



No. 253  
March 2014



# Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

## Tornado Alley



The power was out everywhere and the next day when I was driving around I heard that the National Guard was directing traffic on Ryland Pike.

I was shocked because I didn't know the storms had hit Ryland and I had two brothers, Robert and Joe, living there. You realize that news didn't travel as fast in 1974 as it does now.

When I finally got to Ryland I couldn't believe the destruction I was looking at.

*Also in this issue:* **The Sad Saga of Kinch Britt**

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# Tornado Alley

by Malcolm W. Miller

When I was a small boy growing up on the farm I always looked forward to the coming of spring, because the cold winters were more than rough in those old tenant houses where my parents and their seven sons lived. Sometimes the cold wind would blow the snow right through the cracks in the walls and onto the beds where we were sleeping. The hens would quit laying, the milk cow would go dry and by that time we would have eaten most of the meat from the hogs we killed in the fall.

With the coming of spring I could look forward to fresh vegetables, fresh milk and eggs. One big thing, however, concerned us about the coming of spring and that was the fear of cyclones. Cyclones are what every one called tornados back then.

Almost everywhere we lived we had what we called storm cellars. These had been dug with pick and shovel into the red clay ground. A frame was constructed around it and

poles covered by dirt and a metal door were at the entrance to raise the front so we could enter. I recall when I was very small Papa would carry me, the youngest of the seven boys, in his arms through the wind and rain to the storm cellar when the weather was bad as the rest of the family followed. This storm shelter does not compare with the elaborate storm shelters of today, but they were sufficient at the time.

The first tornado that I remember was in Jackson County. My parents as well as others were talking about the horrible storm. It came through at seven p.m. on March twenty-first, 1932, killing many people. Two men were killed in the hosiery mill which was destroyed. The storm totally destroyed the town of Paint Rock, which until this time was a bustling town with a textile mill and several homes and businesses.

To this day Paint Rock has never completely recovered. Years later when I would drive through Paint Rock I could look at the mountain to the southwest and see a wide gap in the trees, a grim reminder of the killer tornado that destroyed a once vibrant, busy little town. I found out from talking to others that this tornado was very much like the tornados here in 1974 and 2011 because it covered a lot of Alabama as did those two tornados.

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**Steve Jobs**



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716 East Clinton Ave.  
Huntsville, Al 35801

(256) 534-0502

Email - oldhuntsville@knology.net  
Internet Home Page  
www.oldhuntsville.com

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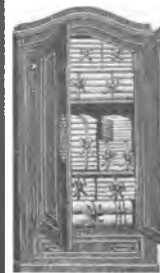
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It was reported that nearly 300 fatalities in Alabama were the result of this 1932 killer storm. As if this was not enough for the state to endure on March 28, 1932, there was another outbreak in Alabama raising the weekly death total for the state to approximately 362.

The current string of tornadoes started on April 4, 1974. There were multiple killer tornadoes that fateful night; about the time one warning was canceled another would be issued. Nationwide, 148 tornadoes struck 13 states on April 3, 1974. These were F4 and F5 tornadoes.

There were numerous people killed or hurt that night. Limestone and Madison counties were among the hardest hit areas in the United States with a death toll of 32. Statewide 86 people died in this April disaster. Two deadly tornadoes struck within a half hour that night in Limestone County. These tornadoes traveled about the same path that the recent

April 2011 tornado traveled.

After the 1974 tornado I was out driving because I thought it was all over when I heard on the car radio that another one was coming, so I went to the basement of what was then Humana Hospital. They were bringing a lot of patients from the top floors to the basement when I saw my sister-in-law Elsie. She was in there for surgery and I didn't know it. Had she been at her home she would have been a fatality. She would have never left her home, which turned out to be completely destroyed.

The power was out everywhere and the next day I was driving around when I heard them mention that the National Guard was directing traffic on Ryland Pike. I was shocked be-

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cause I didn't know the storms had hit Ryland and I had two brothers, Robert and Joe, living in Ryland. You realize news didn't travel as fast in 1974 as it does now. When I got to Ryland the destruction was unbelievable.

I arrived at Robert's house first, it was still standing but when I got to where Joe's house had been there was nothing. The only thing in that area left standing on the property was the little two-room house that we had built for Mama and Papa.

My son Doug came running and told me the family was all safe. They had gone to a neighbor's house, Dendy Brewer, because he had an under ground garage. The house was blown off but they were all OK.

I saw some incredible and unbelievable sights that day, cows with their hides hanging off, chickens with their feathers pulled out, grass twisted out of the ground and my nephew Bern's Dodge Dart car wrapped around the top of a power pole.

Another thing I recall about this tornado was the Amish people who came down from Pennsylvania and stayed in the Shiloh Methodist Church. They went out into all the fields and picked up all the debris left by the storm and believe me there was a lot of it. The neighborhood women provided food for them while they were there. After every one of these tornadoes mentioned in this article there were those who helped and took care of others.

Another tornado, an F4, hit the south side of Huntsville on

November 15 & 16, 1989. I was working at Jerry and Bill's Barber Shop on Governors Drive. It was almost quitting time and we stood out in front of the shop and watched this terrible looking cloud passing south and over us.

I was living off Hobbs Island Road at that time so I thought I would try to make it home. I didn't get far down Memorial Parkway till I ran into a traffic jam so I crossed over the median, went back and tried Whitesburg Drive and it was also blocked. I finally drove across the mountain on Highway 431 all the way to Owens Cross Roads and back up Hobbs Island Road. It took me two hours to get home.

The next day I found out that the storm had hit Airport Road during rush hour. There were 30 fatalities, and some of these were in their cars heading for home as they were leav-

ing work about this time. All total there were nearly 500 persons injured and the devastation was unbelievable, with costs no doubt in the millions. This storm changed the landscape of Airport Road and the surrounding area completely.

The tornado crossed over into Jones Valley and totally destroyed Jones Valley Ele-

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mentary School on Garth Road. School was out for the day but there were several students there in the Extended Day-care Program waiting for their parents. One of these was my granddaughter Mandi. Five teachers there took the children to a small open area under the stairway on the first floor and lay on top of them as the tornado hit the school. It is a miracle they all survived.

Naturally, to this day, Mandi is deathly afraid of tornados as are many of us. Someone told me that this tornado was 18.5 miles from beginning to end and 1/2 mile wide. Another storm vividly remembered by many today.

The next big tornado was on May 18, 1995; it went through the North Madison County and destroyed the Anderson Hills subdivision on Highway 53. Piggly Wiggly, across the highway from Anderson Hills, was also damaged. During the tornado in April 2011, this same Piggly Wiggly was completely destroyed.

By this time folks in the area started calling Harvest, Ander-

son Hills and the surrounding area "Tornado Alley".

On January 21, 2010, at about 6:00 p.m. a tornado struck near Five Points at the corner of Holmes Avenue and Andrew Jackson Way and traveled northeast through the Five Points district. Trees were pulled up from their roots and homes were damaged.

April 25 - 28, 2011, there were tornado outbreaks all over Alabama. These did a tremendous amount of damage and many lives were lost.

On April 27, 2011 there were tornado warnings, however my wife and I were busy that morning and didn't turn on the TV. We were to meet friends at O'Bryan's for breakfast to celebrate my wife's birthday. We went there to eat with friends, however others were smarter than we were and no one else arrived.

On the way home we drove over water and around downed trees. When we arrived home every tree in our back yard and the privacy fence was down. One of our trees had hit the neighbor's shed and crushed it.



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The neighbor on the other side had a tree right in the front of his house. The electricity was out so I sent my wife to her daughter's in Limestone County to charge my phone.

During the time she was gone one of the worst tornados in Alabama history hit Harvest, many were injured and killed and many houses were destroyed. All roads home were closed and she did not make it home that night until after 9 p.m. Many people couldn't get home that night and were forced to sleep in their cars.

Our little Country Treasurers Store on Old Railroad Bed Road, about ten minutes from where we live, also had many downed trees and the privacy fence was down. One of our buildings was flooded as the store is close to a creek and the wind had blown trees into the creek stopping the water from going down stream.

All people that have been through tornados have their own stories to tell, some very interesting and some very frightening.

The scars left from these tornados are still very evident. Even today, there are several half torn down houses and buildings all along Old Rail-

road Bed Road. I suppose the folks didn't have insurance and just gave up. When you have been hit two or three times this is very understandable. Some residents are older and just don't have the energy to rebuild a second or third time.

Anderson Hills was once again hit as was the shopping center across from them. This time Piggly Wiggly did not survive and this time residents of Anderson Hills are not rebuilding.

Two tornados struck north of the city of Huntsville on March 2, 2012, this included many in the Harvest area that had been hit in April 2011. The storm almost followed the same path as the 2011 tornado and residents were still trying to recover after tornados leveled their homes less than a year before. Some had just moved back to their homes and others were preparing to return.

So you see even as I did when I was growing up in the nineteen thirties I look forward to this spring with mixed emotions. In the back of my mind I know that starting in March we are very likely to have tornadoes as the warm and cold air collide with bad results.

Since I have gotten old and

can't take the cold weather I sure hope and pray for the warm spring weather without the tornados.



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# GROWING UP

by Tom Carney

When I was a young boy, I grew up here in Huntsville surrounded by more kinfolk than you could shake a stick at. My Daddy (Oscar Frazier, Tom's grandpa) used to say that if they weren't kin to us now, they would be if they stayed in one spot long enough. One of my uncles was Earl Frazier, a deputy sheriff at the time.

Being like most other kids, we had a tendency to get into trouble now and then. Among other things, we figured if we were old enough to almost shave, we must be old enough to drink a little liquor. I was the tallest, so I was nominated to do the buying.

At that time there was a boot-legger in town by the name of J. B. Webb. Ever so often, we kids would pool our money and I


would go visit J.B. for a 6-pack. The nine of us would go park on some dark road, share the six beers, and wonder if we were getting drunk yet. Course, we would all smoke cigars and sprinkle after-shave on each other so our kinfolks wouldn't catch on.

This went on for a good while, and being worldly men like we were, one night we decided to try some whiskey. Having already done our research, we knew exactly how much a half pint cost. So I go strolling into J.B.'s on my tiptoes, chest poked out and carrying exactly \$1.49 in change.

J.B. looks up from his chair and says, "What will it be, a six-pack?"

In my most manly voice I reply, "Oh no, sir, a half pint of Sunny Corn Whiskey tonight."

Without even looking up, J.B. responds, "Can't do it, son. Your Uncle Earl said don't sell you nothing but beer."



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# THE GUN

by Leo Larkin



I don't know why my grandfather gave me the gun. You'd have thought he'd given it to a grandson instead of me. Maybe it was because the tree behind my parents' Hazel Green home was full of lead.

I practiced regularly with my .22 rifle using Clorox lids as my target. When a boyfriend saw how small the target was, he refused to shoot with me. Daddy took great pride in my being a "crack shot".

