a garden and my paternal grandfather

and mother mainly planted, harvested, froze, and canned a wealth of delicious fruits and vegetables.

During my youth, customarily my dad and I would together go out to "the place" - the name to which all my family referred to the above acreage. He went to work at approximately 6:00 AM and came home shortly after 2:00 PM unless a "breakdown" occurred. In any event my school day ended at 2:30 PM, long in advance to load the car or truck and be ready to go before picking me up at school's end.

I generally hated the work such as picking up rocks spread by bulldozers extracted from a 20-foot deep one-acre pond. This task was among the toughest...to pick up all rocks so we could plant grass around the pond and have a rock-made bridge covering two eight foot by eighteen inch tiles for trucks and tractors to cross the natural creek supplying the pond.

"The place" and the pond would become my father's main interest, and focus for many of my family's most precious memories. We had many horses we rode each weekend with local youth. Thousands of fish were caught...some of trophy size taken from the pond. A wealth of vegetables were grown, harvested, canned or frozen by my mother and many of our neighbors for deli-

"Wouldn't Take Her to a Dogfight 'cause I'm Scared She'd Win."

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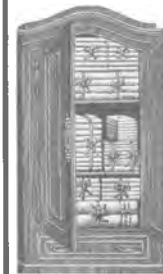
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cious meals. We camped at "the place", hosted many picnics, "fish-fries," hootenannies and dance events, and just went there to enjoy the ambiance of "country." Additionally, my dad raised and sold cows that slightly contributed to our family income and protein intake.

My father focused on his job and insatiable interests at "the place." My mother handily worked as a full-time wife and mother and she operated an in-home "beauty shop" (hair-styling) and worked each Saturday at Troop's Beauty Salon. Her work financially supplemented the family income - plus she was an accomplished seamstress who made many of the clothes she and my elder sisters wore. Within this context I share my story about the time my dad bought me, his only son, my first pony.

The story begins on a Friday morning. It seemed odd that my dad had a "day-off," and my mother welcomed a brisk assemblage of local women who wanted to get their "hair fixed" for the weekend. My

daddy - typically drinking coffee, smoking his Winston's... each lit by a distinctive Zippo "click" while waiting for me to down my sausage and biscuit with chocolate milk would he would devilishly converse - "kidding with" the elder aged women who arrived early for their thirty-minute staggered wash-roll-dry-comb and spray "hair-doo's."

Amongst the clatter only equaled by a covey of black-birds, my dad and I left our well-attended home-beauty shop, hopping aboard a four-door sky-blue and white Ford Fairlane 500 with gold trim. It was a three shifter on the column regarded by my father as the next best thing to a Thunderbird, and I remained ever confident we were aboard a stealthy ride. Proudly I sat beside my dad in the front seat and after the rumble of one of the best 289 cubic inch V8 engines known at the time, we'd travel three houses away to pick up Mr. Jim Barrett.

I always welcomed Jim. He was a guy who made sure I was



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heard and he told more funny stories than my sides could stand. Jim was dark-skinned; he stood about six-foot two inches tall and was thin; his face was long; he had a large hooked nose above a sharply dimpled chin; he always had a freshly clipped "GI" haircut and he covered his salt and pepper colored hair with a dark blue ballcap. He appeared Indian-like and knowing his origins were in Michigan before coming to Dallas Village I would later guess his lineage wasn't likely far from tribal native America.

Jim was a cotton mill retiree. He drove a two-door 1952 Chevrolet he'd purchased from my maternal Uncle Roy and was known by local motorcycle police to drive in the opposite direction on one-way streets. When stopped by police who asked: "don't you know you're driving the wrong way on a one-way street?" he'd dryly reply: "Son, I can't go both ways." To my knowledge he was never given citations for this regular practice (shortcut to the grocery).

The majority of Jim's time was spent raising ornamental pigeons (which now abound in Maple Hill Cemetery), Bantam chickens (pronounced as "Banny" chickens among Villagers), and regularly visited with his close friends, John and Daniel Harrison (owners-operators of Harrison Brothers Hardware). Hard to believe, given current city ordinances, chickens were plentiful and ponies were occasionally owned and housed

in backyards of many Villagers. Jim regularly traded pigeons and Bantam roosters with the "Harrison Brothers" and he often attended their birds and animals, located "on the hill" just above Maple Hill Cemetery. I guess you could say Jim was a "good judge of stock and animals" ...at least that's what my daddy thought.

This particular Friday would eventually take the three of us to a stock purchase although I didn't know it at the advent of our journey. First we drove to "the place" to survey a few beef-bred cows, looking at pastures and checking fences. Dad and Jim first visited "Clayton's Place" for libations and a brief social check-in, before proceeding on our travels to "the place." Clayton's Place was an establishment located on the corner of Dallas Avenue and Stevens Avenue, just across from Fire Station Number One.

Old-timers knew this locale as being one of the neighborhood "watering holes" where patrons could purchase "fifty-cent shooters," or shot glasses filled with stiff spirits. I've heard at least a half dozen sermons and a few dozen beauty shop tales referencing the ill presence of this place and those visiting its premises.

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After surveying "the place," our journey next took us to Elkton, Tennessee, the nearest farm implement store. There we would purchase some tractor supplies but not before stopping on the way for more refreshments-libations at "31 Blue-spot" just over the Alabama-Tennessee state line in Ardmore. There, I'd be given some change from my dad's change purse for playing pin-ball and miniature shuffleboard. I never got the hang of these apparatuses of entertainment and as my dad and Jim shared an ice-cold pitcher of draft beer...not offered in Alabama, I'd be offered a Coke and choice of pickled eggs or bologna with a serving of either potato chips or fried pork skins. Thirst and spirits attained and impatience noticed on my part, daddy and Jim hopped aboard that mighty Ford and proceeded to the farm-implement store in Elkton.

After securing a few three-point-hitch bolts and pins and several tubes for the grease gun we left the implement store and went across the street for yet another episode of draft beer libations for Jim and dad. This Elkton establishment whose name I fail to recall had a fantastic juke box, and I admit having a good time feeding this neon lighted, push-buttoned, record retrieving and loud

playing machine as much silver as it could swallow. In retrospect, I might have caused or exacerbated headaches for several patrons, and after about six songs dad and Jim were prepared to leave, each taking "a quart to go." The next best thing to draft beer was quart beer - neither easily acquired in Alabama.

By this time noon had long come and went, and dad decided to take a back road to return to our home. I now understand why but then I sat in the back-seat looking at the beautiful landscapes while overhearing smatterings of conversation between Jim and dad about planting grass, tractor parts, and grain-feeding cattle as they sipped on their quart beers sleeved in brown paper bags. Winding down back roads seemingly at a snail's pace, I heard my dad say: "Look Jim, they got a pony for sale," as I heard the Ford's tires leave asphalt turning into a gravel driveway.

I rose to get a better look and immediately saw a hand painted sign that I couldn't read standing in front of a lav-

"If everything seems to be going well, you have obviously overlooked something."

Sam Keith, Huntsville

ish green lawn adorning a hill atop which stood a Walton's styled drop-sided two story white house shaded by huge oak trees. Slowly we drove up the drive, and as the dogs barked, alerting their owner of company, a stately elder man



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opened his screened door stepping onto a house-length front porch. Waving dogs back both hanging their heads with wagg-tailed invitation, I shot out of the car followed by dad and Jim, who emerged to introduce themselves. After exchanging customary handshakes, my Daddy inquired: "where's the pony you've got for sale?"

The gentleman responded, "I got him staked out over here behind the house," motioning for us to follow and inspect. Being faster than my elders, between two bouncing collie type dogs licking me all the way, I excitedly made my way to the pony. Catching my first glimpse...a dappled tan on white Shetland pony, withers standing approximately 40 inches, was haltered and roped to a tie-out steak, he perked his ears. I came nearer, speaking softly and he continued to chew the grass he was eating. Simultaneously cautioned in various forms (i.e. "don't spook him;" "boy, be careful," and "holdup and wait for us") by his owner, my dad, Jim and I slowed and allowed the elder gentleman to make introductions.

On approach the pony wel-

comed us, and my dad and Jim interspersed queries to the owner about the pony's age, his demeanor, his lineage and his health status. I was simply impressed when he allowed me to rub his silky nose and Jim quietly interrupted my greeting by performing a cursory inspection of teeth and hoofs. Daddy and the owner stood outside the reach of the pony talking about price. When Jim gave the unobtrusive nod of approval and a right-eyed wink, my daddy peeled off a twenty-dollar bill and ecstatically I declared the pony as being "Smoky."

The man went into his house for paper and a pen to proffer a requested bill of sale while my dad and Jim consulted about how this pony might be transported. The seller provided my dad with a suitable bill of sale and meanwhile Jim began unhitching Smoky from his steak-out. Walking toward our car the prior owner inquired about how and when my dad would transport my new pony, and he said: "we're gonna put him in the car and take him with us." The former owner, obviously astonished - almost chuckling

said: "I don't think that's a good idea." Almost overriding his statement Jim boldly commented, "Oh, he ain't so big and if we take the backseat out and roll the window down he'll fit just fine." The seller said, "He's your horse now" and



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kindly excused himself, retiring into his home as quaintly as he had emerged.

My daddy opened the trunk while Jim held the pony, and swiftly produced some wrenches, removed some seat bolts from the floorboard and proudly deposited the backseat into the golden Ford's trunk. With both back doors openly secured my daddy wrapped the long halter, attached rope around his hand and elbow accurately pitching it into the left side and through the right side of the vehicle. He confidently walked around our car and secured the front end of the rope. Jim had simultaneously lined my now wide-eyed pony to face the driver's side rear door.


With a "Ready? Okay" question-response daddy pulling and Jim pushing by firm tail grip, Smoky went in the Ford's backseat compartment with

surprising ease. Jim shut the left door; dad pushed against Smoky's head to prevent escape; and together (Jim joining my dad) they eventually accomplished the arduous task of turning Smoky's head for clearance through the passenger side rear window while securely shutting the right rear door. Once done the push-styled door locks were activated for "safety."

Initially we noticed a few hoof-to-carpet shifts but found his balance mainly leaning onto the rear seats upper upholstery. He snorted a few times, and settled in for the ride. I was

"I'm just glad it'll be Clark Gable who's falling on his face and not me."


Gary Cooper on his decision not to take the leading role in "Gone with the Wind."



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directed to sit in front between my dad and Jim. "Happy as a lark" and cautious as a lark watched by a hungry cat the Ford, as usual, cranked like a top. Off we went proceeding even slower than before home-ward bound - Dallas Village. They leisurely sipped their quarts, wishing for all delay of Smoky's two main biological functions. Eventually quart bottles were tossed (my dad by an over-the-car shot and Jim by a direct passenger-side hit) at upcoming road-signs. Two tosses...yielded two hits - all passengers amazed except Smoky.

