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Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

REMEMBERING RISON SCHOOL, 1953



Also in this issue: **The Old Swimming Hole**

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RISON SCHOOL, 1953

by Theresa Hanvey Fallwell

It's a funny thing how the simple act of cleaning the attic and throwing away the detritus of a lifetime can affect you. In the midst of the cobwebs and dusty relics, you find old dolls, family pictures, favorite books and forgotten school yearbooks that transport you back to the past to a time of sweet innocence. That's what happened to me the other day when I found my 1953 edition of the Rison Pilot annual, the first yearbook published by the school.

As I turned the time worn, crinkly pages of that sixty year old annual, I met face-to-face once again with teachers and friends from long ago and fond remembrances overwhelmed me. My mind wandered back to Rison to Mrs. Mellette's fourth grade class. That was my first year at Rison having attended St. Mary's Catholic School for first grade and Lincoln for second and third grades.

Rison in 1953 was an intimidating structure that looked like a castle to a nine year old, especially when compared to

the four room house in which my family lived. The school was huge with a red brick and light green stucco exterior, gigantic banks of windows, and tall, arched entries with decorative insets. A columned entrance with a long sidewalk that ended in matching white, marble-like water fountains was impressive. The bell cupola situated at the top, middle of the school looked exactly like a turret from my fairy tale books. A chain link fence wreathed in vines and huge trees surrounded the property and served, in my mind, as a moat to this castle. Wide interior halls with elevated ceilings, oiled wooden floors that echoed every step, large classrooms with cavernous cloakrooms and an auditorium with a high velvet curtained stage and theatrical seats all contributed to a sense of grandeur for Rison.

As intimidating as the structure was, the playground was just the opposite. It was a beautiful open space perfect for running with the wind rushing through your hair. I was particularly fond of two huge, old oak trees that grew in the middle of the playground. Those two trees were far enough apart that they were used as bases for all kinds of tag games.

We played freeze tag, swing statue and partner chain tag. The swings sat at the far end of the playground and the little kids always got to them before us. The junior high kids always

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had a game going on the ball fields nearest Oakwood Street. Next to the building you could find a group of kids playing wall ball, but only on the lower brick part of the facade, or sitting there if they had committed an offense that denied them recess.

On pretty days, the teachers would allow us to spend our lunch hour on the playground and of course we gobbled those sack lunches down to increase our play time. In the spring, I spent time viewing the biggest dogwood tree I had ever seen at the house across the street. My friend, Grady lived next to the big dogwood and after school we would play in the multitude of blossoms as they rained to the ground.

Rison was built in 1921. Prior schooling was conducted in a home on O'Shaughnessy Avenue and in the Moore residence believed to have been given as the school site. The school primarily served the Dallas Mill population and was named after Archie L. Rison, General Manager of the Mill. My family was not part of the Mill commu-

nity, but lived nearby, and since my mother taught at Rison, my brother and I were allowed to attend.

Early on, Rison was a senior high school, but in 1953, it served an elementary and junior high school, having released the 9-12th grades to Butler High School. The annual revealed a student population of approximately 142 junior high and 275 elementary students. Class size varied significantly with some elementary classes having as many as 45 kids.

Rison had a teaching staff of seventeen with Mr. Cecil Fain serving as Principal and a three member set of Trustees including Mr. Charlie Chisam, Mr. Otto Neal, and Mr. Woodrow Chisam. The elementary teachers were Mrs. Kennamer, Miss Esslinger, Miss Womack, Mrs. Taylor, Mrs. Pearson, Mrs. Ward, Mrs. Mellette, Miss

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Mitchell, and Mrs. Pullen. Secondary teachers included Mr. Kennamer, Mr. Blackburn, Miss Harris, Mr. Randolph, Mrs. Graves, Mr. Myhand, Miss Monroe and Mrs. Hanvey, my mother. In addition to standard academics, classes such as home economics using treadle sewing machines and typing using manual typewriters were offered. Art Club with Mr. Randolph, Glee Club with Mr. Blackburn, Allied Youth with Miss Monroe, and Patrol Boys with Miss Esslinger were available extracurricular activities for the older students. Two other wonderful staff members were Mr. Beshears and Mr. Williamson, janitors who would always return to and unlock the school if you forgot your coat.

Rison quickly became home to my family as we attended all the school-sponsored activities. I loved all the carnivals, operettas, cake walks, bar-b-ques, and poetry readings as they meant opportunities for adventure that was quite limited in our lives.