Later, I was busy mothering two young sons and only shot my rifle when necessary; snakes were the targets. My experience with a pistol was limited to firing Daddy's .45 automatic. On one of my visits to Kentucky, my grandfather gave me an old silver-plated Colt .38 Special. For some reason, he neglected to tell me the history of the gun. Only in the last few years have I known the story.

Daddy had 80-something first cousins. One was a beautiful young woman, Hilda, who left the coalfields of Kentucky to go to New York City where she became a chorus girl. I saw her picture and she was truly pretty with auburn hair. It was said that her mother wouldn't let her go to the school where my parents did in Cleaton, KY.



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Hilda's venture to New York City proved to be her downfall. She got involved with the mob and became addicted to heroin. She was especially close to the gangster "Pretty Boy Floyd". One of his gang members came to Cleaton to hide when the heat was on the gang.

The law caught up with Pretty Boy Floyd and killed him in 1934. Hilda stayed on in New York. Somehow, she got out of favor with the mob and came back to her mother's home to hide. Daddy took me to see her in the early '50s when I was a child. She was sweet to me and I adored her beautiful Pekinese show dog.

Not too long after that she was in the airport in Louisville and dropped dead. I asked Daddy to go get her dog and he said that a policeman probably had taken the dog home. More likely, that dog went to the pound and I could have had it. I went to the funeral home with my parents and it was then that I learned about the heroin. Hilda was only in her 50's, but looked so old.

That made an impression on me and I knew that I didn't want anything to do with drugs.

I've only lately become aware that the gun belonged to the famous mobster Pretty Boy Floyd. My son, Shane, being very close to Daddy, learned about its ownership and told me.

There are two sets of folks that you don't want to get crossways with. The mob and the IRS! You've heard about

death and taxes. I've said all I'm going to about the mob.

I was a little afraid to fire the pistol because the cylinder was loose. I used to have nightmares that an intruder was in my bedroom and I was trying to shoot. The pistol wouldn't fire and I'd wake up in a cold sweat right before the intruder could reach me.

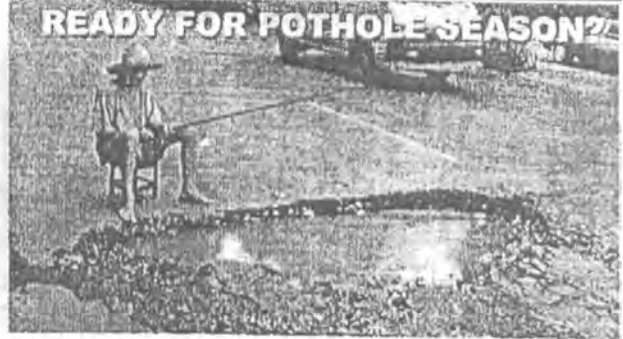
Kentuckians have a reputation about guns. It's true in my family. There was always a discussion about trades or buying a new gun. They especially treasured those that had belonged to a deceased family member.

How much of this story is actually factual or maybe family lore, I don't know. What I do know is, my

family were truth-telling folks and they didn't have to make up tales. There were enough violent and rip-roaring events to fill several books.

My home was broken into about 1980 and the gun was stolen. I had scratched the letter "A" on it, but it never turned up.

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# The Sad Saga of Kinch Britt

by Charles Rice

"Recalling those four years of horror meted out to us by the enemy who were devastating our fair land," wrote Mrs. Lillie Bibb Greet more than half a century later, "I wonder we did not succumb to fear and despair. Meager details of the battles reached us through the Yankees only, and were invariably misrepresented. Often we were given statements of the numbers slain without the names, and were left in horrible suspense for months."

Like most Southern women who lived through the war, Huntsville's Mrs. Greet had her tales to tell. One of them featured a notorious North Alabama turncoat.

"The terrors of our situation were added to by the 'home-made' Yankees, and coats, who searched and robbed houses," wrote Mrs. Greet. "One chief of these marauders was a man named Kinch Britt, a native of this county. He was the terror of the community. He made his appearance one night demanding admittance at the front door of the Scruggs home near town where I was visiting."

"Not realizing my danger, I threw open the door and defied him to enter, telling him I knew he was nobody but old 'Kitchen Bricks' and I would have him arrested. After storming and threatening, he left, saying we would see him again, but that was the last of 'Kitchen Bricks' for, in an attempt to invade the Robinson home a few nights

later, he was killed by Doctor Mac Robinson. Every citizen breathed a sigh of relief when they heard of this demon's demise."

Like so many of the "homemade" Yankees, Kinch Britt was a Confederate deserter. Unlike most of the others, however, Britt's reign of terror would be blessedly brief.

A native of Madison County, Kincheon G. Britt was a poor 32 year-old farmer when the war began. His home was on the Athens Road a short distance west of the Huntsville Depot. Britt had married Susan C. Williams in 1858 and was the father of a young son, James S., born in December 1859.

Britt had gone to war in 1861 as a Private in the Kelly Rangers, the famous "Yellowhammer" company of Forrest's Battalion. However, one doubts he made much of a soldier.

Britt apparently was captured in Tennessee during Forrest's raid, since he was paroled by the Union Army on July 16, 1863. His parole stated he was "Allowed to go home until ordered to report for exchange."

Returning to Huntsville, Kinch Britt found the Union

Army once more in control. He quickly abandoned any thought of returning to his regiment and joined the Yankee invaders as a scout. Britt's knowledge of Huntsville and the surrounding area was invaluable to them.

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Not much is known of Britt's activities around Huntsville, since they were the sort of thing people preferred to forget rather than remember. However, he did enough damage for him to be recalled with hatred. In fact, Kinch Britt even figures in a little known turn-of-the-century novel by a Huntsville resident named Robert Thomson Bentley.

Bentley's 1903 novel, called "Forestfield - A Story of the South", is loosely based on Huntsville's history. Bentley slightly fictionalized the setting; but many of the people, places, and events are easily recognizable, with the city name Huntsville becoming "Hunterstown" and "Meridianville" being renamed "Middleville."

Wiley Thompson, the man who died of shock after seeing Mitchel's invading army, is mentioned, though not by name. So is Sidney Darwin, the man who carried word to Huntsville of Mitchel's approach, only slightly disguised as "Sidney Dartmouth." Bentley obviously knew people who had lived in Huntsville during the war, and drew freely upon their recollections for his story.

The incident that cost Kinch Britt his life is told both by Mrs. Chadick in her diary and by Robert Bentley in his novel. It took place in November 1864 and involved James Madison Robinson, whose father owned the plantation home known as Forestfield.

**"No one can make you feel inferior without your consent."**

*Eleanor Roosevelt*

Forestfield was a beautiful dwelling located a few miles north of Huntsville on the road to Meridianville. The home belonged to James B. Robinson, whose brother John built the famous Oak Lawn, which still stands on Meridian Street just above Max Luther Drive. Supposedly, the two houses were almost exact duplicates.

When the Union Army invaded North Alabama, both James and John Robinson retired to Marengo County, Alabama, where they had extensive land holdings. However, James' son, James Madison Robinson better known as Mac or Matt, was an active member of the Confederate Army.

Young Mac Robinson had first gone to war with the Madison Rifles as their 3rd Corporal. Discharged in October 1861, he had joined the Kelly Rangers, becoming a Lieutenant. Mac had been appointed Captain of a sharpshooter company in Mississippi,

but resigned to assist in organizing the 4th Alabama Cavalry Regiment. He next served for six months as conscript officer for Madison County, finally forming a scout company when the Union troops returned to North Alabama in the summer of 1863.

During the course of his varied military career, Robinson was shot in the hand, struck in the head by a shell fragment and received saber cuts in both the arm and leg. Nevertheless, he survived to become a doctor after the war.

Robinson's service to the South had already made his family a target of reprisal. Eph Latham's men had come looking for him in 1863. Unable to find Mac, they burned the outbuildings on his father's plantation.



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Mac Robinson's scout company operated from the Tennessee River as far north as Nashville. Naturally, the Union Army was anxious to put him out of business.

In November 1864, while General Hood's army was moving westward on the south side of the Tennessee River, Mac Robinson scouted out the situation in Huntsville. On November 10, he was actually bold enough to visit his home.

Somehow, Kinch Britt learned that his old lieutenant was back in town. The next morning he informed the Federals. Colonel John Horner, the Union Provost Marshall, quickly gathered a detachment of cavalry and rode out to capture Robinson.

"Surrounding the house," said Mrs. Chadick, "they demanded a surrender, telling them it was useless to resist as they had 50 men. The reply was, 'If you want us, come

and take us.'" Kinch Britt was standing at a window, apparently trying to get a shot at Mac Robinson. Robinson saw him first and put a bullet in him."

"Thus has the enemy lost a most valuable scout and the citizens of the countryside a most dangerous foe," wrote Mrs. Chadick. "Col. Horner narrowly escaped. He had one of his shoulder straps shot off."

Robinson and his men slipped away in the confusion.

The Union soldiers were determined to shoot somebody, however, so they killed the caretaker, a man named Nugent, who was totally innocent of any wrongdoing. "The next day," added Mrs. Chadick, "Col. Horner sent up a squad of men to lay the house in ashes, an inglorious revenge, we should say, for a Methodist preacher, for such is said to have been his voca-

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tion before the war."

Robert Bentley naturally told the incident much more dramatically in Forestfield, though he was actually fairly true to the facts. Bentley has Robinson (renamed "Le Gare") hear a suspicious noise, slip out of the door and creep down to the end of the veranda. He discovers Kinch Britt ("Clem Bates") "crouching behind the honeysuckle vine." When Le Gare challenges Bates, Bates fires a shot and runs. Le Gare then shoots him dead.

"I rushed to the veranda in time to see the Confederates mount their horses and ride rapidly toward that side of the lawn next to the mountains, which was about a half-mile distant," says the heroine. "At the same time I heard the sound of horses' feet and the clanking of sabres from the direction of the lawn gate as if a hundred horsemen rode posthaste toward the house. But when they arrived upon the spot where they hoped to capture the Confederates (for they were Federal cavalry), our boys were fleeing rapidly across the plantation toward the mountain."

"Captain," says a Union Lieutenant in the novel, "do you not know that the dead man was a deserter from the Confederates to us, and that he was born and reared in this county?"

Yes, the captain agrees, "He is the notorious Clem Bates, who has been wreaking vengeance upon his former friends and neighbors as a spy ever since he joined us. I do not like to criticize a dead man in his presence, but I have heard that he was a bad man and unreliable on

both sides."

The heroine begs the Union Captain to intercede for them, knowing it was Union policy to burn all the houses where they had been fired on. The Captain chivalrously agrees to help, but Colonel Horner, "the meanest Yankee that was ever in North Alabama," orders Forestfield burned anyway.

"A corporal and a private were then sent into the mansion with a can of oil and matches with which to saturate the floors and set them afire, beginning at the top and then coming down." And this is probably just the way the deed was done.

Once dead, Kinch Britt vanished back into the obscurity he had so briefly risen from. All that remains of Forestfield today is a long double row of cedar trees that apparently mark the home site on the west side of U. S. Highway 231-431 north of Huntsville. They stand just opposite Bentley Auto Sales.