For many miles we met few passing vehicles and of those we met they didn't seem to notice a pony with his head sticking out of the backseat passenger side of a vehicle. However, the back roads eventually ended and we took to a major

highway about ten miles out of town...only a half-mile from Trackway Beverages where dad and Jim agreed to stop. dad got more beer for them and I was treated with a Coke and peanuts, while proprietors and patrons came for a look at "a horse in a blue Ford." From that point and all the way to our house, passersby pointed, turned heads and laughed but Smoky remained sure-footed and amazingly in command of biological operations.

Unobserved by me, Smoky was a stud-pony and his destiny had been plotted before purchase for a timely courting episode with a neighbor mare. We traveled down Meridian Street, Oakwood Avenue, onto Andrew Jackson Way, and eventually McKinley Avenue



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and onlookers were bemused by what they saw... smiling and doing double-takes. Finally we turned into the graveled driveway separating 806 and 808 McKinley. The Ford dropping a bit in the rear glided just past our backdoor. As we came to a slow stop, my mother, followed by a half dozen before the weekend women hair-doo seekers came out of the back door as if Castro had finally launched the big bomb.

Some in curlers, others waiting for a wash, and a few draped with towels, and some out of the dryers began knee-slapping, hand slapping howls of laughter pointing to the amazing sight of a horse staring back at them...head jutting from the rear passenger window of a four-door Ford. My feisty mom arose from the frenzy, comb pointing in one hand, the other hand on her hip. Just as Jim and Dad exited the front seat, she asked: "Frank Preston - have you lost your mind?" He didn't answer...but as Jim opened the rear door allowing Smoky's physically and emotionally overdue release, he asked my mother: "Ain't he a dandy?"

Smoky was staked out in our backyard, and a week later my dad bought me a black western saddle, studded with silver trim, a matching bridle and martingale fit for the Lone Ranger. I rode what seemed to be a million miles on Smoky even though he threw me off a couple dozen times. Mean as a Tasmanian Devil he went a courting and he did ride in a

"Why does someone believe you when you say there are four billion stars, but check when you say the paint is wet?"

Patty Pruitt, Huntsville

Ford Fairlane 500. This is the same car in which my family made many midnight rides to Pensacola, Florida, hauled several tons of fertilizer, grass seed, and cattle feed, and that I learned to drive at age nine or ten (seat forward, pillow assisted, paternal grandmother supervised) in rural-dirt road Alabama.

The '58 Ford Fairlane, initially showroom featured before purchase at the local Woody Anderson dealership, was sold in 1966 to my above-mentioned grandmother, so Dad could make a down payment on a much needed truck. He bought a flashy new short-bed truck...black on white F-150 from Woody.

It proved as true and tough (perhaps more) as the Fairlane and dad would daily

drive his truck until his untimely death in 1988 (age 64). When I see television commercials about "Built Ford Tough," I think of Smoky and a couple dozen similar examples of living life aboard a Ford in Dallas Village.



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Boost your metabolism:

- Eat smaller meals throughout the day, go easy on the sugar/fats.
- Eat oranges & other citrus - can help to prevent obesity.
- Add avocado and olive oil to your diet - will keep you full longer.
- If you're buying organic food, be sure that products are marked "100% Organic".

Some safer foods to eat:

- Bottled tomatoes rather than canned tomatoes (the acidity of the tomatoes can eat into the lining of the tin cans and can impact your health).
- Popped popcorn rather than microwave popcorn - this version contains chemicals in the lining of the bag that have been proven to be unhealthy to people to breath in.
- Organic potatoes rather than regular - root vegetables readily absorb herbicides, pesticides & fungicides that wind up in the soil and even thorough washing won't help.
- Wild Alaskan salmon rather than farmed salmon - the farmed version is high in contaminants and lower in Vitamin D than the wild.
- Organic apples rather than regular - apple trees are among the most doused with pesticides, which stay in the apple even after washing. Organic are the best.
- Grass fed beef rather than corn-fed beef; farmers feed cows

for market to fatten them up with corn & soybeans. However the grass fed cows have much greater levels of beta carotene, vitamin 3, Omega 3s, calcium and is lower in saturated fat that is linked to heart disease. Opt for grass fed rather than corn-fed.

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Remembering Hilding Holmberg

by *Charlie Lyle*

I first met Hilding right after World War II. Hilding had a wife named Mickey, a daughter named Eleanor Ann and a sister named Brownie. I believe Brownie had a drugstore named Brownie Drugs, located in Five Points. The name Holmberg was very likely to be of Swedish origin.

During the war he got caught up in the Battle of the Bulge. This battle was fought in Belgium. Our troops were fighting a desperate enemy and the Germans were making their last big effort to surround our troops and cut supply lines. This all took place when a brutal winter storm was inflicting misery on our men. It was so cold with snow and ice, unfortunately many died. This all took place around Christmas time. Christmas was a sad time for our men as one could imagine. Listening to the radio they heard "I'll Be Home for Christmas".

The Germans had a fairly good plan, but they made a big mistake. They didn't count on running out of fuel for their tanks and other machinery. So Germany failed in their last attempt to control events against us and our allies in World War II. After this took place Hilding came home.

Hilding had a background of music. He was a drummer and a very good one and played

with the Auburn Knights Dance Band which I will write as a continuing story. When Hilding came home to Huntsville, he decided to put together a dance band. He started off with a nine piece band. The personnel I knew quite well were: Hilding, leader and drummer; Jimmy Blackburn, from Riverton playing piano; Marion Campbell went to school at Talladega for the blind, playing bass; Wesley Smith playing trombone; Dick Lyle playing guitar; Bill Galloway playing sax; Richard Gilliam playing sax and Jack Roberts playing sax. Richard and Bill were college students. A fellow named Gunn played first trumpet and me on second trumpet.

Hilding rehearsed the group

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Celia Johns, Athens

for several weeks and then booked our first job. Our initial booking was at the Tavern on Monte Sano State Park. The tavern was a delightful rustic pavilion built by CCC men (Civilian Conservation Corp). The tavern was a unique and delightful place. It had a very large open fireplace, burning large logs; small tables with checkered table cloths; candle lighted tables; a large kitchen and a romantic overlook on the back (quite romantic indeed). The band was located on the southwest corner of the building. Politicians and celebrities had been known to have been there. It was rumored that the tavern was torched by competing elements downtown.

Hilding and his band played their first job. At first the job went well. At the end of the engagement we musicians were paid. I made \$4.20. At this time a few of the musicians said they thought it was a co-op band in which everyone was paid the same. Hilding furnished the music, secured a practice place, did the organizing, etc.

He thought his concept was a leader who employed side men as they were called, like the big band concept such as Tommy Dorsey, Harry James etc.

At the end of the summer the band had gone from nine pieces to six and I was extremely happy to be the only trumpet player. Suddenly I had a big responsibility but was elated and began practicing every chance I got. This all occurred in the late 40s. I was making \$8.00 a job with Hilding. I had a job as a salesman at this time with Belk Hudson making \$3.00 a day on Saturdays, but when I made \$8.00 a job with Hilding as a trumpet player, it was all I could fathom. I was so fortunate that I didn't have to buy my clothes, my lunches and virtually everything I needed. I thought I was in heaven and that they had thrown away the key.

Hilding had a clothing store in downtown Huntsville. He was partners first with Edgar Cliff, next with Dudley Smith and then Bill Fowler. Hilding was a very generous person. When I would go into the store,

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he might look at my pants, coat, tie or any other piece of clothing. He might say, "That doesn't go with that or that doesn't match, you have to go change it out" and it never cost a penny.

The band, the septet, played initially at the tavern and Cameron's. Cameron's was (located where a Presbyterian Church stands today) and where Airport Road and Whitesburg Road come together. There was a hill in the back of Cameron's that was teaming with wildlife. Joe Cameron had a field day hunting there and for some reason an abundance of skunks lived there.

The ideal combo, is a five piece band made up of three rhythm, usually bass, piano, drums, and two horns - tenor, sax and trumpet. This is the best sounding combination for the least amount of money. The usual pay for a side man back in the late 40s was \$8.00 a job, a short time later \$10.00. Now it is about \$85.00 - \$100.00 for a combo job. The Hilding Holmberg Combo played many jobs in North Alabama and Southern Tennessee. A very successful

band.

I played for Hilding three years, before going to college and the service, 1946 to 1949.

The last part of Hilding's life has a sad ending. I don't like writing about it but I guess It needs to be told. Hilding was in great physical shape, but had Alzheimer's that kept him alive about 12 to 15 years.

Look for more on Hilding

in future writings in the Old Huntsville Magazine.

Hilding Holmberg had a dynamic personality, a smile that would melt an iceberg or cold heart. He was a mainstay in a church choir. He was generous and possessed many other wonderful attributes plus being a father to me.



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OUT OF TOWN GOSSIP - 1896

A handsome young woman from Birmingham recently came on a visit to a young matron whose husband is a prominent businessman in Huntsville. The fair guest was extensively entertained, remained several weeks and departed. A few days afterwards the husband left the city on a business trip. During his absence, his wife, in rummaging through the pockets of his coats, came across a letter written in a decidedly feminine hand. Her suspicions were instantly aroused, and she read the contents.

What was her astonishment and anger to find that the letter was an endearing little note from her recent visitor, fixing a meeting with her husband in Birmingham. When the gentleman returned home from his business trip, he was confronted with the "billet doux." Those who are acquainted with the fact say that the tender missive will probably be made public as an exhibit in upcoming divorce proceedings.

Decatur - Here is as warm a story as had cropped up in Decatur for many years. For some time past a well known young lady of this city has been puzzled and frightened by the occasional appearance of a skulking figure at night in the yard of her home. These visitations usually occurred on Saturday, and a couple of weeks ago she requested a married friend to send her husband over to lay in wait for the intruder.

The gentleman responded and about the time the young lady was retiring saw three men slip up to her bedroom window. He promptly raised the alarm and gave chase. They ran like scared rabbits, but the amateur detective hung to the trail of one of the trio and finally succeeded in overhauling him.

To his utter surprise, he found that his prisoner was a prominent young lawyer and worst of all, an ardent suitor of the very girl at whose casement he had been detected in the fact! The young attorney was badly rattled and eventually made a clean chest of it. He admitted that he had been in the habit of spying at the window of his sweetheart for weeks past and that his companions were present at his visits.

Both are well known about town, and one is a fledgling physician. Possibly he regarded it as a good opportunity to perfect his knowledge of anatomy.

The trio has since made a ghastly effort to pass the affair off as a joke, but this explanation is received with no smiles. The gentleman who solved the mystery has made no secret of the facts and wherever they have been heard, the comments are scathing. The affair is certain to result in the complete social ostracism of all three of the young men concerned.