My first Halloween at Rison was truly special. I was the new kid and still a little uncomfortable. For days, all the kids had talked about what costume they would wear for the Rison parade. I didn't have a costume, and the probability of getting one was very limited. One day my dad came home with a big square, brown box and told me that it would be my costume.

I was not very excited until he told me about this new thing called television. Try as I might, I could not understand what TV was, so he took me to Sears and showed me a television set. Then I got excited as we cut out a circle in the front of the box.

Mom put wax paper over the opening where my face was visible, and dad created antennae for the top.

Dressed as a TV, I not only won honorable mention in the contest, but created great interest as most kids did not have a TV at that time. It would still be four more years before we had a TV in our home.

I also remember the Christmas program presented by Mrs. Pullen and Mrs. Mallette. The fourth graders wore red dresses, carried holly boughs and danced in a circle singing "Deck the Halls." The next act was by fifth grade and they sang "Angels We Have Heard on High." I had been chosen as one of two angels to accompany this song, but getting out of my red dress and into my white costume proved very difficult. Despite my mother's help, I appeared late on stage as a much disheveled angel with a broken wing and fallen halo.

Athletic events were central to our Rison experience in 1953. The Junior Football Team with Mr. Hub Myhand as coach had four wins and two losses ending the season with second place in the county league. Team members were Cagle, Gulley, Chisam, Marks, Quick, Crowell, Hymer, Walker, Clark, Starr, Mitchell, Burkett, Fuling-

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tin, Hanvey, Byrom, Rutledge, McCutcheon and McAllister. Home games were played at Rison Stadium. Mr. Myhand also coached basketball where the A Team won eleven games and lost four. The B Team won eight and lost six games. A Team consisted of Starr, Clark, Walker, Acuff and Mitchell; while B Team was Rutledge, Marks, Gulley, Brannum and Parham.

Cheerleaders included Wanda Renegar, Mildred Parham, Hazel Newby, Shirley Smithy, Mona Brannum and Martha Green. The Pee Wee Football Team coached by Bill Rice included Tilkings, Moyers, Curry, Johnson, Walker, Hymer, Ricketts, Brannum, Hold, Myhand, Maddox, NeaL, Parham, McKenszie, Rooker and Martin.

Cheerleaders were Mary Frances Crowley, Donnie Sue Cullum, Margine Bishop, Barbara Neal and Judy Magness. The Peewee Team won Championships four of the eight years the organization existed. Rison also had a girls' softball team and a baseball team. A glass case full of trophies inspired athletic

performance and pride in Rison School.

In 1953, World War II had only been over a few years, and Rison's continuing pride in their war efforts was noted in the annual. Students were remembered for their assistance when a war-era, government sponsored Rationing Board was swamped with more work than they could manage. Rison also served as a location for issuing Ration Stamps. Sugar, meat, butter, silk, nylon, tires and other commodities were in short supply as consumer production changed to war production.

Rubber was a particularly valuable commodity and a "Victory" speed limit of 35 mph was established to conserve tires and operate within a four gallon a week gasoline limit for most people. For this reason, most Rison students walked to school including my mother, brother and I. As part of the war effort,

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Rison also hosted scrap-metal and scrap-paper drives that by accounts mentioned in the annual covered the entire campus. Community members were also able to buy War Bonds and vote at Rison.

Some of the greatest memories of my time at Rison revolve around the teachers and cover the time period of 1953-1958. Each teacher was unique and helped to create a welcoming environment for kids. Mr. and Mrs. Kennamer set an example of a couple working together, but demonstrating separate interests. Mr. Kennamer was a mathematician and scientist who prompted kids to think. Mrs. Kennamer was a wonderful first grade teacher and managed the school store in which I worked as a student salesperson. I watched her kindness over and over as kids would be short a penny or two for purchasing a candy or gum, and she would let them have the desired item. At the end of the day after counting the receipts, she quietly put in what didn't match the sales.

From her, I learned a great deal about compassion and charity.

Mrs. Mellette sparked my interest in art as she always

had her class create historical murals in which research was more important than artistic ability. Mrs. Pullen started each day's lesson with 1 Corinthians 13:13 inspiring us to love one another. Mrs. Mitchell and Mr. Blackburn taught me to love theater and music. Getting Mr. Blackburn to play a jazz piece on the piano was always a highlight. Miss Monroe taught us so many things, especially poetry. She had a way of capturing students' attention.

I remember well her introduction to a poetry unit when she brought in a large, dead bird and stapled it to the blackboard reciting, "Little bird you flew so high till I shot you from the sky!"