As a footnote, Kinch Britt's young son, James Britt, grew

to manhood as a ward of the county. Kinch Britt's first wife had died early in the war and young Britt had been raised by a stepmother.

"Crippled in both mind and body," Jim Britt was placed by his stepmother in the county poor house when he was only six years old. He spent the next 66 years there, dying at the age of 72 in 1932.

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# CITY NEWS - JANUARY 1911

## Rain Storm does much damage

The continued rain from Saturday night thru Sunday flooded the lowlands of the city and did considerable damage in the way of flooding the lawns and washed away many footbridges. In the Patton Grove neighborhood the waters were especially high. The spring branch was way out of its banks and so was Pinhook Creek. Likewise this was true in east Huntsville, where ditches and other low places were under water.

## Chimney at the Dement Residence blown down last night

During the early hours of last night, while the rain and wind storm was at its worst, the north chimney of the residence of Mrs. C. C. Dement on West Holmes Street was blown down. The occupants of the home as well as nearby neighbors were greatly frightened at the noise. Fortunately no one was hurt.

## Cave in of Dirt at the Residence of Mr. Newt White Last Night

What was said to be one of the old time ice houses, which were usually built underground, caved in last night at the residence of Mr. Newt White on Adams Avenue. The cave in was on Locust Street and to a depth of about 10 feet.

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Mrs. W. H. Isom of 1419 East Madison Street writes, "For several years I suffered off and on, from female troubles until finally I was taken down and could do nothing. The pains I experienced I shall never forget. I lost weight till I was only skin and bones. I believe I would have been in my grave if I had not tried Cardui. I shall praise it as long as I live." Many women like Mrs. Isom are weak and discouraged on account of some painful ailment. Are you one of these sufferers? Cardui will help you - try it today. Any druggist will carry it.

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# Heard On the Street

by *Cathey Carney*



As I sit here writing this column, we're again getting ready for some icy weather in the Southeast. We have sure had enough of this by now, but really feel for our northern neighbors who have snow day-after-day and can't even get out! I am so proud of our Huntsville Utilities for working so hard to keep us warm and reacting quickly anytime there is a "natural" problem on the lines. Thank you!!

OK, back to the Photo of the Month. We had lots of calls thinking that beautiful little girl was **Loretta Spencer**, but it was actually **Joy McKee** who is head of our Green Team, Director of Maple Hill Cemetery, and other city jobs. The first caller who had the correct name was Attorney **Jerry Barclay** whose office is on Southside Square downtown. Jerry is a Huntsville native and has been a resident in Old Town for 28 years! He said he has NO plans to ever move! Congratulations to Jerry.

Then, as many of you noticed and called about, there is another chance for you to win a free year's subscription to "Old Huntsville." Each month I'll hide a little character that will have something to do with the holiday in the month, somewhere in the pages of the magazine. It might be in an ad, or

it might be inserted in the text of a story, or along the margins of the page. It'll be small, and this month it's a Shamrock because March features St. Paddy's Day!

In order to make it fair that our subscribers have a chance to guess, I'll wait until **March 17, St. Patrick's Day**, before I start accepting calls for the hidden Shamrock. If anyone out there has another idea to make it more fair to those who have to wait to get their magazines - let me know!

The winner of the Hidden Heart for February was **Don Dunstone**, who is a resident at Redstone Village in Assisted Living. Don retired from his work as an engineer at Missile R&D 40 years ago and is now enjoying his life at Redstone Village. You've got sharp eyes, Don, the heart was on p. 43 for those who missed it. And the Shamrock will be smaller this month!

Happiest of birthdays to **Jeri Smith**, who recently turned 67. Her sister **Kathy Ogle** loves her SO much and sends a special HI!

We were so sorry to learn that **Deiter Schrader** had passed away,

at only 76 years old. Dieter worked as a lawyer and before that was employed with Thiokol Chemical Corp. for many years. He was involved with the Schrader Family Restaurant businesses since 1962, with restaurants such as Cafe Berlin, Bavaria Delicatessen, Old Heidelberg and Luciano's, among others. He is survived by his wife **Sonja Schrader**; daughters **Aunia Jones Schrader** and **Andrea Coffin (George)**. We send our deepest condolences to the family and many friends.

The **25th annual Dog Ball** was a resounding success. At our table was a lady who's been volunteering her help for the total 25 years - **Billie Muhl** - who was responsible for the Path of Paws - the sticky pawprints that show the adoptable dogs where to walk through the tables to get lots of love & petting. Billie's husband **Fred** was just delightful to talk with. The Ball is sold out every year and is completely enjoyable with great food and a silent auction, so be sure and go next year if you missed this year's event!

**Judy and M.D. Smith's son Owen**, 28, finished the Birmingham Marathon on Feb. 16, the final of the "3N3" Alabama marathon series. He was one of only 26 to

## 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 youngster loves old schools in historic districts!



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finish all three Alabama Marathons (Huntsville, Mobile and Birmingham) and won a special 3N3 medal for his efforts. He has done 6 marathons in just 4 months. Congratulations to Owen!

**Lt. Col (Ret.) George Leach** was a family man through and through. He was a 30 year Army vet, a helicopter pilot and missile defense engineer. George was active in the Golden K Kiwanis and worked tirelessly for OSHA Lifetime Learning at UAH. He was a loving, gentle and kind man who loved life. George passed away Jan. 27 and leaves wife **Maureen**, children **Curtis Leach (Iryna)**; **Robert Leach (Teresa)**; and **Judith Smith (Sam)** in addition to a brother, sister, stepchildren and grandchildren whom he was so proud of.

We recently found a single tombstone at 13954 Hwy. 231/431 in Hazel Green, just off the main road. The inscription is "Nancy King, 1900 - July 4, 1980". If anyone has any information about this, please let me know and I'll share it with our readers!

**Susan Durham** just loves her mama to pieces and wanted to send out a special Happy Birthday that her mom celebrated on Feb. 23 - **Dorothy Troupe Durham** turned 91 years old on that date! She still lives totally independently with lots of visits from family & friends. Her children are **Tom Durham, Susan Durham, Steve Durham and Philip Durham**. Happy Birthday to you Dorothy!

We wanted to wish **John Bzdell** of Old Town a Happy Birthday! He recently celebrated with **Margaret Watson** who treated him to dinner at D&L Bistro. They had fun!

During this very cold weather we appreciate our UPS, FEDEX and Mail Carriers even more than usual. Unless there's solid ice, they do their jobs every day. Thank you!

Many remember **Pat Zaborny**, the nurse who worked for **Dr. Burnside** at the Orthopedic Center of Huntsville for many years. She comforted many who were scared about their surgeries. Pat died on Jan. 16 at the very young age of 67. She is survived by her husband of 46 years, **Richard Zaborny**; daughter **Leah**; sons **Chris (Angela)** and **Brian (Amy)**; brother **Donald Balch (Faye)**; and her 4 grandchildren whom she loved so much.

**Ruth Jack Bond** passed away at the home of her daughter, **Sonja Schrader**, on Feb. 9 at the age of 94. We send our condolences to her daughter **Sonja**, son **Gary Lee Jack**, grandchildren **Aunia Schrader, Kevin Jack** and **Angela Baker**, and her great-grandchildren. She was a smart, feisty woman who will be deeply missed.

**Billy Leatherwood, Sr.** would have been 81 on March 17. We love and miss you so much! From **Rosemary & Billy Leatherwood, Jr.**

When we heard that **Emmylou Harris** and **Rodney Crowell** were coming to town, tickets were bought immediately. And it was a good thing because the South Hall of the VBCC was nearly full when they performed. Emmylou and Rodney are on tour promoting their latest CD, and the music was SO good. In our group was **Sam Keith, Rebekah Keith McKinney** and **Mark Breen**.

Speaking of great music, the **Historic Lowry House** just off Meridian Street near Lincoln An-

tiques is now featuring a twice monthly concert series. I attended the latest one in early February. The setting, sound and lighting reminded me so much of attending performances in the Bluebird Cafe in Nashville, TN. The sound was great and the setting (with the 12 foot ceilings) was just perfect. There were 3 performers - **Chapman James, Del McGee, Ron Dometrovich** - a very enjoyable evening.

Welcome **Remington Gun Manufacturer** to Huntsville! You're going to love it here!

Have a wonderful March and remember that warm sunny weather is on the way!

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### Hot Sausage Dip

1 lb. spicy sausage  
1 lb. Velveeta Mexican cheese, cubed

1 (10-oz.) can Rotel tomatoes with green chilis

Brown your sausage in a skillet, stirring til crumbly. Drain off grease. In a microwave safe bowl combine the sausage, cubed cheese and Rotel, mix well. Microwave on high til melted, stirring occasionally and don't burn. Serve with thin, crispy tortilla chips.

### Cheddar Chowder

2 c. water  
2 c. diced potatoes  
1/2 c. sliced carrot  
1/2 c. chopped onion  
1 t. salt  
1/2 t. pepper  
1/4 c. butter

1/4 c. plain flour  
2 c. milk  
2 c. shredded Cheddar cheese  
1 c. diced Polish sausage

Combine water, potatoes, carrot, onion, salt and pepper in soup pot. Boil for 10 to 12 minutes. Do not drain. Melt butter in small saucepan. Add flour, stirring until smooth. Add milk gradually, stirring after each addition. Cook until thickened. Add cheese. Stir until melted.

Add cheese sauce and Polish sausage to vegetables in soup pot. Heat thoroughly.

### Cheese Garlic Biscuits

2 c. baking mix (Bisquick)  
2/3 c. milk  
1/2 c. Cheddar cheese, shredded  
1/4 c. melted butter  
1/2 t. garlic powder

Mix baking mix, milk and cheese in bowl til soft dough forms. Drop by spoonfuls onto ungreased baking sheet. Bake for 8-10 minutes and golden brown.

Blend butter and garlic powder in bowl, brush on hot biscuits. Serve immediately.

### Spicy Lentil Salad

1-1/2 c. lentils, sorted and rinsed

1/2 t. salt  
1/2 c. chopped cilantro  
6 green onions, chopped  
1/2 c. olive oil  
juice of one lemon  
3 cloves garlic, minced  
1/2 t. coriander  
1/2 t. ground cumin  
1/4 t. ground cayenne pepper  
Black pepper to taste

Soak lentils in water to cover in saucepan for 2-3 hours. Bring

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to a boil. Simmer til tender and drain. Cool. Combine the lentils, salt, cilantro and green onions in bowl; mix well. Pour mixture of remaining ingredients over lentils and toss to coat. Serve chilled.

### Peanut Butter Treat

1 lb. milk chocolate  
1 (16-oz.) jar chunky or plain peanut butter.

1 lb. white chocolate

Melt milk chocolate in microwave. Add peanut butter and stir. Pour onto greased cookie sheet, spreading evenly. Melt the white chocolate in microwave. Pour in a zigzag pattern onto chocolate.

Cut with knife back and forth across the mixture. Chill til firm and break into bite-sized pieces.