Kites were used in the Civil War to deliver letters and newspapers.



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Heard On the Street

by *Cathey Carney*



Congratulations to **Bev Simpson** of Decatur who was the first correct caller to identify **Carol Record** (who runs the Kaffeeklatsch Bar downtown) as the little girl in the photo of the Month for August. Bev remembers going the Kaffeeklatsch many years ago in her "hippie" days and loved the vibe in the Klatsch! The bar is still going strong on Jefferson & Clinton and it's good to know that some businesses can last! Bev is a retired tech writer from the Arsenal and still comes to Huntsville to shop.

Lots of good birthdays in September - my beautiful Mom **Dr. Annelie Owens** will turn 93 and lives in Redstone Village. **Barb Eyestone** has a September birthday as does that handsome realtor **Darryl Goldman!** Another big event for Darryl is his 44th wedding anniversary with the love of his life, **Linda Goldman.** Happy Anniversary to you folks.

Also **Joe Waggett** has a Sep. 3 birthday. Special greetings to you, Joe.

Vivian and Bill Kruse just celebrated their 47th wedding anniversary and knowing them, it had to be romantic!

We're so proud of our fiend **Buddy Darwin** who owns and operates Heart of Dixie Popcorn Co. They were devastated by the tornado that hit Meridianville in March of 2012, and caused extensive damage to their equipment & buildings & farm. But the business is back stronger than ever and it says alot about Buddy and his family. They have been running this business for 29 years and we're so glad it's back!

Providence Classical School has purchased the old East Clinton School building in the heart of Old Town, and they are working so hard to clean up the building and get it ready for their students. By now they will be conducting classes there and it will be so good to hear children's voices again at the school! A huge welcome to PCS from your neighbors in **Old Town.**

A very special Happy Birthday to **Ret. Sgt. Shirley Frazier** who retired years ago from the

Huntsville Police Department. She turned 78 recently and is **Ann Hill's** momma. Shirley played a big part in the rich history of Huntsville lawmakers and her daughter Ann is a firefighter on the Arsenal. She loves her momma so much!!

It was interesting to read in "Natural Awakenings" recently that not all bottled water is what you think it is. It's an \$11 billion business annually and what you think is pure spring water may be only treated tap water. If a bottle doesn't say Spring water, chances are good that it's not. But if it states on the label that it comes from a spring (only 55% of water sold), it probably is.

SO Proud of **Debra Jenkins.** She and husband **Alan** bought and turned Merrimack Mill into a premiere performing arts center, Merrimack Hall. Debra will be honored in September by the Women's Economic Development Council Foundation. It is sponsored by Crestwood Hospital and will be held Sep. 19 at the Civic Center. The other community leaders to be honored at the "Women Honoring

Photo of The Month

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

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Hint: This little boy has had an office on the north side of the Square for many years.



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Women" celebration are **Penny Billings**, Market President for BancorpSouth; **Jean Templeton**, President of Wesfam Restaurants; **Dr. Lori Lioce**, Clinical Assistant Professor of Nursing at UA Huntsville; and **Lynn Troy**, President of Troy 7.

Speaking of the Jenkins, **Alan Jenkins** worked with the BRAC Committee to help secure a \$75,000,000 bond issue for our schools. Alan's leadership in the community and with Merrimack Hall are examples of the kind of man he is - hardworking, committed and caring. He never expects to be recognized but we are SO proud that we have someone like Alan in our community.

Rosemary Leatherwood wants to send a special greeting to her sister **Angie Simmons** of Huntsville. Angie just recently celebrated an August 23rd birthday and Rosemary thinks she gets more beautiful every year!

The Historic Lowry House is a gem in Huntsville and **Eula Battle** along with **Jane Tippet** has been doing alot of work around the gardens of the home. This has been recognized for the 5th year in a row by the Huntsville Beautification Board and this year the Lowry House received the prestigious District 2 Council Award. Congratulations to the folks who worked so hard to get this award!

There's a very popular barber at Jackson Way Styling Salon who recently had a birthday.

Ken "Bullet" Ward just turned 48 on August 14 and celebrated with his sweet wife **Connie**. Happy Birthday to you Ken!

Pam Rawls sent us a good mosquito spray that is all natural - I'm going to try it:

15 drops lavender oil, 3-4 tablespoons vanilla extract and 1/4 cup lemon juice. Put this into a 16 ounce spray bottle and fill to the top with water. Shake and it's ready to use. I will definitely try this, can't stand mosquitos.

Remember the story of **Lizzie Borden**? It was quite a mystery. It will be performed at the Lowry House on Friday Oct 4 at 7pm and Oct. 5 at 2:30 pm and 7 pm, advance tickets are \$10. It ought to be very memorable - check the Lowry House website for more details.

In late August downtown Huntsville had a great block party! It was called "Summerfest" and several downtown streets were blocked off for bands to set up and play. It started at 2pm and went on til nearly midnight and there were over 3,000 people there in the streets! **Sam Keith** and I were there checking it out and the weather was perfect - hope we'll see more of those.

Susan Ayers of Ayers Farmers Market had a birthday on August 19 so we wanted to wish her a VERY Happy Birthday. I hear she celebrated all weekend long which is what you should do.

And speaking of Farmers Markets, it is so good to see the huge attendance at the summer markets such as Greene Street, Latham Church, Madison Market Days, etc. and more by people who just want to eat better and give good food to their families. Check them out if you haven't already! Don't forget to come downtown for the **Annual Trade Day around the Square Sep. 7, Saturday, from 8-5**. It's always lots of fun!

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Down in Dixie Bourbon Pie

1 box Nabisco chocolate snaps

1/2 c. melted butter
21 marshmallows
1 c. evaporated milk
1/2 pt. whipping cream
3 T. bourbon

Crust: Crush chocolate snaps; mix with melted butter and pat into 9 inch pie pan. Bake til set. Cool and set aside.

Mix the marshmallows in undiluted milk; do not boil. Chill. Whip cream and fold into the marshmallows; add bourbon.

Pour into cooled chocolate crumb crust and refrigerate 4 hours to set. Top with whipped cream and chocolate crumbs.

Never Fail Drop Cookies

1 c. sugar
1 egg
2 T. milk
1 t. vanilla extract
1/2 c. butter
1-1/2 c. flour

Mix first 5 ingredients and add the flour. Drop on cookie sheet. Bake at 375 degrees for 10-12 minutes. Coconut or chopped nuts may be added if desired.

Strawberry Pecan Cake

1 box white cake mix
4 eggs
1/2 c. milk
1 c. coconut
1 box strawberry jello
1 c. frozen strawberries

1/2 c. Wesson oil
1 c. chopped pecans
Topping & filling:
1 stick butter
1/2 c. drained strawberries
1/2 c. pecans
1 box confectioners sugar
1/2 c. coconut

Bake cake in 3 layers at 350 degrees for 30-35 minutes - check for doneness with straw.

Topping & filling - cream sugar and butter, adding other ingredients, spread over cooled cake and between layers.

Pecan Brittle

2 c. chopped pecans
1/4 t. salt
2 c. granulated sugar
1/4 t. baking soda
1 t. vanilla extract
Spread nuts close together

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in a buttered shallow pan. Heat sugar in saucepan til melted and a light golden color - being careful not to burn - remove from heat and quickly stir in the salt, soda and vanilla, Pour over nuts. When cold, break into pieces.

Peanut Candy

- 1/2 c. Karo syrup
- 1/2 c. water
- 1 c. sugar
- 2 c. peanuts
- 1 t. baking soda

Mix first 4 ingredients in saucepan. Cook til peanuts start to pop; add 1 teaspoon soda. Stir in and take up at once. Pour on greased platter; cut in squares when cool.

Heavenly Hash Candy

- 1/2 c. sugar
- 1/2 c. Pet evaporated milk
- 1 T. white corn syrup
- 1 c. chocolate chips
- 1 c. pecans
- 1 c. marshmallows, small

Mix sugar, milk and 1 tablespoon corn syrup in a heavy 2 quart saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. Boil 2 minutes. Remove from heat, and stir in the chocolate chips til completely melted. Let cool for 15 minutes. Add pecans and marshmallows.

Using 2 teaspoons, drop candy onto cookie sheets lined with waxed paper. Chill.

Mandarin Orange Salad

- 1 c. mandarin oranges
- 1 c. sour cream
- 1 c. marshmallows
- 1 c. pineapple tidbits
- 1 c. toasted sweetened coconut

Drain fruits, mix all ingredients & chill.

Peanut Butter Pie

- 1 c. powdered sugar
- 1/2 c. creamy peanut butter
- 1 baked 9 inch pastry shell
- 1/4 c. cornstarch
- 2/3 c. sugar
- 1/4 t. salt
- 2 c. milk, scalded
- 3 egg yolks, beaten
- 2 T. butter
- 1/4 t. vanilla extract
- 3 egg whites, room temp

Combine the powdered sugar and peanut butter; mix with a fork til it resembles coarse meal. Spread half mixture in pastry shell; set remaining mixture aside. Combine rest of ingredients except egg whites.

In a saucepan cook over medium heat until thickened, stirring constantly. Spoon filling over the peanut butter layer in the pastry shell. Beat egg whites til stiff; spread over filling. Sprinkle remaining peanut butter mixture over meringue. Bake at 325 degrees for 20 minutes and meringue is lightly browned and firm. Let cool before serving.



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A TALE OF TWO WOMEN WHO MARCHED WITH THE MEN

by Steve Gierhart

Zora Neale Hurston said of men "Ships at a distance have every man's wish onboard." Her metaphor was true a long time ago. Only men were entitled to dream. Even if they were never attained, they were allowed. That has changed, in no small part due to the feminist and the civil rights movements, and even due to Hollywood.

However, lest we forget, even in days long past, women were attracted to the call of adventure and their own ship of dreams. Their desires were at best simply overlooked, at worst purposely disregarded. The "fairer sex" was entitled to adventure as long as it involved changing the spices in a pumpkin pie or smoking a cigarette with a gal friend while the boys talked shop or baseball.

Elsie Merritt Ellingsen, a 91-year young Huntsvillian, was a woman who ignored what she was told by men and so was the late Dorothy Diemer Hendry, head of Huntsville High's English Department during another chaotic era, the 1960s and 70s. These are two women who would not be caged by stereotype. They played a man's game when that was not expected, and they enjoyed it.



Elsie Merritt Ellingsen, from Abbeville to Hawaii - A World War II Adventure

Elsie Merritt was raised in South Alabama near Dothan. In 1941 all the young men from Elsie's Abbeville High School were destined for war, just like others caught in the maelstrom of WWII. That seemed so unfair to her. She loved her country as much as them, but could only follow the safe path of college. Instead, she went with them ... in a roundabout way.