Mrs. Graves taught me about saving money and death. That's an odd combination. Her frugality was instilled in me because every time she would send a student to the office with personal money, we would make certain that all of her change was returned in dimes as she would never spend, but always saved, dimes. She often sang the lyric, "Brother, can you spare a dime?" as she dramatically dropped the dimes in the jar on her desk.

What she taught me about

death came late in my career at Rison. As my eighth grade math teacher, I knew she was sick, but I had no idea she was terminal. My last memory of her was a visit to her hospital bed. My mother sent me out to

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pick all of the Dutch iris that we had in our yard. I balked at this idea as I loved flowers. Then she told me we were taking it to Mrs. Graves. Mother and I took a huge bouquet of white, blue, and yellows irises to her room.

It was not until that day that I realized how sick she was. I was devastated, not only because I loved her as my teacher, but my brother and I had stayed with her family every afternoon when we attended St. Mary's, as she lived across the street. It was my first real experience with death and I saw her gracious acceptance of her fate. I cried for days.

The best teacher at Rison, and I know I am prejudiced, was my mother, Velma Hanvey. I can't begin to delineate all the skills she taught me. I just know that I loved being in her classes even though she was strict and demanded academic excellence.

To this day, if I close my eyes

and let my mind wander I can still hear her dramatically reading from "Hie to the Hunters" and feel the chill bumps as fresh autumn breezes rush over me through Rison's open windows.

It was not until her passing in 1981 that I came to understand the degree of her positive impact when dozens of former students approached me at her funeral with stories of what she had done for them that far exceeded her required role as teacher.

I think my mother epitomized the quality, character and devotion of teachers and staff. They created a nurturing environment that turned that imposing castle-like structure into a warm, inviting educational home. Those of us who attended Rison know first-hand just how lucky we were, and why to this day, we still tear up at the loss of a special time and place that was Rison School.



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

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

- Glen McLain \$5, Robert

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

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

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

- Stiff Ewing was fined \$10 for being drunk and disorderly. A total of \$68 was paid in fines in this morning's police court.



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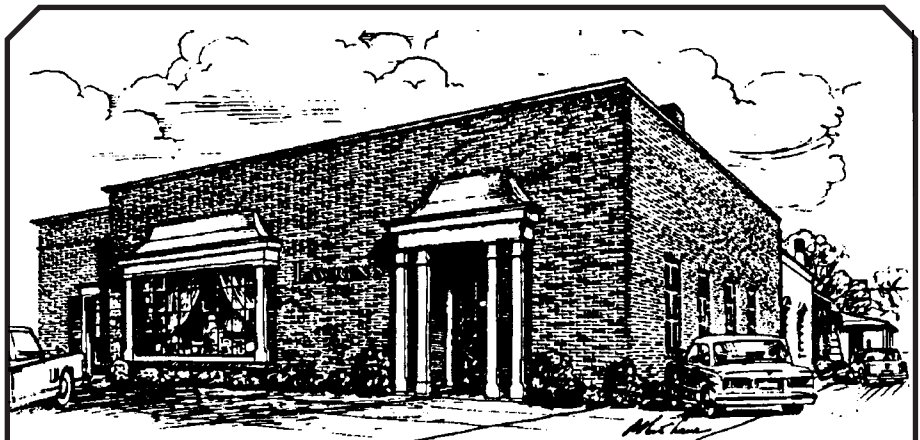
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A Very Peculiar Hill

by John Crow

The year was 1959. Fidel Castro became the Prime Minister of Cuba, "Tom Doolley" was a popular song and I had come to Huntsville. My father and I were staying in a boarding house on Adams Street until he could close on a home and bring my mother and sisters down from Ohio. I had come down that summer with Dad to get squared away at Huntsville High for my pending junior year and to try out for the football team.

That summer I learned that Southern boys take their football seriously, that I resented being called a "Yankee" (I had lived most of my young life out West or in Tennessee). Through the auspices of my soon-to-be best friend, I discovered what surely must be one of the all-time great mysteries of the universe.

"Minus" Mullins was the football team manager. We called him "Minus" because at that time he was so small. His real name was Bob and he had sort of an impish, con-man quality about him. He was always cooking up some scheme or another designed to make a quick buck.

Well one day after practice we were sitting around at Gibson's Barbeque drinking iced tea. I forget how the conversation got started but I was telling Bob about some of the wonders I had seen in my travels out West. Bob got this sort of far away look in his eye, hunkered over closer to me and in a low, serious voice

said, "John, I bet you a dollar that I can show you a wonder right here in Huntsville, Alabama that you'll have to agree is the greatest wonder you've ever seen."