### Coconut Sour Cream Cake

1 (2 layer) pkg. white cake mix  
2 c. sugar

2 c. sour cream

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

12 oz. whipped topping

Prepare and bake cake using package directions for 2 round cake pans. Cool. Split each layer into halves horizontally. Combine sugar, sour cream and coconut in bowl; mix well. Chill in refrigerator. Reserve 1 cup sour cream mixture for frosting. Spread remaining sour cream mixture between cake layers. Combine reserved sour cream mixture with whipped topping; mix well. Spread on top

and side of cake. Can be stored in airtight container in refrigerator for 3 days.

### Sweet Finger Snack

16 oz. cream cheese, softened

1 egg yolk

1/2 c. sugar

1 t. vanilla extract

2 (8-count) cans crescent rolls

1 egg white, beaten

1/2 c. sugar

1 t. cinnamon

3/4 c. chopped pecans

Beat cream cheese, egg yolk, 1/2 cup sugar and vanilla in bowl until light and fluffy. Line buttered 9x13-inch baking pan with 1 can of crescent rolls. Spread with cream cheese mixture. Cover with remaining crescent rolls. Brush with egg white. Combine 1/2 cup sugar, cinnamon and pecans in bowl; mix well. Sprinkle evenly over crescent rolls. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes or until brown. Let stand until cool. Cut into squares.

### Strawberry Surprise

12 oz. whipped topping

1 (21-oz.) can strawberry pie filling

1 (14-oz.) can sweetened condensed milk

1 c. chopped pecans

Fresh strawberries

Combine whipped topping, strawberry pie filling and condensed milk in bowl; mix well. Add pecans and mix well. Chill. Spoon into pretty dish, top with strawberries and serve.



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# Huntsville's Natural Well

*by Wayne Conner*

I am from Huntsville, Alabama and was born on May 10, 1939 on Stevens Avenue. When I was two years old my parents and I moved to Southern California where I stayed until I was drafted into the Army in 1962. When I got out of the Army I decided that I would try to live in Huntsville. My mother never liked California and she always wanted to move back to Huntsville. That was the reason I had for wanting to move back here. I stayed a total of 16 months. I went to work for Meadow Gold Dairy and got married to Barbara who lived on McKinley Avenue. I had a cousin who lived in Huntsville and he knew all about the caves in this area. He once told me that Huntsville was called "Cave City" and that there was a huge hole on Monte Sano. So we went up on Monte Sano one day and there was a man from our church who lived up there. He told us how we could get to the "Natural Well".

So we started hiking and it turned out to be about two city blocks from his house. When we got to this monstrous "Natural Well" we were totally amazed at the size of it. It was 180 feet in diameter. It went down 180 feet til it angled to a depth of 240 feet and that is where a cave starts. The top of it was solid stone, with no guard rail, and we didn't get within fifty feet of the opening for fear of slipping down and falling into the well. There is nothing to hold on to so if you lost your footing you fell into the well.

I heard later that there were no accidents while the well was unfenced, but later in the early 70s the city put a fence up. In 1984 a 25-year old girl climbed over the fence and fell to her death in the well. Her name was Teresa Lynn Carnes. My wife's niece knew her from working at the Arsenal. When we left, my cousin Sonny told me that as far as he knew no one prior to now had been down inside the well. He said there were a few people getting ready to go down into it when WWII started and they never got to do it. That was my belief all those 40 years since I first saw the well.

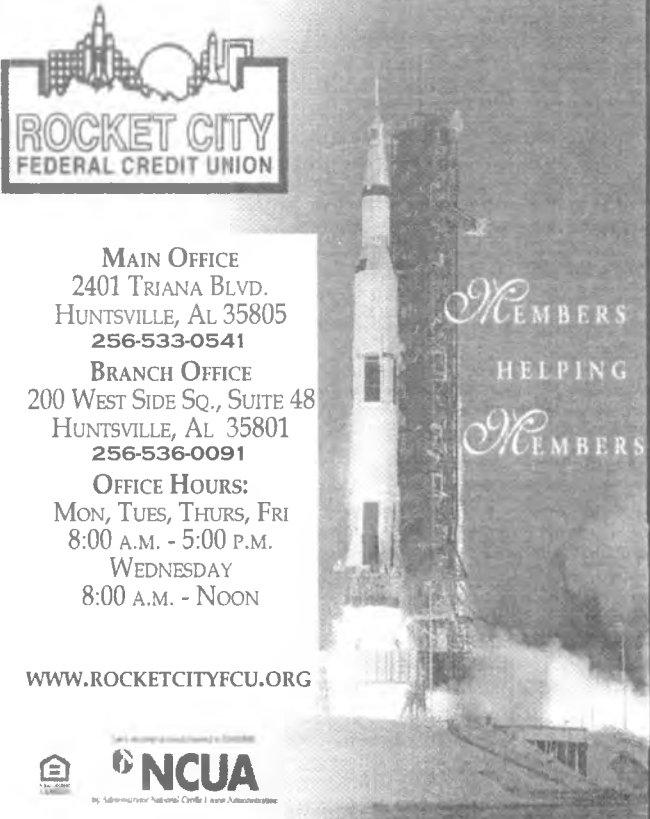
When I went back to Huntsville in May of 2006, my brother-in-law and I went up the mountain again. We were told by the forest ranger in the park that we could take a trail across the street from the Burritt Museum. We went to the museum and the lady there confirmed that the way the ranger told us to get there was the best, but that the trail was washed out. She also acted a little like she was afraid of going to the well. We got on the trail and found that we could not get



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across the washed out trail so we went back up to the old friend who lives on the mountain. He remembered me from forty years ago but said that he had just killed a rattlesnake in his back yard and that the trail was all grown over now and that we shouldn't try it. So after a week in Huntsville we headed back to California and I thought that maybe I would never get any more information on the "Natural Well," but I just couldn't get it out of my mind. Was I ever surprised when I got home and began to read the "Old Huntsville" magazine that I had purchased while in Huntsville. In there was an advertisement for a Shaver's Bookstore. I called the store and the man, John Shaver, told me that there was a book called "Tales of Huntsville Caves" and that there were six pages about the Natural Well in it! I then sent for the book and when I got it I learned so many more things about the Natural Well that I wanted to know. I found out there are at least 240 caves known in Huntsville and the Redstone Arsenal.

I hope the book becomes a best seller because it tells about information on Huntsville that show how totally unique the city of Huntsville is. When I was in grade school, I read about Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico, the Grand Canyon in Arizona, the Alamo in Texas - but not a word about the fascinating caves in "Cave City" - Huntsville, Alabama.

I live in Southern California but I am proud to have been born in Huntsville - "Cave City".

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# Old Hulldy

by Austin Miller

Our family didn't have a car until I was eighteen, prior to that we walked. For trips to town, we would start out afoot and somebody usually picked us up by the time we got to Highway 72. On the return trip home, we got a ride with somebody or caught 36, the Southern afternoon eastbound train that ran about 4:30 P.M.

In the summer of 1959 I got a job with Ashburn & Gray cutting bushes on Redstone Arsenal. The pay was \$1.57 an hour, which was good compared to the going rate of \$3.00 a day for chopping cotton. The crew was made up of high school students and older uneducated men that normally worked in the cotton fields.

We didn't know it at the time but we were clearing out a place to build facilities to test rockets that would one day take men to the moon. The work was hard and boring but not as hard as chopping or picking cotton. One way it was better is because we had regular hours compared to daylight until dark on the farm.

In the fall, I got a letter from my Uncle Jimmie Meford asking if I wanted to buy a car. It was a green two door 1951 Chevrolet Deluxe that he had bought from Uncle Frank Mefford a few months earlier. It was nine years old and had a lot of miles but it had no

known mechanical problems. Uncle Jimmy drove it to Ryland from Illinois and took the bus back home. The car cost \$225 dollars, which was the exact amount I had saved from my summer job.

The first thing I had to do was learn to drive. I started practicing on the roads around Ryland and finally ventured to drive in town. It took me two tries but sometime around Thanksgiving, Daddy and I got our license on the same day. It soon became a family car but I didn't care because I had no money

for gas.

This car turned out to be one of the most important purchases of my life. It enabled me to commute to Athens College and a part time job at the old A & P on the corner of Green and Eustis Streets. The car not only got me to college, it also got me to the job that enabled me to pay my way through college. I soon learned that buying a car was only part of the expense. I found that an old car requires a lot of repairs. My cousin Emmett McKinney was the solution to that problem. He kept the car running for four years at very

*Woody Anderson*



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**"A cat is more intelligent than people believe, and can be taught any crime."**

**Mark Twain**

little cost. The man who had a third grade education and was known to say he regretted getting as much education as he did, helped make it possible for me to graduate from college.

I didn't decide to go to college until after I graduated from high school. All of a sudden, it seemed like the thing to do. The problem was money and a school that would accept me considering my high school record. I learned that a degree from Athens College was possible if I didn't have to pay room and board and got a job. In the fall quarter, I started commuting to Athens with Phillip Sharp, Denny Johnston, the preacher at Shiloh United Methodist Church and Carl George.

After I started to work at A & P, I got acquainted with a lady named Joan Williams. Mrs. Williams lived in one of the big houses on Williams Street. Her husband was deceased, her children were grown and she was looking for something to do to get out of the house.

One day when I was taking out her groceries she announced that she had enrolled at Athens College and asked if she might join our car pool. By this time Denny and Carl had graduated and we had openings. I was concerned because I didn't know what she would think about riding in my old 1951 Chevrolet Deluxe.

She soon brought us another car-pooler named Patsy Turvey. Patsy was in her twenties and the daughter of a well-known Huntsville physician, Dr. Pat Hamm. Patsy was married to Kenneth Turvey the music Director at the First Baptist Church. When her two daughters started to school, she enrolled at Athens College.

If these two ladies had any problem riding in my old car they didn't show it. They were both good company and easy to be around. The daily commute was the highlight of my college days.

Emmett kept the engine running

**"You know, stop lights don't come any redder than the one you just went through."**

**Local policeman while giving a ticket**

like a sewing machine. It never faltered once. The body was another matter; after about two years things started to wear out that I didn't have the money to replace. The heater put out some heat but not enough. Wind whistled in under the dash and you had to roll down the window and open the passenger side door from the outside. On cold days the ladies wore heavy coats but never complained. The driver's side door made a loud pop when opened and the car leaned to the right. The left side sat higher than the passenger side. On my days to drive, we often had a good laugh



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about what a sight we were in my car on the Athens College campus.

We all eventually graduated. It took Phillip seven full years. He is now retired from the oil business and lives in Newnan, Georgia. Denny went on to preach at other churches in north Alabama. He retired in Birmingham and lived there until he died. Carl became a coach in Canton, Georgia where I am told he still lives. Mrs. Williams graduated with honors and taught foreign languages for many years at Butler High School. Her daughter Jane Mabry served on the Huntsville City Council in the seventies and eighties. I don't know what happened to Patsy, I haven't seen or heard anything about her since we graduated.