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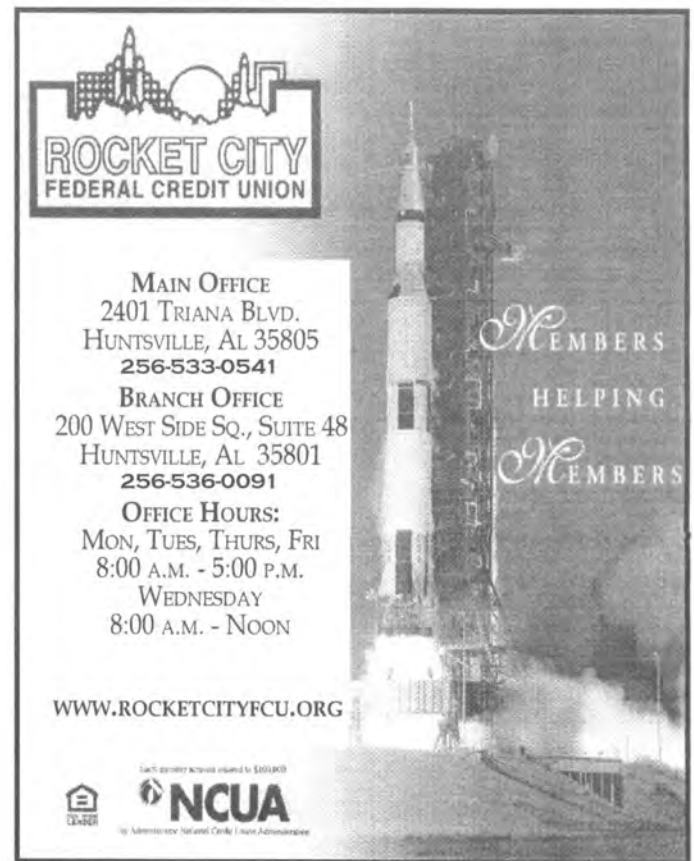
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Elsie was in Hawaii, helping maintain aircraft and working as a telephone operator for the War Department by the fall of 1944. Prior to that, she attended college at Jacksonville State, took a job as a telephone operator for Southern Bell (now BellSouth) which led to her taking a civil service examination which led to the War Department. Elsie trained near Memphis with other women (and some men), taking apart and restoring aircraft, over and over. She then took her first job at Brookley Army Air Field in Mobile. There she answered the Army's call for volunteers to go to "foreign locations" for work that soldiers could no longer perform. She was one of twenty-two people, about half women, who left Mobile in 1944 for Hawaii's Army Air Base, APO #953, or Hickam Field as it was more popularly known.

Her three week journey was almost as eventful as her work. It did not start out well, as they arrived at the train station only to find they had no assigned seating. However, luck won out as their secret clearance garnered an unused railroad car that had been built for executives. For the next five nights Elsie and one other young woman shared the "roomette" in the spacious car. The rest of the women rode with them but bunked elsewhere at night. Imagine these young women laughing and swapping stories, talking about historic Pearl Harbor and the exotic paradise of the Hawaii Territory (not a state until 1959).

They arrived in Seattle and waited, but had nice rooms in a hotel in the mean-

"No problem can stand the assault of sustained thinking."

Voltaire



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time. Young girls were preoccupied with soldiers and sailors in those days. Many young men also waited for transportation to the Pacific War Zone, often passing below Elsie's hotel window. They were perfect targets! The women made paper airplanes and conducted flights to "bomb" the passing soldiers. However, their success meant the soldiers stopped and asked which room they were in. That resulted in a scolding by hotel management.

After a hot and wave-tossed week at sea, they arrived in Honolulu, their sickness mitigated by adventure. A Japanese submarine followed their cruiser for much of the time, forcing the captain to zigzag and order the few women (and sailors) to quietly stay in their hot boxes for fear of being fired upon.

Eventually, the women were given 9' x 12' rooms at Hickam Field, in itself a luxury since the men had bunks. Their room was barren, a solitary light bulb with a cot and a desk, but it was home. The walls were thin, but Elsie's room had a small hole in the wall which allowed her to talk with another woman next door.

The sirens wailed that first night. Then the gun emplacements on the hills surrounding the area fired, their tracers filling the sky with light. Outside, an air warden walked by her room. When Elsie failed to turn off her light fast enough, he told her he would shoot it out if she didn't step to it. In a while the sirens cut off and soon the air was filled with cheers, not because the guns found their target but because they had not. It turned out that several

planes had arrived from England via Canada, Alaska and then the Pacific. They had not provided Hickam with their approach ahead of time, but now their men were safe!

Elsie spent the rest of the war and much of the late 40s in Hawaii. She danced with many soldiers as the few women in the area were special for men without female attention for so long. The USO and local events kept them in party dresses and even formal wear, her "den" mother often giving the girls notice of such parties via notes passed under the women's doors.

However, despite her many adventures there, it is most remembered as the place she found her heart and her own man, soldier Howard Ellingsen. Elsie and Howard married in 1946. He stayed on as a civilian instructor at Hickam while she continued to tow

planes in her tug and work as a telephone operator. It was quite a life for a young woman from South Alabama!

(Howard Ellingsen died in 1996 and Elsie never remarried, but she cherishes her memories in her comfortable home in English Manor in South

Huntsville. Elsie's grandson is the author's stepson.)

Dorothy Diemer Hendry - A Teacher's Compassion Melded by Family and Lust for Life

You could say Dorothy Diemer Hendry was generous because life was generous to her first. After all, her father, George, was a university president who knew Harry Truman and as such, Dorothy had many experiences that were not available to others. But do not believe for a second that Harry Truman and George Diemer were made by money. They were molded by character, a belief that all men were capable of greatness and a responsibility to their fellow man. This character, not money, was the root of Dorothy's generous life, a life tempered with the knowledge that we must pass on that character to the next generation. However, a key to this door's success was also a knowledge that to help life, one must lust for life.

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Dorothy Diemer Hendry, when given this key, did not throw it away.

As a teenager in 1938 Dorothy climbed Long's Peak near Estes Park, Colorado. She did it for the exercise and fun ... and the compelling faith that the world was beautiful, especially when looking over its garden at 14,000 feet. After seeing such beauty, who could blame her desire to protect it and see more, maybe at even greater heights?

So as the chaos of war shook the world, Dorothy forsook her training as a teacher. Though she graduated as valedictorian of Central Missouri State College and received a Master's Degree from the Ivy League's Columbia University, Dorothy jumped to the skies. She became a hostess (stewardess) for Trans World Airlines, despite their earlier requirement that such women hold nursing degrees. She was in the first highly select group of only 50 young women who were exempted. She did so well she was noticed by Mid-Continent Airlines where she became Chief Hostess. A photo exists of Dorothy as the sole woman at a long table filled with airline executives. She loved men but was never daunted by them.

This led her to her husband, Wick, a WWII Army Captain and engineer who did cold weather testing for the Army Air Corps in Alaska. They met on a flight over the Grand Canyon and corresponded during the war, catching glimpses of each other as Wick flew between his job and the states. They married on Christmas Day, 1944, and she gave up her wings for family, over the years gaining three daughters and a son.

She returned to the less glamorous role of a teacher, but kept her zest for life and her drive to

pass character to succeeding generations. Though Wick's engineering degree brought the family to Huntsville in 1962, it also brought Dorothy to Huntsville High School where she eventually became chairman of the English Department and started the award-winning student literary magazine, Spectrum.

Along the way she encouraged others to similar adventurous and rewarding journeys, others like Marcia Scar-

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Jack, age 7, in Bible class



Tuxedo Junction Right Back Where I Belong by Carol P. Ealons

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-- Dr. Robert O'Meally (Ph.D. - Harvard 1975), Zora Neale Hurston Professor of English and Director for the Center for Jazz Studies at Columbia University

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borough Keller, a student teacher for Dorothy, who became a successful English teacher at Grissom High, advising another student literary magazine, Seed. Marcia went on a year-long sabbatical to Barranquilla, Colombia at Dorothy's suggestion.

Marcia recounts the following. "Dorothy was never afraid to speak her mind. In 1969, Dorothy proved to be diplomatic dynamite when, in a faculty meeting, she called for a vote on the hair policy that the school board had asked us to enforce. Males were to be sent home if they had sideburns below mid-ear or hair touching their collars. Dorothy thought this was an outrageous waste of time. Shortly after that vote, the hair policy was dropped."

Dorothy was compassionate and generous to her students, a trait she felt necessary to obtain their confidence and instill their belief in giving to others. In one example ex-Congressman Bud Cramer said "Dorothy Hendry was an inspiration to me, a real teacher who caused me to major in English in undergraduate school, and I even fancied that I might be a writer of sorts, because of her."

Mention Dorothy's name in a group in Huntsville and you may prompt someone to tell how she influenced their life. A local successful scientist, now retired, tells the story of how he dropped out of Huntsville High School, but one of the reasons he returned and went on to college and a long career in consulting and research was Dorothy. She had faith in him when he needed it most in high

school, pulling a crumpled set of papers from the trash can where he had thrown them in disgust and returning them to him with encouragement, that his words reflected promise that should not be discarded.

Even in death (she passed in 2006), Dorothy carried her mantra. Upon discovering her cancer, she started finding homes for her 300 varieties of roses as if they were her children. When interviewed by Kay Campbell of The Huntsville Times about her approaching end, Dorothy had this to say "Hail younger generations! I trust in you! I believe in you! I trust you to move forward in the great quest

to win justice, freedom, peace, and goodwill for the world! Godspeed!"

*Note from Cathey at "Old Huntsville" magazine:
(An author and poet herself, Dorothy was one of the founders of Huntsville Literary Association. In Dorothy's honor HLA named their high school writing competition, a division of their long-standing Young Writers' Contest, The Dorothy Diemer Hendry Award for Literary Achievement. The author of this article is the chairman of this division.)*



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Rolling Suzy's Yard: Summer Nights in Southeast Huntsville - 1976

by Steve Burcham

After dinner and well beyond nightfall, we meet up on our front porch on Coronado Drive to plan our attack. Tonight, it's me and Markie boy, Sean and Jill. Taking inventory, I count 10 rolls of toilet paper, not enough for a whiteout, but we'll surely leave a mark. Suzy could be the movie star Cher's little sister. Suzy, with long straight dark hair flowing to her tailbone and a Mediterranean complexion, is a superb mix of brains and beauty. Any boy in the neighborhood would love to catch her and she knows it. Not interested in anyone in our scrappy clan, she still enjoys teasing us with her graceful ways and "catch me if you can" attitude. Talking among ourselves as we walk 2 blocks over to her house, we decide to work the 2 trees in the front yard until all rolls are used up. Taking charge, I say, "If Suzy comes out, let her catch us and I'll do all the talking. If one of her parents comes out, it's everyone for themselves!"