I'll have to admit I was pretty leery of what was taking shape but I could tell Bob was serious and that look in his eye was downright scary. I figured I couldn't lose and besides I was awfully curious.


"OK, show me," I said, a little smugly.

We got in his '58 Chevy and headed up Big Cove just a little way, it seems, when Bob started to slow down. He began looking from side to side

then stopped, backed up a little, then stopped again. He put the car in neutral and with his foot still on the brake said, "We're on a hill going up, right?"

Well we were definitely on a hill, granted the spot where we were at was not a particularly steep grade, but

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it was definitely a hill. "Bob, you know darn well we're on a hill."

"OK," he said, "When I let my foot off the brake we'll start to roll back down the hill, right?" "Right," I said, not hiding my disgust. Bob let his foot off the brake, and I swear, instead of rolling backwards down the hill, the car rolled up the hill for a short distance, coming to a stop.

Bob put the Chevy in gear and backed up (down) the hill a short distance, then repeated the performance. "Bob, that's the strangest thing I've ever experienced." "Yeah, it's weird alright. Let me show you something."

He reached over and opened the glove compartment and pulled out a folded piece of paper. "Read that," he said. I unfolded what appeared to be a piece of an old comic strip section from a Sunday newspaper. Someone had written a date on it that now was very faded, nineteen fifty something.

When I read it I could feel the hair on the back of my neck start to rise. It was an old "Ripley's Believe it or Not" strip. You remember when it was in color in the Sunday comics? Well it showed this car on a hill and a man scratching his head and little question marks coming from his head and said something about the upside-down hill in Huntsville, Alabama.

"Bob," I said, "This is really something. Imagine, we're on a spot in 'Ripley's.'" "Yeah," Bob answered, "Don't it beat all you've ever seen?" "It sure does," I replied. Then I saw his eyes light up and he said,

"John, you owe me a buck."

Well, I begrudgingly paid Bob and, armed with a marble and a carpenter's level, all that summer I'd go back and try to unravel the mystery of the upside down hill. I never could figure it out. I do know that the level would show "down" but the marble would roll "up".

I had forgotten about this incident until a couple of weeks ago when I was thinking about my old friend. Bob's been dead over twenty years now. Little did we know that summer would be one of the few left when we still had our adolescent innocence. The sixties, The Nam, the seventies, careers, family, all the changes and stresses of adulthood, almost caused me to forget that first summer in Huntsville.

I guess in memory of old Bob "Minus" Mullins I tried to find that spot on Big Cove the other day. I can tell you this, if you try to stop your car on Big Cove Road today the odds are you'll get run over, and to walk around there with a marble in your hand is just plain suicide.

I've never found that spot again where down is up.

I sure would like to, though.

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The Miller Swimming Hole

by Malcolm W. Miller

I was born on a hillside off what is now Wall Road in the Ryland community. Papa was a share cropper on a farm known as the Hewlett place, owned by Carl Moring, Sr. Since Papa owned his own mules and farm equipment he only gave the landlord one third of the cotton he raised and one fourth of the corn. If the share cropper did not have his own mules and equipment the landlord got half of everything.

Folks today could not imagine living the primitive life style that we lived. The house had no ceiling and there were huge cracks in the walls. Insulation was something no one had every heard of. We didn't own a mattress. There were a couple of feather beds, other than that we slept on straw ticks and fertilizer sacks sewn together and filled with oat straw. When you first started trying to sleep on these things they were almost round and you could roll off, but later on there would be a hole formed and it would be sunk in. There was Papa and Mama and seven

of us boys.

We were really poor but we were happy. I guess we didn't know how poor we were and many of our neighbors had similar

circumstances. Being the youngest of the seven I suppose I was spoiled. Some of my brothers were seventeen and eighteen years old when I was born. My brother Joe had a nickname he called me that I can't put in print but I will say that when we had company he changed it to "Cat Mess."

When I was six years old we moved about a mile further west on Wall Road to the Ben Lawler farm. He was a rural mail carrier and I started to school in the first grade with his youngest daughter Mary Julia.

It was while we were living here that a big change came about. My oldest brother Robert brought home a wife. Her name was Beulah "Boots" Campbell. This was really some adjustment for

the whole family because Mama was the only female that had ever lived in our house, except on the rare occasions that Mama Kate, my Grandmother on my Mama's side, came to visit.

Robert bringing Boots home was the best thing that could have happened for Mama because for the first time there was another woman in the house to help with the work, and believe me Boots was a hard worker and with the large family there was plenty to do. Boots also worked in the cotton fields. She could easily keep up with the men.