There were several others who also rotated in and out of the car pool. The ones I remember best were Barry Key, Charles McBrayer, Larry Sharp and Nolan Myrick. After a successful career Barry is now retired and living in Owens Cross Roads. Charles is a retired J. C. Penny's store manager and lives in the Chattanooga area. His sister Lee Frazier and her husband Floyd live across the street from me. Larry retired as the principal of Central School and is now an AFLAC insurance agent in Huntsville. Larry served in Vietnam and had over twenty years in the Army Reserve. Nolan lives on his farm in Tennessee and writes for "Old Huntsville". His son Andy is a Lincoln County, Tennessee Circuit Judge.

When I went to the Army, I traded the car to Mr. Jim Barnett for a 22 caliber automatic rifle. For several years Jim was the well pump man for Lewter Hardware. He left that job to open a grocery store at Ryland and start his own pump business. Jim's son, J.D. and I started to school together at Central and are lifelong friends; I see him and his wife on a regular basis at Mullins. After Jim got the car he took out the back seat and used it in his business. He hired Daddy to help him and they named the car "Old Hullydy."

It was a common sight to see Daddy and Jim riding around Ryland in Old Hullydy on their way to fix somebody's pump. Sometimes Emmett McKinney helped them. When this happened, Jim drove, Daddy sat in the front on the passenger side and Emmett sat amongst the tools behind them on a five gallon bucket where the back seat used to be. It was truly a sight to behold!

After I traded the car to Jim, it would be over two years before I would own or

drive another car. When I went to work for the State of Alabama, I bought a new 1967, Chevrolet SS/96 Super Sport with a straight shift in the floor. It was a white two-door coupe with black stripes down both sides. It was a sharp car with a powerful engine. I would have thought I was somebody if I had owned this car when I was commuting to Athens College.

I have had many cars since my first car but none compare in memory to my old 1951 Chevrolet Deluxe, later known as "Old Hullydy."



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# Important News from Here and Around the State - January 1911

## Temperature here ranged from 2 to 14 degrees this morning

Last night was one of the coldest that has passed here in many years, but it was not as cold as it was when the soldiers were here. At 3 o'clock this morning the thermometer stood 2 above at Merrimack; a little later in the day it stood 3 above; from 6 to 8 o'clock throughout the city the temperature registered from 5 to 14 above. The coal dealers were taxed to their capacity today, supplying people with fuel. There was a great deal of suffering among the poor.

## Robbers Poison all Dogs

In a community close to Huntsville last week nearly every dog in the place was poisoned and the residents came to the conclusion that a band of robbers were preparing to raid the town.

Everybody put additional bolts upon their doors and windows and took other precautions and then waited. The robbers came early today. After attempting to hold up Strickland McCay, a wealthy citizen of the town, they broke into the railroad station.

The robbers blew open the safe but before they could get much booty they were frightened off. The station agent had taken the precaution of keeping but little money in the place - since the dogs were poisoned. Our townspeople are smarter than the robbers thought.

## Fire on Steele Street

The fire laddies made a run early today to the home of Bettie Penney on Steele Street between Holmes and Clinton. The roof was burned and the household effects slightly damaged by water.

**Lost** - an amethyst ring on Randolph Street, between Butlers School and Grahams Pharmacy. Finder return to this office and receive a reward.

## Spragins Continues Feeling ill

The friends of Senator Robt. E. Spragins will regret to learn that he is quite ill at his home on Echols Hill. It is feared the Senator will be confined to his home for several weeks yet.

## 50 year old Woman arrested for Bigamy

Deputy Sheriff Pierce today arrested Mrs. Josephine Shaw, aged 50, charged with bigamy. She was placed in jail and was released on \$500 bail today.

Her husband C. L. Shaw of the Big Cove had her arrested for marrying W. L. Barnett who lives near the Fairgrounds.

**For Rent** - New four-room cottage corner 6th Street and Pratt Avenue for rent cheap. J. Pierce

**Anniston - Offers Gold Medal to Women who shoot. Police Superintendent Hyland Tells Women to Shoot purse Snatchers**

"I will give any woman a gold medal who will shoot a hole through a purse snatcher" was the declaration of the Superintendent of Police, last night, following the reports of numerous hold-ups of women by low life thieves.

"Of course I cannot say women should go armed on the street, for that would be a violation of the law, but what can I say under the circumstances? They are robbed night after night and we no more think we have the gang broken up until purse snatching breaks out in another section of the city."

## Arab Husband Shoots Self - Fired at Wife

"I am sorry that I didn't kill her," said Charles Higginbotham, liveryman, after firing at his wife with murderous intent, then putting three bullets into his own breast near the heart; as a result he may die. Due to alleged unfaithfulness on the part of his wife, the husband recently left her for Texas. He returned yesterday, went to her room and told her to prepare to die. As she was about to run he fired, and when she swooned he turned the weapon upon himself.



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# Huntsville's Ladies of the Night

by Judy Wills



The theme of the wicked lady with the heart of gold runs through our literature from the Biblical Rahab, the Harlot, an ancestor of Jesus, to that friend of Rhett Butler's, Belle Watley, in "Gone With The Wind".

Huntsville has its own version, but it was fact, not fiction.

Huntsville Hospital owes its existence to the generosity of the town's most colorful madam, Mollie Teal. She bequeathed her house, the most popular bordello in town, first to a friend, and then upon the friend's death to the city of Huntsville. It became the City Infirmary and operated until 1926 as a hospital. It was one of the most modern hospitals in North Alabama, even having its own School of Nursing.

It remained in operation until Huntsville Hospital opened.

Mollie became quite well off financially as a result of her "business." She bought the house at the corner of St. Clair and Gallatin for a mere \$300 and a few years later was able to mortgage it for \$1,900 - a debt she soon repaid. It was an extravagant, well-run house where a shot of whiskey could be had for 25 cents and the favors of an attentive lass would cost you \$5 for the night.

Legend has it that the whiskey she served was made in her own still located in a building right

behind the house.

Part of the public's confidence in Mollie probably was the fact that her girls had regular and thorough health inspections. Miss Bessie Russell, for whom the branch library is named, was the widow of the physician who was charged with health inspections at Mollie's place.

Mrs. Russell remembered her mother talking about Mollie, saying "she was the most attractive person you ever saw." She always carried a parasol and when she took her afternoon ride in her long black carriage with the two black horses, she was considered, by most people, to be an extremely glamorous lady.

Mollie was an astute business woman who knew the value of publicity. One year, during the 4th of July parade, she dressed her ladies in their finest garb and joined the parade, to the delight of many onlookers. She was not on the official

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parade schedule, but as an observer later commented, "She did add much interest."

Mollie's ghost was said by many to have haunted the hospital for years after her death. There was a screen door that had a habit of slamming and hooking itself shut. The long time employees joked that it was Mollie checking on the customers.

Another legend concerns her grave in Maple Hill Cemetery. Ever since her death almost a century ago, fresh flowers have been periodically placed on her grave. No one knows who is doing it.

While Mollie Teal is the most colorful and the best known of Huntsville's "Fancy Ladies," she was certainly not the only one. Minnie Maples' establishment, though smaller than Mollie's, was equally well known around the turn of the century. She and her employees advertised their wares by dressing up and promenading on the city's sidewalks. Heavily made up, wearing big flowery hats and exquisite clothing, they attracted much attention on their daily excursions.

May Wells, June Martin, Jewel Earl, and "Gashouse Carrie" were other prominent Huntsville madams, but in the 1920s and 30s the best known was Hazel Battle. Her house was located near the present site of the Von Braun Civic Center, and though illegal, had the reputation of being a well regulated house. The only disturbances were an occasional police raid when some of the girls would be jailed long enough

to get their health checkups.

Many of Huntsville's outstanding citizens were regular patrons of the houses, as evidenced by an incident that happened in the late 1800s. One of the bordellos caught fire and the fire department quickly showed up and extinguished the blaze, which proved to be minor. Needless to say, the girls were so impressed by the brave, courageous firemen that they invited them to stay for awhile and "relax."

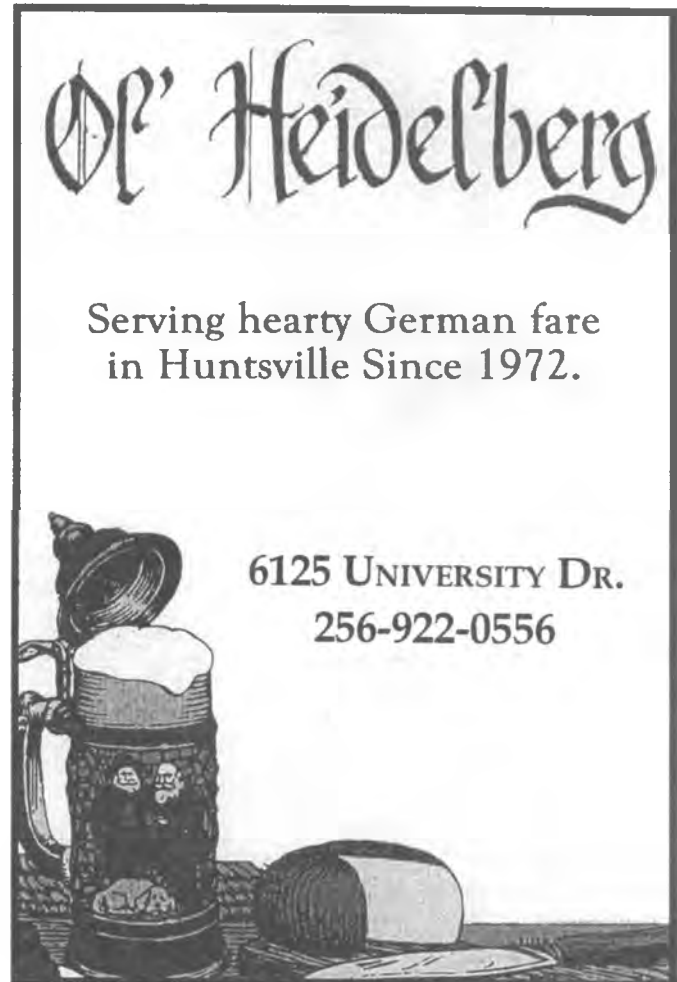
And needless to say, when word spread among the volunteer fire department of the madam's offer, other firemen, even from out in the county, began showing up, "just to make sure the fire is out."

Unfortunately, the Huntsville Police Department chose this exact time to stage one of their raids. The firemen were promptly arrested and thrown in the calaboose. Furious, the volunteer firemen resigned, leaving Huntsville without fire protection until the

matter was straightened out.

Some of the prostitutes married well. Miss Bessie Russell remembered that her husband was astonished at the number of young men who married women right out of the houses.

Though "polite society" never mentions the fact, there are still several elderly matriarchs in Huntsville today who got their start in a much more colorful place than the Huntsville Country Club.



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As the cotton mill began

to prosper, such was not the case for its organizing genius. Mr. Love had become infatuated with the young and beautiful Ada Johnson of Huntsville. But following the demands of a busy travel schedule, Mr. Love did not press his suit in time. The newspaper on September 21, 1881 announced the

marriage of Ada Johnson to "Mr. John F Lanier of Madison County."