I know that we can easily scatter in so many different directions that her parents will have no way of tracing us back to our homes and identifying the perpetrators.


About the time that we had dispensed 5 rolls into the trees, I hear a commotion coming from the left side of the house. It's Suzy's dad! He's ambushed us from the side door of the garage and is chasing Markie boy around that corner of the yard! I yell, "Scatter!" To which the gang immediately drops the rolls they are holding and start off running.

Following my outburst, Suzy's dad is tipped off that I'm the one behind the mischief and takes his focus off of Mark and turns it my way, breaking into a full sprint.

"Just how big were those two beers you said you had?"

Policeman, to speeder he pulled over

"Holy cow! I forgot Suzy's dad's in good shape. That dude jogs by our house every day," I thought as I break into a sprint in the opposite direction heading west down Riviera Drive. After I had advanced about 4 houses down the street, I could hear his tennis shoes hitting the pavement closer and closer to me with every



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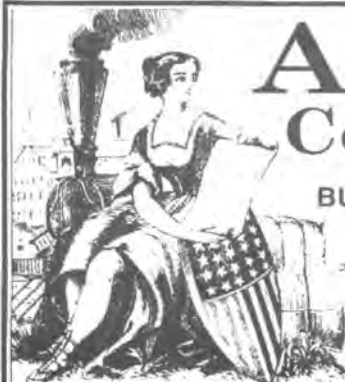
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step and could almost feel his steamy breath on my neck! I couldn't turn around to assess the intensity of the situation or risk being identified as a neighbor and classmate of Suzy's.

"I'm not going to be able to outrun him," I thought. "Some evasive tricks are in order to shake Suzy's daddy tonight" I mused as I racked my brain about what to do next. Remembering that about two more houses down the street on the left, there is a narrow alleyway between two chain-link enclosed backyards.

An idea develops in my head. The alleyway dead-ends into another chain linked enclosed backyard. Horsing around with our friends, we frequently run down the alley and jump the fence. There's a viscous sounding German Shepard dog that lives in that last backyard - but I know he's docile and certainly won't bite me because I'm the lawn boy.

Now with a concrete evasion maneuver in mind, I bare down hard, running as fast as I can. Moments later the sounds behind me seem to be fading a bit as I think I may be pulling ahead of him. With his breathing getting heavier though, I can tell the old guy is getting a little winded as I'm turning up the afterburners. I turned left into the lawn and round the corner of the first house and line myself up on the moonlit alleyway like a plane lining up on the deck of an aircraft carrier returning from a sortie.

Meanwhile he rounds the corner and, not giving up, remains in hot pursuit of this vandal. Reaching the halfway point of the alleyway, I heard him giggle and snort as he thought he had me cornered, but with one giant leap my right shoe landed perfectly on the top rail of the fence and I landed on my left foot in the dog's backyard. Ten more giant steps and I jump the fence on the other side of the backyard before Gusto even emerges from his doghouse.

Giving me a quick glance, Gusto decides to focus his attention on the strange man standing at the backyard fence and heads his way. As I made my way back to Coronado Drive, I look over my shoulder and see Gusto growling and barking viscously at Suzy's dad who is standing there leaning on the fence, trying to catch his breath while yelling something about hunting me down and squashing me like a bug.

Back on our street, just a block and a half west of our house, I see the rest of the gang gathering under the corner streetlight as I walk slowly up catching my breath along the way. "For a doctor, that guy sure is in good shape. I better take Suzy's house off the practical joke list," I thought.

We laughingly recount the events of the day as we head back up Coronado to turn in for the night.

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SNAKE!

By Calvin Holder, Sr.

In 1978 Junior and I lived in beautiful Maysville, Alabama. When I first moved there I built us a music room in the back yard to use for recording purposes and practice for our gospel singing group. This was in 1970.

On Friday and Saturday nights Junior would go out to the Music Room to listen to the gospel singing on radio station WNDA and the Grand Ole Opry on radio WSM from 6 pm til 1 am.

This one night Junior was getting ready to come back into the house and he happened to look up on a shelf and saw an electrical cord, that he reached for, to unplug. There lay a big old snake. It was no electrical cord. He didn't know what kind of snake it was: a garden snake, a green snake, a black snake - just a snake. And that was the end of the music room. From then on he moved back into the house with just a portable radio.

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"Old Fuzzy"

by Malcolm Miller

Old Fuzzy was my dog (given to me when I was born by a family friend) and for the first fourteen years of my life we were inseparable.

You see growing up in the nineteen thirties, as I did, life was hard all around. There was no money for toys and things to play with but I always had Old Fuzzy, incidentally his real name was Shep but he was always Old Fuzzy to me. When I was too small to work in the fields I spent many happy hours playing with him. I would pretend he was a mule and have him pulling a make-believe plow or pretending we were battling lions or tigers. When I got big enough to venture to the creek he was always there looking for snakes. He hated rattlesnakes and I dare say he killed dozens of them during his lifetime. He would dart in and out until the snake struck, then he would grab the snake and start shaking and wouldn't stop until there was only pieces of the snake left.

During those hard times possum hunting was very popular and Old Fuzzy was the best possum dog in the community. I wasn't big enough to go along but many nights during late fall when the persimmons were ripe, some of my older brothers and their friends would head for the mountain and bring back a fat possum or two. I can still remember my Mama putting a big possum on the table surrounded by sweet potatoes. I don't think I could eat one now days but back then the only way you got fresh meat was by catching a possum, killing a chicken, a squirrel, a rabbit or even a ground hog. Of course, we had fresh pork once a year usually in the middle of November when we killed hogs, so you see possum hunting back then was a popular sport and also provided much needed food for our large family of seven boys and Mama and Daddy.

I have heard folks say you shouldn't give a child a dog or cat because when something happens to the pet the child would be upset but I believe that having a pet and eventually losing it helps prepare a person for things to come. In my eighty years I have lost my parents, five brothers and most of the friends that I grew up with.

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

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



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Madison Resident in Skydiving Hall of Fame



Chuck MacCrone, retired engineer, is to be recognized for his contributions to skydiving on both national and international levels when he is inducted into the National Skydiving Hall of Fame at the Skydive Chicago center in Ottawa, Illinois on September 7, 2013.

Chuck moved to Huntsville to work at the Marshall Space Flight Center in 1960. He joined the Huntsville Sport Parachute Club in 1961 and made his first jump in 1962. He was very active in competitive skydiving at both the Southeastern Region and National levels. He served 6 years on the board of directors of the United States Parachute Association and was the U.S. delegate to the parachuting commission of the International Federation of Aeronautics in Paris, France for ten years. He served as President of the commission for 6 years. On stepping down from the office he was acclaimed Honorary Lifetime President of the commission. His service to skydiving was recognized by the National Organization when he was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award for 1984.

Chuck finally retired from skydiving in 2001 with 1,070 skydives, to pursue a second career in emergency medicine. After receiving an Associates Degree in Emergency Medicine, he was

employed by H.E.M.S.I. as a paramedic where he has worked for the past nine years.

The Skydiving Hall of Fame, a function of the National Skydiving Museum whose Honorary President is former president George H.W. Bush, recognizes and honors those who, through leadership, innovation and/or outstanding achievements have defined, promoted, inspired, and advanced skydiving at the highest levels in the past, present and for future generations of skydivers.

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Times have Changed

The following is from a 1950's Home Economics textbook intended for HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS LEARNING HOW TO PREPARE FOR MARRIED LIFE:

1. Have dinner ready: Plan ahead, even the night before, to have a delicious meal - on time. This is a way of letting him know that you have been thinking about him, and are concerned about his needs. Most men are hungry when they come home and the prospects of a good meal are part of the warm welcome needed.

2. Prepare yourself: Take 15 minutes to rest so you will be refreshed when he arrives. Touch up your make-up, put a ribbon in your hair and be fresh looking. He has just been with a lot of work-weary people. Be a little gay and a little more interesting. His boring day may need a lift.

3. Clear away the clutter. Make one last trip through the main part of the house just before your husband arrives, gathering up school books, toys, paper, etc. Then run a dust cloth over the tables. Your husband will feel he has reached a haven of rest and order, and it will give you a lift too.

4. Prepare the children: Take a few minutes to wash the children's hands and faces if they are small, comb their hair, and if necessary, change their clothes. They are little treasures and he would like to see them playing the part.

5. Minimize the noise: At the time of his arrival, eliminate all noise of washer, dryer, dishwasher, or vacuum. Try to encourage the children to be quiet. Be happy to see him. Greet him with a warm smile and be glad to see him.

6. Some DON'TS: Don't greet him with problems or complaints. Don't complain if he's late for dinner. Count this as minor compared with what he might have gone through that day.

7. Make him comfortable: Have him lean back in a comfortable chair or suggest he lie down in the bedroom. Have a cool or warm drink ready for him. Arrange his pillow and offer to take off his shoes. Speak in a low, soft, soothing and pleasant voice. Allow him to relax and unwind.

8. Listen to him: You may have a dozen things to tell him, but the moment of his arrival is not the time. Let him talk first.

9. Make the evening his: Never complain if he does not take you out to dinner or to other places of entertainment; instead try to understand his world of strain and pressure and his need to be home and relax.

10. The Goal: Try to make your home a place of peace and order where your husband can relax.



She was only a whiskey maker, but he loved her still.

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September 11, 2011



by Leo Larkin

I almost missed it! Thankfully, I had a strong urge to attend early worship at my church that morning. I'd have had a justifiable excuse to not go; we were to travel in the opposite direction from our Monte Sano home for a later dedication service of a great-grandchild. So, my husband and I drove out to our Hazel Green United Methodist Church. Yes, we were aware of the significant date as the news media kept us informed, but I was not aware of what was in store for us that morning. We took our seats on the second pew at the front of the sanctuary as usual. The service started with my son, Shane Adkins, playing guitar and singing an Alan Jackson song, "Where were you when the World Stopped Turning."

"Where were you when the world stopped turning on that September day?"

A sudden, indescribable hush came over the already quiet church. There was no movement except for a firefighter, in full dress with his helmet under his arm, coming down the aisle. He knelt at the

altar for several seconds and then walked out.

"Did you stand there in shock at the sight of that black smoke risin' against that blue sky?"

Another firefighter came down the aisle. He also knelt. I looked around and tears were streaming quietly down most faces. I was struggling to keep my composure; I still had another service to attend in town and I didn't want make-up running down my face.

Then a city policeman in uniform came to the altar. He had just had knee replacement surgery and didn't kneel, but stood with head bowed.

"And the heroes who died just doing what they do?"