After living on the Lawler farm for two years Papa made a move that made all our lives much better. He rented a one hundred sixty acre farm bordering the Flint River, paying four hundred dollars a year cash instead of sharecropping. We moved there in 1935 when I was eight years old and this began the seven happiest years of my

"I have kleptomania, but when it gets really bad I take something for it."

Robert Benchley, Arab



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life growing up. When all us boys were not working or going to school we were on that river.

It wasn't long before we knew every inch of that river for a couple of miles each way. We would fish with poles and worms. We learned to fish with trot lines and even learned to make fish baskets out of chicken wire. We had fish to eat twelve months a year and that was a wonderful thing as there were times when food was scarce and a good meal of fish was greatly appreciated by all. Sometimes, to change the menu, we would cook chicken stew in a large pot over an open fire at the swimming hole. This was shared with everyone there as were the watermelons in the summer.

We would catch large mouth, small mouth bass, blue gill, sunfish, channel catfish and bullheads. No matter which we caught they were all delicious when we cooked them over an open fire or when Mama cooked them on her cook stove. At that time I doubt that any of us had heard of a fishing license, whereas now that would be re-

quired for fishing all Alabama rivers.

I felt that I had died and gone to heaven but the best was yet to come; my brother Joe and his best friend Clyde Gossett found the ideal spot for a swimming hole. The water was eight or nine feet deep and there was a large, very tall tree leaning out high over the middle of the river. It didn't take the two of them long to find a real strong rope, tie a handle to the bottom, climb the tall tree and fasten the rope securely to the very top of the tree.

All of the Miller boys and their friends made good use of that rope and that swimming hole. That, folks, is how the legendary "Miller Swimming Hole" began. It wasn't long till word spread like wildfire through the Ryland community. Every Miller showed up;

"I'm very good at opening childproof caps - if I have a hammer."

Bill Kruse, Huntsville

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also the Gossetts, the Taylors, the Phillips, Olin Vann, Eulan Golden, Ernest Conley, Emmett McKinney and the Mefford boys. These are just a few of the neighborhood boys who came to the swimming hole.

There were very few girls who ventured to our swimming hole although I do remember four; Virginia and Ruth Guerin and Kathryn and Johnnie Markham. This didn't work out too well because none of the boys owned swim trunks so when girls showed up we had to swim in our pants. There was a place on up the river a short way where the girls sometimes went to swim; however, the water was only about waist deep, not deep enough for us boys.

My brother Paul and Olin Vann were at the swimming hole with Kathryn and Johnnie Markham. Many times in my young life when the girls arrived my older brothers would send me for a walk. As I walked along the river bank I saw a trotline that they had stretched above the water to dry and a large cat fish had jumped out of the water and grabbed a grasshopper that was still on a hook and got caught. I ran as fast as I could and told them about the fish but they didn't believe me and they didn't want to leave those girls. I finally persuaded them and they came and took the fish off the line.

The seven Miller boys and their friends had more stories about this Miller swimming hole than many other parts of their childhood.

The Flint River is 65.7 miles long so no doubt many other Madison County families had their swimming holes and fishing spots downstream. Many learned to swim in this river and many were thrilled to be able to swim completely across.

They no doubt also enjoyed the many beauties of the Flint River which originates in Tennessee and flows in a south-

erly direction through Madison County. The Flint River has two major tributaries; Brier Fork which flows in from the northwest and Mountain Fork which flows in from the northeast and then Flint River which flows into the Tennessee River.

A month or so ago my niece Paula Lebarr, Paul's daughter, who has been gone from here for thirty something years, heard about "The Miller Swimming Hole" and really was excited about it and wanted to visit. Paula and her husband Keith have a new home here that is located close to the Flint River.

She got together with two of my nephews, Austin and Berns Miller, and they found the spot where the swimming hole was located. But it seems nothing there is really the same, as landmarks such as the tree have changed.

Can you believe that things do change after seventy years? All signs of the tree where the swing had swung were gone and the deep water was filled in with silt. It seems every sign of what was the happiest times of my boyhood have been swept away.

The only thing that remains is

the memories of all the boys and girls who swam there, many of them now deceased. Each and every one who swam and fished in the "The Miller Swimming Hole," experienced wonderful carefree summers with family and friends.

I wouldn't mind reliving some of the fun-filled days at "The Miller Swimming Hole", however I do not want to return to sleeping on the straw ticks.