The paper further commented, "The Huntsville public was greatly surprised that Miss Ada, whose hand had been sought by so many suitors, had at last succumbed to Mr. Lanier's offer of marriage."

None was more surprised than Mr. Love who, when learning he had been jilted, lost his temper and sought to avenge his loss by besmirching her character.

So foul were his accusations that the young husband did what honorable young men of breeding were expected to do in such cases. He went to Greenville, Mississippi and killed Mr. Love.

Defended by Huntsville attorney Captain Milton Humes, young Lanier was completely exonerated.

The judge announced from the bench, "It is my opinion that he did just what I or any other man of honor would do, and I therefore discharge the prisoner and bid him go hence without further delay."

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## Conditions in Huntsville - 1812

### Grand Jury Reports on Bad Conditions in Huntsville

- Bootlegging is alive and well in Madison County. It exists in every part of the county, especially in the city and outlying areas, with the exception of Merrimack.

- Most of the county officers and city commissioners offices are bought and sold outrageously. The only reason that the county commissioners have not been indicted was because of the pleas of the solicitor.

- Night hacks and omnibus lines help supply the bootleggers. Two restaurants, one near Southern Railway Station and one near the N.C. St. L., are termed "dens of vice." Near one of these a man, carrying \$40 he had gotten from sale of his cotton, had been reported

murdered during the past year.

- The city has been asked to revoke the licenses of the cafes, one of which was selling five barrels of illicit whisky a week.

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

- The poor house is in condition of neglect and its 23 inmates, white and Negro, run out of food regularly at different intervals and are unable to obtain any doctor's services.

- The Courthouse is a positive disgrace, with the Grand Jury room a germ-laden hole. It is the recommendation of the Grand Jury that this courthouse be torn down.

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# Sarge's Brother

by Janet L. Miller

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

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

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

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

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

About fifty yards from our house was a huge fenced field that was owned by the then tax collector, George Culps. At some point he had put cattle and a pony in the pasture. We

**"Most of all stress is caused by three things: money, family and family with no money."**

*Maxine*

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had always wanted a horse because we watched the Gene Autry/Roy Rogers Theater every Saturday morning and were convinced we needed one. I talked Duane into helping me catch the pony, and seeing as how neither of us was tall enough to get on it, we decided to put Gwen, our six-year old sister, on it. About the time I slung her up on the pony, the pony slung her off, kicking and bucking as he crossed the pasture. Apparently while flying thru the air, one of his hooves made hard contact with Gwen's neck. After Gwen came home from the hospital, we found ourselves in trouble again. It was Duane's fault, of course.

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

Time marches on and in a few short years Duane joined the United States Army. When he came home from Boot Camp with a shaved head, I noticed that he had a large scar across the top of his head (I had never seen it. It was covered in hair all his life.) When I asked, "Bubba,

where did you get that scar?" he raised one eyebrow, and with a slight smile he sarcastically said, "I wonder." Only then did I realize that I was responsible.

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

One day several years ago, Kristi, our youngest sister, came


into the house with a quizzical expression and handed me an old croquet mallet. She had asked Duane why he was sending me a mallet, and all he said was, "Janet will know." It was to be my last gift from him. Several months later he passed away.

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

Reckon what he meant by that?

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**Profits from the Pancake Breakfast will go to the  
National Multiple Sclerosis Society and other  
Kiwanis Club of Huntsville West projects.**

# Modern Day Timeless Tips



\* When you have to turn your cell phone to silent for church, meetings, etc., many times you don't remember to turn it back on. Remind yourself by putting a rubber band around your phone when you silence it, then when you pull it out of your purse again you'll remember to turn sound back on. The rubber band can drop right into your purse!

\* Mix three pounds of margarine with one pound of butter and see if anyone can tell that you don't have four pounds of butter.

\* Add a quarter cup of grape juice to a cup of lemonade for a refreshing drink.

\* A teaspoonful of ground mustard dissolved in your dish-water will take away strong odor of fish and garlic and will remove stains from your hands.

\* If you've added too much salt to a stew just throw in a raw Irish potato, it will absorb the excess salt.

\* New taste for brownies - add four crushed peppermint sticks to the recipe.

\* To get your hair really clean, massage one tablespoon of baking soda into it while

shampooing. Rinse well.

\* To improve and preserve your eyesight, get your left earlobe pierced. Buy a gold earring and wear it. It seems that the area of the lobe where it would be pierced is the same acupuncture point that affects eyesight.

\* If you're in a very warm room and feel faint, run cold tap water over the inside of your wrists. Ice rubbing will do the trick as well.

\* To keep from falling asleep on the highway, chew ice. It works every time.

\* Feel sluggish in the morning? Try this. Upon arising, place your

hands a little above your waist, just below the ribs. Gently squeeze the right hand, then the left - do this about a dozen times each side. This is a liver massage and in a few weeks you should notice a big difference in your energy. Also, try to limit heavy starches and sweets.

\* If you're shopping, always lock your car as soon as you get back in it - there are people who target those who seem to not be paying attention.

\* To improve your memory, eat 6 raw almonds a day.

**"St. Paul cavorted to Christianity. He preached holy acrimony, which is another name for marriage."**

**Tim, age 9, on Bible test**

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# EFFECTIVE TREATMENT FOR VARICOSE VEINS

Varicose veins are a very common problem, affecting an estimated 40% of women and 25% of men. New minimally invasive techniques in vein management, along with insurance companies recognizing the need for treatment of varicose veins and their complications, allow patients who have not previously considered treatment a simple and relatively pain-free option.

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.



**JAMES C. NIX III, M.D.**

A new procedure called EVLT (Endo-venous Laser Treatment) is now available and covered by most insurance companies. EVLT is a non-surgical, more effective treatment for varicose veins. The treatment is performed in the doctor's office under local anesthesia. The doctor uses ultrasound to map out the vein. He then applies a local anesthetic; patients feel very little pain. After administering anesthesia, a thin laser fiber is inserted through a tiny entry point, usually near the knee. The laser is activated as the vein is destroyed. The body will absorb the vein over the next 3 to 6 months.

Most patients feel an immediate relief of symptoms and can return to normal activity. There is no general anesthesia, hospitalization or scarring.

**JAMES C. NIX III, M.D.**  
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HUNTSVILLE, AL 35801  
256-885-6001

## *Do I have Varicose Veins?*

### **Do I have any of these symptoms?**

Pain, Aching, Swelling,  
Heaviness, Bulging Veins,  
Pressure, Burning, Tingling,  
Restless Legs

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today!**

# The Family of William Bean

by Gordon W. Scott

My name is Gordon Wayne Scott. I was born and raised at 317 N. Washington Street in Huntsville, Alabama. This was about three blocks from present day Lewter's Hardware Store. I worked for the Postal Service for almost 42 years; 14 of those were in Huntsville. The remainder was as postmaster in Winchester, and Clarksville, Tennessee.

I am descended from the William Bean family, early settlers in the New Market, Alabama and Elora, Tennessee areas.

Captain William Bean was among the first permanent settlers in what is now the state of Tennessee, and his son, Russell Bean, was the first white child born in the state.

Captain William Bean was born in Pennsylvania, came from Pennsylvania County, Virginia. Lydia Russell Bean, my third great-grandmother, was a member of the Virginia Russells. In 1769, William Bean and his family migrated to Bean's creek in the Watauga Settlement where Russell Bean was born that year.

In 1776 the Indians attacked the fort at Watauga. Mrs. Bean was captured as they retreated. She kept her composure, however, and through the intervention of a influential Cherokee woman, Nancy Ward, her life was spared and she was returned to her family.

Captain Bean's duties as commander of his company were to break up Tory resistance to the American cause. At the battle of King's Mountain, Captain Bean and his men, including his brother, John Bean, scattered a band of Tories and hanged nine of them. During one period of the Revolutionary War, the Watauga Settlement was the small refuge of a small group of Whig families from Georgia and North Carolina that was fleeing from persecution at the hands of the British and Tories.

After the Revolution, many made this their home. William Bean's last will and testament was signed Jan. 6, 1782, four months prior to his death.

Frontier life was hard, but the settlers persisted. Bean Station was an important cross-roads for travelers going south

and to the western frontier.

Captain Bean built a tavern at Bean Station in 1811 in true antebellum style, with walls of handmade brick 15 inches thick. Because of the location and accommodations, it was a gathering place for leaders in the area.

Bean was also a gunsmith. While he didn't practice this skill as much, he taught his sons, who became avid gunsmiths.

Russell Bean died in 1824 and was buried in the Bean-Roulston cemetery in Sweetens Cove.

Amanda Bean, Granddaughter of William Bean, and my second great-grandmother, married Hance Henderson Reeves in 1832 Grainge, TN. She later moved to the New Market, Alabama-Elora, Tennessee area. She died in 1850 near the Alabama/Tennessee line.

George Bean, my third great-



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grandfather, was a prominent soldier in the battle of King's Mountain during the war of 1812. He fought with the dragoons that fought with his father, Captain William Bean, in 1778. He was at the militia at King's Mountain.

He was a goldsmith and a jeweler and worked out of his house on German Creek. He was also a gunsmith, making rifles. He was commissioned as a captain in the Tennessee militia October 10, 1796 in Grainger County, TN. He was also in the Revolutionary War under Col. Sevier. He lost all his property on German Creek in Grainger County, TN. in about 1801 in a lawsuit with Mathew English and moved to Rutherford County, Tennessee.

Lydia (Russell) Bean (1726-1788), William's wife, was captured along with 13 year old Samuel Moore in July 1776 by hostile Cherokee Indians prior to an attack on the Watauga settlement. She was intercepted as she made her way from her home on Boone's Creek to Sycamore Shoals. She was sent to the Overhill Towns and was led to the stake. But she was saved, it is said, by Nancy Ward, "Beloved Woman" of the Cherokees, who told the Indians that they could use Mrs. Bean's instruction in the making of butter and cheese. So her life was spared and later she returned to her home.

Nancy Ward's act may have had far reaching effects. When militant Cherokees prepared to attack illegal white communities on the Watauga River, Ward disapproved of intentionally taking civilian lives. She was able to warn several of the Watauga settlements in time for them to defend themselves or flee. Lydia was sentenced to execution and was actually being tied to a stake when Ward exercised her right to spare condemned captives. She took the injured Mrs. Bean into her own home to nurse her back to health.

Mrs. Bean, like most "settler women," wove her own cloth. At this time, the Cherokee were wearing a combination of traditional hide (animal skin) clothing and loomed cloth purchased from traders. Cherokee people had rough-woven hemp clothing, but it was not as comfortable as clothing made from linen, cotton, or wool. Mrs. Bean taught Ward how to set up a loom, spin thread or yarn, and weave cloth. This skill would make the Cherokee people less dependent on traders, but it also Europeanized the Cherokee in terms of gender roles.

Women came to be expected to do the weaving and house chores; as men became farmers in the changing society, women became "housewives."