I nearly lost it then! I looked at Bob and he was crying. He didn't have make-up to deal with! "What next?" I thought. Then, a nurse and child came down, placed flowers on the altar and knelt.

"Did you weep for the children?"

They were followed by an office worker.

"But I know

Jesus and I talk to God." "Did you call up your mother and tell her you loved her?"

No words were spoken and they were not necessary after that!

"And the greatest of these is love. And the greatest of these is love."

Probably, mine were the only dry eyes in the house, except for Shane, and he said he couldn't look at anybody. Shane never tells me when he's going to play, so I could have missed it completely, if not for that strong nudge from God.

We have four church members who are firefighters and one city policeman. Two of those firemen were on duty that day. Protecting us!

(Used with permission of the writer/singer (Alan Jackson))

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Abnormal veins can appear as a bulging rope-like cord on the legs. Other symptoms of varicose veins include pain, aching, heaviness or tiredness, a burning or tingling sensation, swelling, pressure or throbbing, and spider veins. If you experience these symptoms and don't seek treatment varicose veins could lead to more serious complications, including phlebitis, blood clots, skin ulcers and bleeding.

Varicose veins occur when the valves in superficial leg veins malfunction. The superficial veins have one-way valves which allow the venous blood in the legs to return to the heart. When these valves become dysfunctional, typically caused by trauma, increasing age, pregnancy, and a family history of venous dysfunction, the valves may be unable to properly close. This allows blood that should be moving towards the heart to

flow backwards. This is called venous reflux and it allows the blood to collect in your lower veins causing them to enlarge and put the venous system under high pressure. Once a vein develops venous insufficiency it will always be abnormal and will only lead to the development of more abnormal veins and worsen.

In the past, venous insufficiency was typically treated with surgery using a procedure called vein stripping. This involved either multiple small incisions or a large incision leaving scars. Stripping can involve general anesthesia, treatment in a hospital, and multiple weeks of recovery. We now have minimally invasive treatments that are proven to be 98% effective in treating varicose veins.



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Remembering Johnny Evans

by M.D. Smith, IV

I wish Johnny was here to see this turnout of his friends and loved ones. Perhaps he is.

This is a good time to reflect on the life and times of Johnny Evans Osborne, the Channel 31 Alumni who had the longest run at 31 and was there when Cactus went to work in 1960.

Ed Sisson, a newsman from the 70s, said, "I will always remember Johnny. He was one of the most remarkable men I have known. I liked him from the first time I shook his hand. He was real. He was what he seemed to be...decent, caring and straight up. He could put a smile on your face and laughter in your heart."

Johnny and Cactus were at Channel 31 for 40 years, longer than my 36 years.

Johnny had a unique personality that was part salesman and part showman. As a salesman, he had an easy going style and manner about him, sort of like Lt. Columbo from the TV show, and was never "high pressure." He used subtle logic to get the customer to see the reasons why they should buy advertising. Johnny was very good at that.

He was the first salesman at the TV station to ever sell ONE MILLION dollars in a year. We did a studio celebration party for that event. Johnny could sell difficult clients when no one else could. It was his easy going and laid back style that made it possible.

Johnny was also a showman. He performed on TV in two capacities. He was the star of an afternoon kids' show on Channel 31 and he could do TV anchor work.

Sam Arnold, who was there in the early 60s, said, "Johnny would arrive at the station, minutes before the start of Western Theatre. He would rush to dress into his cowboy role and usually run into the studio during the break. At the end of Western Theatre he would be assigned to do weather or sports."

Tom Stinnett, a Channel 31 en-

gineer from later years, wrote "As a kid I used to have an autographed picture of Johnny, in costume on his horse, hanging on the wall in my room. I was in the "Peanut Gallery" on "The Johnny Evans Show" many times. Later as an adult when I went to work in the Engineering Dept. at Channel 31, I found Johnny to be very open, approachable and a genuinely nice guy."

Johnny was at his zenith when he was doing one of the Telethons, over many, many years and often got little or no sleep from Saturday until the next Sunday afternoon when the telethon ended. He raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for Cerebral Palsy, Muscular Dystrophy, The Children's Hospital and even a telethon for animals.

The telethons were mostly about the kids, and Johnny was very proud of the thousands of kids that his work helped in a most tangible way. Sometimes on a telethon in addition to all the local talent and a few big name stars or a Werner Von Braun who donated their services, Johnny would bring out "Tex", his ventriloquist dummy from the afternoon kids show, and do a routine as part of the program.

I still remember how Johnny would tell stories and "talk out of the side of his mouth" as if he was letting the dummy talk. I was not always sure who was the dummy, either. Sometimes, I think it was me.

Adrian Gibson worked with Johnny for a long time at 31 and about the telethons he said, "It was something he cared greatly about and showed how much he cared for others, especially the children. He leaves quite a legacy of caring and generosity."

When Johnny and Helen's house burned some years ago, they lost everything inside, but fortunately "Tex" and "Grandfather Clock" were in the garage and made it through. I believe Tex is being passed down to family.

A last comment from someone who knew Johnny best and that is Cactus as he relates a story that happened before the Smiths bought Channel 31 in 1963.

The G.M. at the time, John Higdon, met Cactus one morning

saying "You so and so"... "You ate the watermelon we had for a prop for the Red Food commercial last night!!"

Johnny came in and heard it and said, "You are wrong John, Grady Reeves cut that melon thinking we had already done the break".... Mr. Higdon felt so bad about that morning, he gave me a \$5.00 raise....." If it hadn't been for Johnny, Cactus would not have worked at 31 for so many years!

The warmth of Johnny's personality, his love of a good or funny story and unique chuckle as he'd tell the tale live on, in all our memories. Just like the love that Helen, the family and all of us have in our hearts for him.

Johnny did many a telethon where it was the longest show of any event in broadcasting. Now Johnny is in a place where the show goes on forever and I assume he's making people smile just like he did here for such a long time.

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Traveling to Huntsville in 1931

by James T. Syler

When I was just 7, we made my first trip to Huntsville. I had never been to what was called the "big" town. Someone had asked Mr. Tabor to come to our house and take us to "town." Getting to ride in a car was a thrill for me.

About 9 am that day he came for us and we were off. Along with us, he took many vegetables, eggs, chickens and milk to sell at the courthouse square in Huntsville. In fact, I was the one who held a gallon of milk the entire trip to town. Everything was wonderful until the car started up the mountain. When the trees in the valley were so far below the road, I really hugged that jug of milk for dear life. I could just see that car, and us, going down into that valley, end-over-end. Finally the top of the mountain came into view. At that point Mr. Tabor flipped a button (the car didn't have a key). This turned the motor off and put the car in neutral gear, and we coasted all the way to Huntsville Hospital. I didn't realize the danger of a trip down the mountain with squealing brakes, that could fail at any time.

With the motor running again, we arrived at the Courthouse. There were so many wagons parked all around the Square, and a few cars. Grandpa said they were model "T"s and model "A"s. There were tall buildings everywhere. One could buy anything he wanted, and there were crowds of men and women picking through the large selection on each wagon. A few of the men were yelling to the buyers, telling what they had to sell. One car had some large tubs containing fish.

There were some huge fish - bigger than the any I had ever caught in the bog. It was rumored that the fish salesman would take out the entrails and put a quart of "White Lightning" inside each fish. This turned out to be true, but I don't think they sold any of these fish to the policemen.

Everything was astounding

to me. I looked at the tall buildings around the Square and asked how on earth could people get to the tops of them. I was told that they had elevators, but I had no idea what an elevator was. It was explained that people used an elevator to get to the top, that it was a big box that had a man sitting on a stool, who would ask the floor number you wanted to get to, then carry the passengers to the desired floor.

I saw that the streets were paved with bricks and



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then noticed a man standing on the street corner holding what looked to be a rope. I asked what that man was doing, and was told that he was making the thing in the middle of the street turn red or green. The cars would cross the street for a while, while the walkers would run for their lives, trying to cross the streets and avoid the cars.

By this time I was starving and could smell a wonderful smell of something cooking. It was coming from the "greasy spoon" next door and smelled wonderful. I had heard the kids at school tell me how good the hamburgers tasted and how many they could eat, but I had never had one. The good smell nearly drove me crazy, but no amount of begging and pleading to my grandfather worked.

He said he had a better idea for dinner. That we would go to T. T. Terry's to have some cheese and crackers - a dime's worth. Sure enough, there was a large wooden barrel with cheese and crackers. To the back of the store we went, to sit on large feed bags as chairs. It didn't taste good to me because what I wanted was a large, greasy, hot hamburger just around the corner. T. T. Terry's slogan was "Great is the Power of Cash," painted on a sign over the doors of the store.

After our crackers & cheese, I begged my grandpa to see the Big Spring. To my surprise he agreed, until he saw the number of steps he would have to take coming back up. He finally gave in and we started down. What a spring! I had never seen such boiling water, just bubbling up from the bottom. I asked what caused that and was told that a swift current was pushing the water from under the ground.

Someone said the spring had no bottom, and that brought on a deep puzzle. If the spring had no bottom why did the water not run the other direction and run out some other place? And surprisingly, the water was very

cold and not hot, which I imagined. We went back up and I went up the courthouse stairs and onto another floor, where I noticed a drinking fountain. It was marked "White Only" and a little further down was another one marked "Colored." I couldn't understand that and asked about it. I was told that was the rule, I wondered who made that rule but no one paid attention to me.

My grandmother wanted to go to Kress's 5&10 cent store. I was thrilled, we could buy anything in the store for 5c and no more than a dime. I was shocked beyond speech when I found out that was not true, things cost a lot more. I asked why they tried to fool people with that sign on the glass window. I ended up with a pair of blue socks to wear to Sunday school. I was happy with that as I wanted a souvenir to take from town.

By this time the place was so crowded with so many people.

It was time to go but I still had many questions to ask my folks. I guess they had enough silly questions for one day.

We found our car and were on our way home. Going back down the mountain towards home Mr. Tabor switched off the car again and barely held it between the ditches while I said prayer after prayer, with my eyes shut tight.

At the end of the day, I was really happy to get home, and see Bingo, my dog, greet me at the yard gate. The day had been great but there was no place like home and I was very happy to be there.

I heard years later that Mr. Tabor had ended his life in that same car, when he was hit from behind by a car traveling at a very high rate of speed.

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Tweetie

Birds

* 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.

* If a blackbird nests in your house you can look forward to a year of good fortune.

* If a red bird crosses your path, you will receive good news from a loved one.

* Some Native American tribes believed that eating turkey would cause them to lose their courage.

* Sparrows bring summer with them when they come.

* If you harm a robin or a robin's nest you will be struck by lightning.

* A hen which enters the house is an omen that a visitor will arrive.