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Area News from 1923

Firemen Not Active, but Ready (June 5, 1923)

The Huntsville Fire Department hasn't had a run for a matter of nearly three weeks, not even a false alarm. However, members of the department are always ready and always prepared to respond to calls when they come.

Gurley Boy Drowned in River

While swimming in Paint Rock River Sunday afternoon, Leslie Thomas, aged 13, was drowned. The body was recovered and removed to the home of his parents in Gurley, where the funeral was held Monday afternoon. According to those who were swimming with young Thomas, he dove from the bank into the stream and never came up. They became frightened and called for help which was soon forthcoming and after a long search the body recovered. It is supposed the young man's head hit the bottom of the stream and rendered him unconscious.

Laughlins to Stay in City

The many friends of Mr. and Mrs. Laughlin will be glad to know that they will remain in Huntsville instead of moving to South Alabama as they had expected.

Arab Child Chews on Dynamite and Lives

Mrs. C. E. Brewster called frantically for police when she found her three-year-old daughter, Frances, eating the neighbor's dynamite. Police said the child was chewing on the end of a half pound when they arrived and removed it from her tiny hands.

Dr. McCown Very Ill

Dr. McCown, of Hazel Green, one of the best physicians in the county, is lying very low at the Huntsville Hospital, having been brought yesterday morning from his home. While suffering from a bad toothache, Dr. McCown called upon his son, who had been studying in Atlanta, to extract the tooth. The young man did so and all seemed to be going well until the close of the day when the jaw began to swell and grow worse. The Doctor was then brought to the hospital.

Baptists want More Room

The First Baptist Church will offer \$11,000 for the Smith and Vaughn property, west and north

side of the church. If the offer is accepted the church, it is stated, will be enlarged and other improvements made.

Dr. W. R. Staten Killed by Train

Dr. W. R. Staten of the Flint community was run down and killed by a train Tuesday, the accident occurring near the Flint Station. Dr. Staten is said to have been walking upon the railroad right-of-way when the accident occurred. The Doctor was hit by a freight train and was killed instantly.

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Heard On the Street

by *Gathey Carney*



The winner of the hidden Shamrock in the March issue was **Margaret Sims**, of Capshaw, AL. Margaret worked at H.D. Lee and several other manufacturing plants until she retired and has 5 kids. One of her 5 children is someone many people know - **Cristina Lynn** is a talented singer who performs in the Huntsville area. Congratulations to Margaret for spotting that little shamrock on p. 48 of the March issue!

Then we had another winner - the Photo of the Month was of **Margaret Watson** of Five Points who worked tirelessly to help East Clinton transition to Providence Classical School and retain its important historic presence in Old Town. **Peggy Sharp** was the first reader to call and correctly identify Margaret. Peggy worked for years in the Huntsville Middle and Lee High lunch rooms and is a retired Mom and grandma now!

The retirement party for **Dr. Louis Horn** and **Dr. Richard Burnside** was amazing. It was held in the Huntsville Museum of Art and the hors d'oeuvres and streaming videos were so good. There were just hundreds of colleagues and friends wishing them

well and the evening was one that many will always remember.

It was sad news indeed to hear that **Janet Milly** had passed away, at just 63 years old. She worked with her husband **David Milly** at their business, Theatrical Lighting, for many years. We send our deepest condolences to her husband **David**, sisters **Lenda Presley (Sidney)**, **Teresa Biggs (Dale)**, **Karen Whisenant (Tim)** and brother **Randall Wilks (Donna)** as well as father-in-law **John Milly** of Huntsville and other family & dear friends who will never forget her.

The Huntsville West Kiwanis Pancake Day at the Mayfair Church of Christ recently was packed! The pancakes were SO good with the sausage and coffee and orange juice. We saw **Doug Driskill** and **Joan Dawson**, among many other hard working Kiwanians & youngsters.

Happy Birthday in late April to my dear friend **Cheryl Tribble** of Woodstock, GA - she is the lady responsible for helping me

with editing and does an amazing job each & every month.

That renowned athlete **John Bzdell** just had knee replacement surgery at Huntsville Hospital with **Dr. Goodson** and we hear he is doing great! **Margaret Watson** and his friends took good care of him during the 3 day hospital stay and the nurses wanted to know what kind of celebrity he was! He's doing well and waiting to get back on the trails!

This month there is a tiny **Easter egg** hidden somewhere in the magazine and the first one to call and tell me the correct page number wins a free subscription to "Old Huntsville!"