Another aspect of Cherokee life that changed when Ward saved the life of Mrs. Bean was that of raising animals. Lydia owned dairy cattle, which she took to Ward's house. Ward learned to prepare and use dairy foods, which provided some nourishment even when hunting was bad. However, because of Ward's introduction of dairy farming to the Cherokee, they would begin to amass large herds and farms, which required even more manual labor. This would soon lead the Cherokee into using slave labor. In fact, Ward herself had been "awarded" the black slave of a felled Creek warrior after her victory at the Battle of Taliwa and thus became the first Cherokee slave owner.

Lydia's brother George Russell, husband of Elizabeth Bean, was killed by Indians while on a hunting trip in Grainger County, Tn., in 1796. Her daughter, Jane Bean, was killed in 1798 by Indians while working her loom outside the walls of Bean's Station.

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# Earthquake in Huntsville!

On August 6, 1961, at exactly 1:20 in the afternoon, a radio station disc jockey in Birmingham interrupted his programming to broadcast news of an earthquake. He reported that the amount of damage was not yet known, but there were reports of windows rattling and dishes being knocked off the shelves all across North Alabama, and specifically, in Huntsville, Alabama.

Within minutes, many other radio stations began broadcasting the same news and civil defense sirens began blaring across all of North

Alabama.

Robert Snider, a newspaper reporter, was on his way to Birmingham when he heard the news. Immediately, he stopped at the next phone and called the radio station that had first broadcast the report.

He located the radio announcer who had made the initial report, and he repeated the information he had released over the air.

Playing a hunch, Mr. Snider next called the Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville.

"Yes," said the space flight

official, "there was a test firing of the Saturn today. It took place at exactly 1:00 p.m."

Mr. Snider's hunch was correct. There had never been an earthquake. The earth tremor that had been reported was the test firing of the Saturn rocket, the most powerful engine in the world. It had taken twenty minutes for the sound and vibrations to reach Birmingham.

Even today, there are still people who remember the powerful "earthquake" of 1961.

**"I've learned that when you plan to get even with someone, you're only allowing that person to continue to hurt you."**

**Robby Smith, Athens**

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# Tweetie's Pet Tips

*"My bird friends in the back yards  
Love it when you take the time to  
Feed them and Photograph them!  
Tweetie*



Here are six steps you can take to make the future brighter for birds:

1. Put out the welcome mat! Habitat loss is the biggest challenge facing birds. You can help by making your neighborhood more attractive to birds by landscaping with native plants that provide natural food sources, shelter from the elements and predators, and nesting sites. Providing feeders, nest boxes and water also benefits birds. To learn how, stop by your local wild bird shop or garden retailer.

2. Prepare a proper menu. Providing the appropriate foods year round will attract more birds to your yard and help ensure that they have a safe and nutritious diet. Refill feeders regularly with food desired by birds in your area. To pick the best menu, stop by your local wild bird shop.

3. Keep feed and feeding areas clean. To help reduce the possibility of disease transmission in birds, clean feeders and feeding areas at least once a month. Plastic and metal feeders can go in the dishwasher, or rinse these and other styles with a 10% solution of bleach and warm water. Scrub birdbaths with a brush and replace water every three to five days to discourage mosquito reproduction. Rake up and dispose of seed hulls under feeders.

Moving feeders periodically helps prevent the buildup of

waste on the ground. Keep seed and foods dry; discard food that smells musty, is wet or looks moldy. Hummingbird feeders should be cleaned every three to five days, or every other day in warm weather. It's good hygiene to wash your hands after filling or cleaning feeders.

4. Birds and chemicals don't mix. Many pesticides, herbicides and fungicides are toxic to birds; avoid using these near areas where birds feed, bathe or rest. Always follow directions provided by chemical manufacturers. For additional information visit your garden retailer.

5. Keep cats away from birds. Scientists estimate that cats probably kill hundreds of millions of birds each year in the U.S. Many people who enjoy feeding birds also love cats. The best solution is to keep cats indoors if possible. Install feeders in areas not readily accessible to cats or install fences or other barriers to help keep stray cats from feeder areas.

6. Reduce window collisions. Collisions with glass windows kill

millions of wild birds every year. Depending on their size and location, some windows reflect the sky or vegetation, and birds are fooled into thinking they can fly through them. To eliminate this problem identify windows that cause collisions (typically larger, reflective windows, those near the ground, or those that "look through" the house).

Attaching decorative decals or other decorations to the outside surface of the glass can reduce reflections. Feeder birds fleeing predators are vulnerable to window collisions. If this is happening at your house, consider moving feeders within three feet of the windows so that birds cannot accelerate to injury level speeds while flying away. Problem windows can be covered with a screen so that birds bounce off, rather than hit the glass.

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# From the Desk of Tom Carney

## Army Birdmen Lose Their Way

by Tom Carney

Heavy storms on the night of March 15, 1938 almost caused a major tragedy at Huntsville's new airport.

The airport, located on Whitesburg Drive, was in reality nothing more than a meadow with a wind sock and a small office. With no lighting, it was woefully inadequate to meet any type of a night-time emergency.

The first sign of impending danger came as Huntsville's citizens began to hear the drone of airplanes circling overhead, searching for a place to land. With no lights, any attempt at landing would result in a catastrophe.

The group of planes, fly-

ing a training mission, had been caught by a pulverizing rainstorm and were miles off their course, when they were drawn to Huntsville by a huge electric arrow atop the Russel Erskine Hotel, and the lights of the city.

The roar of their planes brought alarm from the citizenry.

At least one family thought a tornado was coming and took refuge in the basement of their home, staying there until a radio announcer's voice informed them otherwise.

Quick thinking by the two state highway patrolmen sta-



tioned here played a major part in the safe landing.

Patrolmen S. T. Barrett and Franklin Moore heard the deafening roar of motors and, looking aloft, saw the cloud-laden sky filled with the circling planes.

Hastening to the local radio station, they had an appeal broadcast for citizens to drive swiftly to the unlighted landing field and turn their

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automobile lights onto the broad open expanse, which was little more than a pasture.

Hundreds of automobiles, loaded with passengers, dashed to the field that night to help break the darkness, and to aid the fliers in their precarious attempts to land in dangerous conditions.

The Army birdmen, one by one, commenced to land while breathless citizens looked on. The first plane taxied back up the field late that evening.

Finally, after two very tense hours, the last plane landed. It was this pilot's escape that provided the biggest suspense of the entire event. Just before touching earth, the ship was caught by a strong gust of wind. It whirled completely about, but the pilot kept his mind alert and settled to safety. He dropped a flare before circling to come in.

"The boys did something proud," said their commander, Captain D.M. Allison. "But it certainly was a great relief to see the last ship land and start back up the field — right side up."

Immediately after the planes had landed, Capt. Allison was surrounded by Huntsvillians offering assistance.

The Army fliers spent the night at the Russel Erskine Hotel, having experienced what could have been a tragic landing, but for Huntsville's speedy answer to a distress situation.

Throughout the dark hours, multitudes of spectators visited the field. Still more suspense came during a heavy rain storm, accom-

panied by thunder, lightning and gale-force wind. Again, quick thinking by concerned and fast-acting citizens saved the day when the winds threatened to wreck the fragile aircraft.

Capt. Allison was liberal in his praise of the cooperation given the birdmen by Huntsvillians.

"On behalf of myself and my men, I want to express our heartfelt appreciation for the quick response and the splendid cooperation we have received all the way through."

The aviators, already be-

hind schedule, were forced to depart Huntsville early the following morning, amidst the well wishes of an admiring population.

In 1972, one of the pilots returned to Huntsville on a visit to the Space and Rocket Museum. While here, he toured the site of the old airport and reminisced about the arrow on top of the Russel Erskine Hotel that had guided him to safety.

"Thank God for radios and Tin Lizzies," he was quoted as saying.

"They saved a lot of lives that night."

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# Honey and Cinnamon - Who Knew?

*It is found that a mix of honey and cinnamon cures most diseases. Honey is produced in most of the countries of the world. The scientists of today also note honey as very effective medicine for all kinds of diseases.*

**HEART DISEASES:** Make a paste of honey and cinnamon powder, put it on toast instead of jelly and jam and eat it regularly for breakfast. It reduces the cholesterol and could potentially save one from heart attack. Also, even if you have already had an attack, studies show you could be kept miles away from the next attack. Regular use of cinnamon honey strengthens the heartbeat. In America and Canada, various nursing homes have treated patients successfully and have found that as one ages the arteries and veins lose their flexibility and get clogged; honey and cinnamon revitalize the arteries and the veins.

**ARTHRITIS:** Arthritis patients can benefit by taking one cup of hot water with two tablespoons of honey and one small teaspoon of cinnamon powder. When taken daily even chronic arthritis can be cured. In a recent research conducted at the Copenhagen University, it was found that when the doctors treated their patients with a mixture of one tablespoon honey and half teaspoon cinnamon powder before breakfast, they found that within a week (out of the 200 people so treated) practi-

cally 73 patients were totally relieved of pain - and within a month, most all the patients who could not walk or move around because of arthritis now started walking without pain.

**BLADDER INFECTIONS:** Take two tablespoons of cinnamon powder and one teaspoon of honey in a glass of lukewarm water and drink it. It destroys the germs in the bladder....who knew?

**CHOLESTEROL:** Two tablespoons of honey and three teaspoons of cinnamon powder mixed in 16 ounces of brewed tea given to a cholesterol patient was found to reduce the level of cholesterol in the blood by 10 percent within two hours. As mentioned for arthritic patients, when taken three times a day, any chronic cholesterol could be cured. According to information received in the Journal, pure honey taken with food daily relieves complaints of cholesterol.

**COLDS:** Those suffering from common or severe colds should take one tablespoon lukewarm honey with 1/4 spoon cinnamon powder daily for three days. This process will cure most chronic cough, cold, and, clear the sinuses, and it's delicious too!

**IMMUNE SYSTEM:** Daily use of honey and cinnamon powder strengthens the immune system and protects the body from bacterial and

viral attacks. Scientists have found that honey has various vitamins and iron in large amounts. Constant use of honey strengthens the white blood corpuscles (where DNA is contained) to fight bacterial and viral diseases.

**INDIGESTION:** Cinnamon powder sprinkled on two tablespoons of honey taken before food is eaten relieves acidity and digests the heaviest of meals.

**INFLUENZA:** A scientist in Spain has proved that honey contains a natural ingredient which kills the influenza germs and saves the patient from flu.

**LONGEVITY:** Tea made with honey and cinnamon powder, when taken regularly, arrests the ravages of old age. Use four teaspoons of honey, one teaspoon of cinnamon powder, and three cups of boiling water to make a tea. Drink 1/4 cup, three to four times a day. It keeps the skin fresh and soft and arrests old age. Life spans increase and even a 100 year old will start performing the chores of a 20-year-old.

**RASPY, TICKLING OR SORE THROAT:** When throat has a tickle, is sore or raspy, take one tablespoon of honey and sip until gone. Repeat every three hours until throat is without symptoms.

**PIMPLES:** Three tablespoons of honey and one teaspoon of cinnamon powder paste. Apply this paste on the pimples before sleeping and wash it off the next morning with warm water. When

done daily for two weeks, it removes all pimples from the root.