* An owl hooting is bad luck. There are a number of ways to counter this bad luck: put irons in your fire; throw salt, hot peppers or vinegar into the fire, the owl will get a sore tongue and hoot no more; take off your clothes, turn them inside out and put them back on.

* Peacock feathers have an evil eye at the end.

* If a mockingbird flies over the head of a single woman, she will be married within the year.

* The Aztecs believed that hummingbirds were the reincarnation of brave warriors killed in battle.

* The dove is the only bird which a witch cannot transform.



Cats

* If you kick a cat, you will develop rheumatism in that leg and you are sacrificing your soul to the Devil. If you are a farmer, your cattle will die mysteriously.

* If a girl treads on a cat's tail, she will not find a husband for at least a year.

* In France, it is considered bad luck to cross a stream carrying a cat.

* When moving to a new home, put the cat in through the window, not the door, so that it will not leave.

* To reverse the bad luck curse of a black cat crossing your path, first walk in a circle, then go backward across the spot where it happened and count to 13.

* The Dutch believed that cats could spread gossip around town and were careful not to discuss anything delicate in

front of them.

* "Who cares well for cats will marry as happily as he or she could ever wish." — French proverb.

* Some cats have the ability to foretell death and will curl up by the sick person.

Dogs

* A greyhound sporting a white spot on its forehead guarantees good fortune.

* Being followed by a black dog is an omen of death (in Scotland and Lancashire).

* Being followed by a black dog is good luck (in the West Country).

* A sleepy dog who scratches himself is a sign that the weather will change.

* If a dog eats grass or rolls in the dust, rain is coming.

* It was once believed that if a dog howled on Christmas Eve it will be fated to go mad before the end of the year. Many healthy dogs were killed as a result of this belief.

* Dogs howling in the silent night are a sign of imminent death.

* A dog with seven toes can see ghosts.

* Three white dogs together are considered lucky.

* South Dakota Lakota Sioux Indians believed you could transfer illness from a human to a dog by placing them next to each other.

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From the Desk of Tom Carney

The Russel Erskine Hotel

by Tom Carney

More than nostalgia, the Russel Erskine Hotel still stands as a monument to a bygone era, a time when Huntsville was young and growing. Now that there are other and newer monuments and skyscrapers, the Russel Erskine Hotel has taken a lesser, but still significant, role.

Albert Russel Erskine was the onetime President of the Studebaker Corporation. Although he did not have an important financial interest in the hotel, it was named for this local person of national prominence.

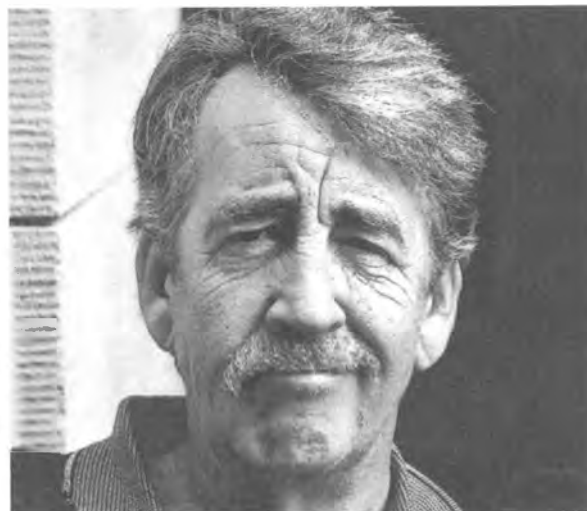
According to local folklore, the hotel ran into financial trouble before it was ever completed. In an attempt to raise more money, the owners came up with a plan to name it after Erskine, a local hometown boy made good, hoping to interest him in investing in the venture. When the hotel was dedicated, Erskine came to Huntsville, listened to the speeches honoring him, ate the free food, drank the free liquor, stayed in the free suite, and then went back to Detroit without spending any money!

As each city has its prominent hotel, the Russel Erskine

was "the place to go" in Huntsville, Alabama.

Officially opened on January 3, 1930, in the midst of the Great Depression at a cost of 1.5 million dollars, it was and still is a splendid building that was 12 stories high and had 132 rooms. It became one of Huntsville's leading attractions and immediately became a popular spot for conventions and travelers.

Besides the convenience and availability of a large hotel in Huntsville, visitors noted the "completeness" and "exquisiteness" of the furnishings in 1930. It was also noted that such modern conveniences of the day as an electric fan and an RCA radio were in each room. One satisfied guest, Dr. George Alden of Massachusetts, wrote the hotel saying that the Russel Erskine was the best appointed and gave the best service of any hotel during his trip. The Russel Erskine became the shining jewel of Huntsville.



It was Huntsville's best advertisement and many balls and gatherings were held in its splendid ballroom and banquet rooms.

In the decade of the 1940s, the Russel Erskine grew and prospered with the development of the Army's newly founded chemical warfare arsenal. Rooms during the war years were easily filled and the guests were more than adequately served by a staff of over 100 persons. High ceilings, chandeliers, an inviting comfortable lobby with scurrying bellmen, entertainment, fine dining on tables with white linen tablecloths and a barber shop on the premises seem uncommon to the average traveler today, but the Russel Ers-

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kin was the premier hotel in North Alabama. It was before the widespread use of motels, "no frills," and budget accommodations.

After the war, as the Nation's economy sputtered, the Russel Erskine was merely changing gears. In 1949, with the advent of the Rocket Center, the hotel again had no problem filling rooms. The hotel continued its success throughout the 1950s, and in 1955 the Russel Erskine commemorated its 25th anniversary with a week-long celebration. From 1937 until its closing, the hotel turned a profit each year.

But as motels began to be built on the perimeter of the city, the hotel not only had to deal with competition, but also a change of taste and choice of potential guests. In the 1960s, the movement of commercial activity away from downtown areas in many American cities hastened the demise of many hotels and businesses.

The stately Russel Erskine Hotel, so proudly rooted on Clinton Avenue, could not move with the new development and economic opportunities outside its downtown site. Measures to revive the hotel were short-lived. In March of 1971, the Russel Erskine Hotel closed its doors to transient guests. It's only business thereafter was to cater to conventions, civic clubs, and special accommodations.

Well-intentioned, thought-out plans of a succession of owners to revive the hotel were unsuccessful. Consequently, the hotel was auctioned off to the First Alabama Bank in 1975 for \$300,000, which included the furnishings. Interestingly, this was far less than the construction cost of \$1,500,000 in

1929. If this was not indignity enough to the landmark hotel, in May, 1979 its contents went on sale. For thirty days the hotel was opened to the public to buy whatever they wanted.

The First Freewill Baptist Church bought the ballroom's main chandelier and the lobby's four metal chandeliers within the first half-hour of the sale. Visitors and buyers rummaged through the halls of the once-proud hotel, looking at price tags on the furnishings and eventually removing the trappings of the hotel. Perhaps they bought for their own use, to resell, or to obtain a precious keepsake of the place that held for them a fond memory of a "Cotton Ball," an unforgettable evening for a debutante, or honeymoon. By any account, it was the wake of the hotel.

Ironically, in 1978, the Russel Erskine Hotel was considered as a county-state work-release center for the Department of Corrections. Reportedly, a proponent of the idea said that,

"It looks like the building was just built for this purpose."

Finally and happily on September 15, 1983, the Russel Erskine reopened its doors as a high-rise complex for the elderly and disabled. Renovated for \$3.6 million by local business people working with the Huntsville Preservation Authority, the memory, the brilliance and the hotel building itself has been revived. Huntsville's premier landmark of the 30s and 40s remains, except now it serves to house its residents permanently — not as temporary guests. While the new tenants still share much of the same ambiance of this venerable building as the former occupants, still there is a distinction between a hotel and a high-rise apartment house.

But two facts are indisputable: the new residents still have magnificent views from their windows, and any residents who lived there at any time became a part of Huntsville's rich history.

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Working for Firestone

by Don Broome

I got hired at the Firestone store on North Parkway in 1974. The manager, Charles Stevens, was a tall man, rather lanky. He was a fair and honest man and treated everyone equally. I was hired as the Passenger Tire Sales Manager. They were big on titles. I would become Service Manager and then Assistant Manager and I worked in 3 of the 4 stores in Huntsville.

One of the tire changers rode his motor cross bike to work one day. I'm told that these bikes are lightweight and fast. The thing about this type of bike is that it's designed to accelerate instantly and while it might not do but 80 or 85 mph, it will do it quick. Charles asked if he could ride it up and down the side street. The owner warned him that it was fast, Charles told him that he had owned a big hog in his younger days and could surely handle this little thing.

We watched as he slowly went up to the end of the road to get a good start. We heard him winding it out coming down the hill. As he came into sight, he was laid out on the seat hanging onto the handle bars for dear life. At the last moment, he was able to pull himself back aboard. It took him a long time to live that one down.

The North Parkway store is located near some senior apartments and we had a few who were regular customers. There were two that will always be a part of my memories. An old man, bent over, had a grumpy look on his face and had to watch everything that we did to his car. Nothing was ever quite right and we sure were always glad to see him go. He just knew that if we told him something was wrong with his car that we had broken it so we could do the repair.

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Ralph Pope, December 1900

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The other was a lady. The sweetest, kindest, gentlest woman you could meet. As luck would have it, they had both come in for an oil change at the same time. Mr. Grumpy and the Lady. As we serviced her car, we noticed that one of her shocks was broken. The shaft was broken in two. When we told her, she didn't know what to do so she asked Grumpy. He agreed that it needed to be replaced and that the sale price was fair.

While we repaired her car, I noticed them talking, but I was busy and didn't have time to dwell on it. About 4 months later they came in together, holding hands and being all love-dovie like childhood sweethearts. When the former Mr. Grumpy went to check on his car, I asked what kind of magic she had worked on him?

She laughed with a glow of happiness and then she said kind of quietly that she and Buddy (his name) had grown up together in Iowa and were sweethearts planning to marry after finishing high school. She said in their senior year, World War I started and Buddy, as most in town did, went to war. After the war, she had learned that he had been killed and she moved away with her family.


Both had married, raised their families and were widowed, living in the same apartment building for 5 years and had not known the other was there. I stand in awe of what love can do or at least in that one case it was a transformation. They continued to use Firestone and I saw them together on many occasions. He

was always smiling and holding her hand, looking as if he couldn't wait to get her alone.

When I was the Service Manager at the Bob Wallace Store, a young couple came in to buy a microwave oven. They said they didn't know anything about them. I was the one at this commercial store that knew appliances and was called to wait on them. It was close to my break time so I got out my Hardee's Steak and biscuit and placed the bag in the microwave not realizing that the biscuit wrapper inside was foil lined. After setting the dial for 1 minute, we continued down the row showing them the different models. After I had shown them the full line of ovens, we stopped at the oven with my biscuit so that I could show them the 'miracle' of a hot sandwich. As I opened the door, smoke billowed out.