Thank you to **Kory Riccardi**, UAH alumni, who found the information we were looking for on the solitary gravestone by the side of the road in Hazel Green. It turns out that the young lady was **Nancy King**, who died from falling off a horse. This tiny area was part of a larger cemetery that was destroyed when a car repair garage was built on the property in the 1970s. Her husband later moved to South Alabama and re-married.

Can you imagine a world

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 pretty girl loves giving her time to the Humane Society as well as volunteering in our city school system.



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where we could leave all our doors and windows open in this beautiful spring weather, not even thinking that someone would want to rob us? Tom used to say when he was growing up everyone in **Hurricane Creek** was so poor they all knew what each other had, and no one wanted it, so they always left their doors open and slept on the outside porches at night. Sure is a different world nowadays, isn't it?

Buddy Darwin was a man who did so much for our community. He was owner of Pine Lawn Farm, Heart of Dixie Popcorn & Supply and Darwin Development. He was one of the leaders of the American Agriculture movement back in the 70s and 80s; served on numerous boards and committees to help farmers. He participated in the Maple Hill Stroll for many years. He was never pretentious and was just a kind man who spent his life helping others. Buddy died at 75 and leaves his wife **Frances Lamb Darwin**, (54 years married), son **Barton Darwin (Amber)** and daughter **Sammie Walls (Bentley)** among many other family members. If he called you his friend, you were lucky indeed to have known Buddy.

A third of the members of Beta Sigma Phi chapter of Preceptor Alpha Gamma had birthdays in March: They were **Linda Drake, Sherry Taylor, Jane Smith, Vivian Kruse and Pat Riley**. Happy birthday to all you beautiful ladies!

I think I must have been the only person in Alabama and Georgia who hadn't seen the fascinating **Bald Eagle nest in Rome, Georgia**. There is an eagle family who has set up their nest in a tall pine tree on the Berry College property in Rome, GA and they are filmed 24 hours a day! Georgia Power donated a truck and manpower to install a small camera with a direct (and close) view of the nest. It is incredible to see it because this year the couple had two eggs, but only one made it, and the baby now is growing and you can see the interaction between the mom and dad. The mom is SO protective of her little one. It's addictive to watch and grabs your heart! If you want to see for yourself on your computer go to www.berry.edu/eaglecam/.

You'll love it. One recent night the wind was really blowing there and you could see the mama's feathers all ruffled as she protected her little one. It's filmed day and night.

Happy March birthday to **Gale Nichols** of Athens, hers was on the 13th but she reported no bad luck.

Also **Brandon Owens** of Tucson celebrated his birthday on the 25th of March and we just know his wife **Susan** had something creative up her sleeve!

Happy wedding anniversary to a great couple - **Jim and Martha Ann Reagan** toasted their 53rd anniversary at PF Chang's at Bridge Street.

The Historic Lowry House

continued to see bigger crowds at their music concerts 2 Saturdays a month - reminds me of the Bluebird Cafe in Nashville because many of the performers like **Chapman James, Travis Widner and Dave Stocks**, play and perform their original songs that are SO good in that old historic setting. The concerts will start up again April 26.

Rosemary & Bill Leatherwood, Jr. want to wish Bill's brother **Johnny** a great birthday on Apr. 8th. I'll bet there'll be some celebrating going on!

Have a wonderful WARM month of April!

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Sweet and Unusual

Eclair Cake

- 1 stick butter
- 1 c. water
- 1 c. plain flour
- 4 eggs
- 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese, at room temps
- 1 lg. box instant vanilla pudding
- 3 c. milk
- 1-2 c. whipped topping
- Chocolate syrup

In a saucepan bring the butter and water to a boil. Add the flour, stirring in, with wooden spoon and remove from heat.

Add the eggs, one at a time, beat well after each addition. Spread the "crust" in greased 9x13" pan. Bake at 400 degrees for 25 minutes and cool.

Mix the cream cheese & pudding, slowly add milk. Spread this on top of the cooled crust. Refrigerate.

Frost with the whipped topping. Drizzle with chocolate syrup. Note - you might try other

pudding flavors with good results.

Social Room Cocoa

- 1 c. powdered coffee creamer
- 2 c. dry milk
- 1-1/4 c. dry hot chocolate
- 1/3 c. sugar
- 1/2 T. ground cinnamon

Mix together all ingredients and store in airtight container. Use 1/3 cup of the mix to one cup of hot water in a mug.

Peanut Butter Streusel Pie

- 1/2 c. peanut butter
- 3/4 c. powdered sugar
- 1 8" baked pie crust
- 1 sm. pkg. French vanilla instant pudding
- 1-1/2 c. milk
- 1 c. whipped topping

Combine the peanut butter and powdered sugar with a pastry cutter til crumbs form. Place half of crumbs in bottom of pie

crust.