**SKIN INFECTIONS**

Applying honey and cinnamon powder in equal parts on the affected parts cures eczema, ringworm and all types of skin infections.

**WEIGHT LOSS:** Daily in the morning one half hour before breakfast and on an empty stomach, and at night before sleeping, drink honey and cinnamon powder boiled in one cup of water. When taken regularly, it reduces the weight of even the most obese person. Also, drinking this mixture regularly does not allow the fat to accumulate in the body even though the person may eat a high calorie diet.

**CANCER:** Recent research in Japan and Australia has revealed that advanced cancer of the stomach and bones have been cured successfully. Patients suffering from these kinds of cancer should daily take one tablespoon of honey with one teaspoon of cinnamon powder three times a day for one month.

**FATIGUE:** Recent studies have shown that the sugar content of honey is more helpful rather than being detrimental to the strength of the body. Senior citizens who take honey and cinnamon powder in equal parts are more alert and flexible. Dr. Milton, who has done research, says that a half tablespoon of honey taken in a glass of water and sprinkled with cinnamon powder, even when the vitality of the body starts to decrease, as good re-

sults. When taken daily after brushing and in the afternoon at about 3:00 P.M., the vitality of the body increases within a week.

**BAD BREATH:** People of South America gargle with one teaspoon of honey and cinnamon powder mixed in hot water first thing in the morning so their breath stays fresh throughout the day.

**HEARING LOSS:** Daily morning and night honey and cinnamon powder, taken in

equal parts, restores hearing.

Remember when we were kids? We had toast with real butter and cinnamon sprinkled on it! This would be a great way to get your honey & cinnamon - just use whole grain bread and go easy on the butter!

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# How the Possum Got his Name

by Ted Roberts



No one knows the possum population of Huntsville. We know that every Huntsville byway has at least one, where they live in luxury - rent free - and eat the cat's food and any groceries you may have left on the patio.

Have you ever seen a one? Maybe not. But they come to my back door every night and gobble up the cat food. The Possum is so ugly she scares the cat. The cat jumps up in the tree and watches while Miss Possum eats her cat food. The following story explains how Possum got her name.

You see, on the sixth day of Creation, the Lord looked down and smiled at the creeping, crawling, running, swimming, flying creatures he had made; they filled every corner of the Universe. But yet all were different.

The Lord looked down with warmth on his new creatures. And so did his new sun that he put in the sky. It was hot. The animals squirmed and sweated under his strong rays.

They need some shade, the Creator thought. So he made

big Oak trees.

But each tree dropped thousands of acorns - and only one or two found a home in the dirt to grow into another Oak. Why waste good acorns, thought the Lord. What I need is a small, quick little animal to eat those acorns. He can hide from his enemies in the branches of the Oak tree. Kinda like a squirrel - that was the idea.

But, His first try at this new creature didn't turn out too good. Its nose was too big - it had a long, ugly snout. The eyes were so close together they crossed. The body was wrong, too. Much too big; with a long, hairless tail. Ugh, he looked like a four foot rat. Something like a creation that Steven Spielberg would have put in a horror movie.

Even worse, this big-nosed, cross-eyed, overweight thing hated acorns. And remember that's why he was made - to eat acorns.

"No way I'm gonna eat acorns," said the Giant Rat as he sat alone in a corner of creation while the other creatures just stared at

him. This rat-tailed animal was sassing his maker!!

The Lord was about to destroy it and start all over again on another design with the same material - why waste - when he heard a roar from the big tiger that he had made the day before.

The mama tiger was unhappy. She was thinking about supper. So, she looked around Creation. She saw deer who could run like the wind (they could kick, too) she saw flying eagles (with sharp beaks) and

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she saw wolves with teeth. Oh sure, there were small things like squirrels and rabbits, but the mama tiger could spend all day and all night filling up her big belly with these bite-size appetizers. So when would there be time for the long naps she had already learned to love?

She spoke to the Lord: "Maker of Oaks and acorns and spiders and perfect tigers like me," she pleaded, "please don't destroy this slow, dumb, overweight creature that looks like a big rat. If he cannot decorate your world, he shall feed my young ones. We will eat him. He'll be breakfast, lunch and supper."

"Not so fast," said Old Pointy Nose, who wasn't near as dumb as he was ugly. "Before you use me to stuff the stomach of that big cat, I have two requests. First of all, give me a sporting chance and put some orange or black stripes on that hungry cat so I can see her well enough to scoot up a tree."

And the Lord did it - bam - just like that the tiger got her stripes.

Then the overgrown rat said, "OK, now, if I've got to carry around this pointy nose in between beady eyes much too close together - not to mention a hairless, raty tail (I mean I'm so ugly!) I want a special name. A pretty name for poor, ugly me."

All the other animals, who were sitting around waiting for names, laughed to think of this gray creature with a "beautiful" name. It was the first laugh of the fresh, new world. The hyena and the jackass - neither one of them beauty contest winners - laughed much too loud. The Creator was angry. After all, they were making fun of one of his children. So the Lord ruled that the Jackass and Hyena would always laugh that obnoxious braying laugh. Yes, that's why they sound like clowns.

And the Lord felt sorry for the poor, ugly, gray thing without a name. But what was his name to be? All the really pretty names had been used to describe flowers.

I know, I'll use one of the flower words twice, he thought. "You shall be called BLOSSOM," he announced, "so that your image shall always be one of beauty. Blossom, a beautiful name - just like my flowers."

All the animals made polite approving whinnys and growls and peeps except, of course, the Hyena and Jackass, who could only make that embarrassing noise.

"Adam, do you hear?" called out the Creator, who was drilling our great, great, great (do a thousand more "greats") grandfather on all the animal names he must memorize. "Call her Blossom."

But Adam wasn't listening well at all. Instead, he was staring at a new, two-legged creature who looked just like his reflection in the lake - almost. Her name was Eve.

"Possum? Is that what you said? A fine name," said the first man, looking away from the world's first woman, with only a quick look at the pointy-nosed, whip-

tailed ugly thing that rubbed against his leg.

He thought the Lord said POSSUM! They DO sound alike, don't they?

Oh well, thought the world's first POSSUM - at least I'll be able to see that tiger a mile away. And I'd rather be called a POSSUM than the GIANT RAT.

And that's how the Possum got his name and that's how the Tiger got her stripes and the Jackass got his laugh. That's how I put my granddaughter to sleep every night.

*The humor of "Ted, the Scribbler on the Roof" appears in newspapers around the U.S., on WLRH National Public Radio, and numerous web sites.*

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# “Here a Chick, There a Chick, Everywhere a Chick, Chick”

by Theresa Hanvey Fallwell



The other day I went in search of blackberry bushes at Garvin's Feed and Seed, and as soon as I entered I heard the familiar sound of baby chicks. As I stood there watching those chicks, sweet memories flooded me and once again I recalled growing up in Hurricane Valley in the 1940s.

I loved springtime. It was a time when I emerged from an adult imposed cocoon and allowed my body and mind to run freely. It was a time to explore the wonders of nature; evidenced in the perfection of a single Johnny Jump-up bloom, the renewal of life through a litter of new pink piglets, the intuitive intelligence of birds in nest building, and my favorite springtime activity, the arrival of the baby chicks.

Each year on an early spring day we would travel to Tennessee and come home with a large box of a hundred or more chirping little chicks, usually White Leghorns or Rhode Island Reds. Grandma would hold the box on her lap and I entertained myself by sticking my fingers in the air holes and petting the babies. Sometimes I would be allowed to take one out and hold it on the way home. Each chick, destined to be either broiler or egg-layer, was tiny with just a few thin

little feathers.

The chicken house with its adjoining buildings and pens was home to Grandma's prized chickens. The baby chicks went to the brooder house first. The brooder house was a small wooden enclosure that was about eight feet tall with a row of windows at the top screened by wire. Five rows of cedar logs set up about five feet above the floor stretched from side to side of the house. On one side of the house were double rows of square wooden nests. In the middle of the brooder house was a large mud, covered mountain shape that I called the oven for lack of a better name. The mud walls of the oven were very thick at the bottom and thinned out near the top. There was an opening at one end for building a fire. The opening was covered by a metal plate secured by a pile of rocks. The oven showed evidence of frequent cracks and repairs that I likened to rivers. Newspapers saved from the whole year were spread out over the floor of the brooder house to keep it

somewhat clean. The last feature of the brooder house was a large metal thermometer that hung down from a rafter in the middle of the room.

A fire was kept going in the oven at all times to keep the babies warm. When you stepped in the house it felt like summer. The temperature had to be at least 90 degrees or the chicks would die. It was so funny to see all the chicks stacked up on top of one another all around the oven trying for a spot touch-

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ing the warm mud of the oven. There were always one or two super achievers who somehow managed to get on top of the oven. Long skinny trays of food were kept filled for the babies. Egg shells were saved all year toasted, crumbled, and added to the mix periodically.

My daily job was to change the newspaper and fill the water containers with the green water. I don't remember what made the water green or why we used it, but I suspect it had to do with controlling infection. I loved my job. Every time I went into the brooder house the chicks greeted and surrounded me. It was hard to walk without stepping on one. It seemed chicks were everywhere.

As the chicks grew they were allowed outside in the adjoining fenced yard. As the weather warmed the fire in the oven was no longer needed. On really cold winter nights Granddad would run all the grown chickens into the brooder house, build a fire and allow them to roost over the oven. I spent hours with the chicks and despite my Grandma's dire warning to not get emotionally attached or name the chicks, I did anyway.

As the little chicks grew into hens they graduated to the big chicken house where they stayed during the night. In daylight hours they roamed the farm scratching for bugs and seeds. The big chicken house had row upon row of square, wooden nests. My job was to keep fresh straw in the nests, collect the eggs every day and stay out of the way of the mean roosters.

Grandma taught me to always look into the nests before putting my hands in because

snakes like hens' nests. I met quite a few snakes that way, mostly black racers. I remember one year we had problems with snakes getting the eggs before we could collect them. Granddad put smooth river rocks in the nests and the snakes swallowed them thinking they were eggs.

I spent a lazy summer afternoon watching a long black racer snake with one of the river rocks in its belly climb the apple tree across from the hen house and wrap and rewrap himself around a branch trying to crack the egg. It didn't work. We found that snake hanging from the branch dead with the shape of the rock still obvious in its belly.

Part of me understood that the chickens were raised for eggs, feathers and food. I liked tending the chickens, hunting for eggs and stuffing feathers into pillows and mattresses; but when it came time to kill a chicken for Sunday dinner that was a different story. I could never watch while my Grandma either wrung the chicken's neck or chopped its head off with an axe. Dipping the chicken into scalding water to remove feathers was not a job that I participated in, nor was the burning off of the pin feathers over the old iron stove. That smell still resonates in my memory.

I could not eat chicken though I am told my Grandma fried the best chicken around.

Grandma seemed to understand my attachment to the chickens and my revulsion for the process as she always boiled eggs for me to eat when she served fried chicken. Never once did my family question my Southern heritage because of my aversion to chicken.

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