As my customers, looks of horror on their faces, peered into the oven, strings of the melted plastic from the ceiling were hanging down like a stalactites in a cave. I had to laugh because it was so stupid not to remember the foil. And it didn't take a rocket scientist to know I had lost that sale.

While I was the Assistant Manager at the North Parkway store, I had a truck driver walk up to me and ask me if he could use our employee bathroom to clean up. He said he had been on the road for a week and needed to clean up badly. The employee area was always wet and couldn't be hurt by someone cleaning up so I told him sure. Some time later, he emerged looking clean having shaved and washed and had put on fresh clothes. He told me how much he appreciated my letting him clean up and offered to pay me something. Before I could say anything, a customer asked him what he was hauling. He told us it was a load of green beans. The customer asked if he could have some of them and was told that these beans weren't for humans, that they were grown for animal feed. We chatted for a few minutes more and the customer left. The truck driver turned to me and asked me if I wanted any green beans. I told him that I didn't think that green beans grown for animal food would be very good. He said that the beans were picked yesterday and were for humans. I took 2



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Did you hear about the cross-eyed teacher who lost her job because she couldn't control her pupils?

banana boxes full home with me and we spent the weekend canning beans. They were good, too.

When you have been with a company and get moved, you often will have customers follow you to your new location. One of these loyal customers and I must say he will always be a friend was Jerry. Jerry had 2 cars, one was a little sports car called a Fiat X19. It's about as high off the ground as a go cart. His other vehicle was a 4X4 that you needed a step ladder to get into.

One day Jerry came into the store and his face is all banged up with scratches and bruising. I asked him what happened? Kind of sheepishly, he said that he had gone out drinking and when he got home he forgot and thought he was in the little sports car and stepped out of the 4X4 and fell flat on his face.

Several weeks later, he came in on crutches and I asked him what happened. He said that he went out drinking and thought he was in the 4X4 and was in the sports car and pulled his groin muscles.

About two months later, Jerry and his wife pulled into the lot with two identical Olds Cutlasses. As I came up to him to greet him, he winked at me and whispered "Solved that Problem, didn't I?"

Dolphins are so smart that after just a week of captivity they can train people to stand on the edge of the pool and throw them fish.



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Money Saving Tips

- Want to find the freshest and cheapest produce? Visit a local farmers market. The produce tends to be fresher, treated with fewer chemicals, and cheaper than the grocery store.

- To stretch your liquid hand soap and dish soap, when the container is half full, fill the rest with water. Shake gently to mix. Works just as well, and your soap will last twice as long!

- Don't spend your money on expensive deodorant cat litter. Instead, when you change the litter box, spray it with a disinfecting spray (like Lysol) and cover the bottom with baking soda. When the cat scratches it will mix the baking soda in and alleviate the odor. Sprinkle more on top as needed.

- Instead of using expensive paper towels to clean up messes in your kitchen, buy a bunch of cheap washcloths and keep those in a drawer in your kitchen. You can throw them in the wash and use them over and over. Buy them in a color that matches your kitchen so they don't get mixed in with your bath ones.

- For economic and stylish gift-wrapping use raffia instead of ribbons or bows. It's much cheaper and it looks great, too!

"You can tell it's going to be a bad day when your car horn goes off accidentally and remains stuck as you follow a group of Hell's Angels down the highway."

Jeb Akins, Scottsboro

- You can completely do away with the need for paper napkins, aluminum foil, plastic bags, plastic food wrap, etc. by using cloth napkins for all meals and Tupperware for all food storage instead. What a great savings over the years!

- Crockpots can be a pain to clean. To avoid that, place a Reynolds cooking bag into the pot, fill it with your recipe, cover and cook as usual. To store leftovers, just pull the bag out of the pot, close it and toss into the fridge. By not having to scrub the pot, you will save time, water and soap!

- For savings using your dishwasher, fill only the main cup with detergent, not the pre-wash cup, and set it on light wash instead of regular wash. You'll find the dishes are just as clean! Also, before putting dishes in your dishwasher, try

rinsing them in cold water instead of hot. It has no bearing on the cleaning process and saves money on your utility bill.

- When cleaning the garden in fall, don't throw away unripened tomatoes. Just pull the tomato plant out, roots and all, shake off the dirt and hang the plants upside down, in either the basement or the garage. The green tomatoes will ripen "on the vine" and you'll enjoy fresh tomatoes for months!

- To rejuvenate worn denim garments, buy denim dye and use it in an entire wash load of denim items. They come out looking brand new.

- Have lots of flat sheets, but need fitted ones? Convert a flat sheet to a fitted one by tying a knot in each corner and when making the bed, just tuck each knot under the corners of the mattress.

Each day is a gift.



ALL HOSPICES ARE NOT THE SAME. Hospice Family Care is Madison County's only not-for-profit hospice provider and was one of the first hospices to open in the United States.

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Grady Reeves, Johnny Cash and Me

by Billy Joe Cooley

I was on my way home from the Korean War, my soldiering days far behind, when I stopped off in Huntsville to visit my old radio pal Grady Reeves. It was the summer of 1954 and I was anxious to get back to familiar ground.

Grady had always called me "Boondocks," a reflection on my rural raising, so I called him the Cincinnati Flash, a throwback to his hometown. I stopped by WBHP where he was a record spinner and a part time show promoter. They told me that he had gone out to the Madison County coliseum on Holmes Avenue. I went out there.

"Come on, Billy Joe, you can help me with the show I've booked in here," he greeted.

The coliseum in those days had no end walls, since it was primarily used for cattle shows and such.

"What kind of show have you got promoted here?" I asked.

Grady explained that a Nashville agent had called and said he had a large bunch of traveling musicians who needed a night's work while passing through here on their way to Tuscaloosa.

"The whole bunch will perform and it's only costing me \$600," he said. "I ought to make a good profit." I helped unfold and set up chairs.

At about 5 p.m. a long Cadillac limousine pulled up and about a dozen people got out. A rack on top of the car contained suitcases, guitars and amplifiers. It looked like a band of gypsies. The car was old, half covered with mud and resembled something that had traveled across a lot of plowed fields in recent days.

The musicians and singers were about my age, so we sat around and gossiped for a couple of hours. They were fascinated with Grady's tales about his days as a sportscaster.

About an hour before show time the audience started trickling in. Most were older people. They paid \$2 a person, which was the going rate for a concert in those days.

A few people showed up. Very few.

Grady lost about \$200 on the show. It was the first the I had seen a grown man whimper.

The show was excellent and it was a shame that so few people saw it.

When the show was over I helped the gang get the stuff repacked atop that old limousine and bade farewell to Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins and Elvis Presley.

Little did we know that each man was to become a super star one day.

\$1,500 Finders Fee

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To request info or provide info to me, please phone me at 256-679-1694.

Email me at the below:
duhvjob4me@yahoo.com

A true story of unwavering faith and optimism by

Steve Burcham

Prayer and Grace

My Journey to a New Heart

In his late 40s, Steve suddenly experienced inexplicable heart failure.

The struggle to survive and finally get a heart transplant changed more than his physical health and well-being. How he managed to keep going through it all makes for an uplifting story of medical miracles and spiritual healing filled with humor, determination, prayer and ultimately unshakeable faith

www.prayerandgracethebook.com

Prayer and Grace is available on Amazon, Barnes & Nobel and at The Dwelling Place bookstore on the campus of Asbury Methodist Church in Madison. Contact Steve via email at stephenburcham@bellsouth.net

A Cranky Old Man

What do you see, nurses?.....What do you see?
 What are you thinking when you're looking at me?
 A cranky old man,.....not very wise,
 Uncertain of habit.....with faraway eyes?
 Who dribbles his food.....and makes no reply.
 When you say in a loud voice . 'I do wish you'd try!' Who seems not to notice . .
 the things that you do.
 And forever is losing.....a sock or a shoe.
 Who, resisting or not.....lets you do as you will,
 With bathing and feedingthe long day to fill? Is that what you're thinking?
 Is that what you see? Then open your eyes, nurse, you're not looking at me.
 I'll tell you who I am.....as I sit here so still,
 As I do all your bidding.....as I eat at your will.
 I'm a small child of tenwith a father and mother,
 Brothers and sisters.....who love one another.
 A young boy of sixteen.....with wings on his feet.
 Dreaming that soon now.....a lover he'll meet.
 A groom soon at twenty.....my heart gives a leap.
 Remembering the vows.....that I promised to keep.
 At twenty-five, now.....I have young of my own.
 Who need me to guide and a secure happy home.
 A man of thirty.....My young now grown fast, bound to each other with ties
 that should last.
 At forty my young sons have grown and are gone, but my woman is beside me
 to see I don't mourn.
 At fifty, once more.....babies play 'round my knee,
 Again, we know children my loved one and me.
 Dark days are upon me my wife is now dead.
 I look at the future.....I shudder with dread.
 For my young are all rearing young of their own. And I think of the years ...
 and the love that I've known.
 I'm now an old man.....and nature is cruel.
 It's jest, old age.....when I look like a fool.
 The body, it crumbles.....grace and vigour, it departs.
 There is now a stone where I once had a heart.
 But inside this old carcass, a young man still dwells.
 And now and again.....my battered heart swells.
 I remember the joys.....I remember the pain.
 And I'm loving and living.....life over again.
 I think of the years, all too few gone too fast.
 And accept the fact..... that nothing can last.
 So open your eyes, people.....open and see.
 Not a cranky old man. Look closer see.....ME!!

*Remember this poem when you next meet an older person whom
 you might brush aside without looking at the young soul within.
 We will all, one day, be there, too.*

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Top 10 Books of Local & Regional Interest

1. *Incidents of the War: Civil War Journal of Mary Jane Chadick* - by Nancy Rohr \$19.95
2. *Huntsville* by John Kvach, Charity Ethridge, Michelle Hopkins and Susanna Leberman \$19.99
3. *Historic Huntsville:* by Elise Hopkins Stephens \$18 (new price)
4. *Growing up in the Rocket City: A Baby Boomer's Guide* (over 200 Photos/illustrations) by Tommy Towery \$15
5. *1861 Civil War Map of Huntsville* (with historic points of interest) \$4.95
6. *The Wondrous McCrarys: 200 Years on a Madison County Farm* by Joseph Jones \$12.95
7. *Dear Sister - Civil War Letters to a Sister in Alabama* by Frank Anderson Chappell \$14.95
8. *Tornado Valley* by Shelly Miller \$14.95
9. *True Tales of Old Madison County - back in stock* - by Pat Jones \$7.95
10. *Huntsville Entertains* - by Historic Huntsville Foundation \$12