Beat pudding and milk together for 2 minutes. Fold in the whipped topping. Spread over the crumbs and top with remaining crumb mixture. Chill

Graham Cracker Pudding

- 2 eggs, separated
- 1 c. sugar
- 4 c. milk
- 1-1/2 c. graham cracker crumbs
- 1/2 c. shredded coconut
- 2 T. sugar
- Coconut

In saucepan beat together the egg yolks and cup of sugar. Stir in milk, graham cracker crumbs and coconut. Heat slowly and cook til thickened. Pour into glass casserole dish.

Beat together egg whites and 2 tablespoons of the sugar til egg whites form peaks. Spread on top of the pudding.

Sprinkle with toasted coconut.

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Lemon Lush

- 1 c. flour
- 1/2 c. butter, softened
- 1 c. powdered sugar
- 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese, room temp
- 6-oz. container whipped topping
- 2 3-oz. pkgs. instant lemon pudding
- 3 c. milk
- 1/3 c. chopped nuts

Cut flour and butter together to form crumbs. Press into the bottom of a greased 9x13" pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 15 minutes and cool.

Beat together powdered sugar and cream cheese. Fold in 1 cup whipped topping. Spread on top of the crust.

Mix the pudding and milk, beat well, spread over the cream cheese mixture.

Top with remaining whipped topping and sprinkle with the nuts.

Million Dollar Pie

- 8-oz. container whipped topping
- 2 20-oz. cans crushed pineapple, well drained
- 14-oz. can Eagle Brand condensed milk

- 1/2 c. lemon juice
- 1 c. chopped pecans
- 2 graham cracker crusts

Beat together whipped topping, pineapple, condensed milk and lemon juice with electric mixer. Mix only until blended.

Stir in pecans, saving a few pieces to sprinkle on tops of pies.

Pour into pie crusts. Sprinkle with reserved nuts.

Chill in refrigerator for 2 hours before serving.

Variation: Decorate with coconut and maraschino cherries.

This recipe is something quick to stir up when company is coming, and it's very tasty.

Wacky Cake

- 2 c. sugar
- 3 c. plain flour
- 2 t. baking soda
- 6 T. cocoa powder
- 1 t. salt
- 3/4 c. vegetable oil
- 2 T. white vinegar
- 2 t. vanilla extract
- 2 c. water

Frosting:

- 2 t. vanilla extract
- 1/2 c. butter, softened
- 8-oz pkg. cream cheese, softened
- 2 c. powdered sugar

Combine sugar, flour, baking soda, cocoa and salt. Add the oil, vinegar, vanilla and water.

Mix well. Pour into greased and floured 9x13" pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 30-40 minutes, cool.

Make frosting by creaming all the listed frosting ingredients and smooth over cooled cake.

Heavenly Hash

Melt 1 pound chocolate in microwave. Line an 8x8" pan with waxed paper, pour half chocolate mixture in.

Sprinkle 2 cups miniature marshmallows over, then 1 cup chopped pecans.

Finish with the rest of the melted chocolate, cool and break into pieces to serve.



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THE MAKING OF "THE MIRACLE WORKER"

by Jo (Linger) Stout

My name is Jo (Linger) Stout and I was born in Australia and came to America as a war bride in the mid 40s. A divorce and re-marriage found me in the 50s re-married and mother of three, living in Huntsville, Alabama

I shopped at Dunnnavants, trying to find identical outfits for my twin boys and took them to feed the ducks at the Big Spring Park. Not much else to do back then. A neighbor, having seen an ad for "Hansel and Gretel" Huntsville Little Theaters auditions, asked me to go with her to back her up in her effort to try out for the cat part. She got the part and joined the theater.

On the way home, I remarked that the girl they chose for the witch wasn't very good, and already defending "her" theater, she asked, "Do you think YOU could do better?" So I went into the witch character I'd developed for Halloween parties and almost scared her off the road. When the girl they cast didn't work out, my neighbor told the director about me and after a demonstration I wound up with the part. The good review boosted my confidence and I became a HLT (Huntsville Little Theater) member too.

I had been born in 1926 to parents who were part of a very successful vaudeville troupe by the name of "The Diggers", in which my father was the top comedian and also was a comedic dancer. My mother was one of the chorus line and a specialty dancer too.

Traveling with them all over Australia, Tasmania and New Zealand, I had, during those formative years (unknowingly) absorbed a lot of theatrical know-how. Although I had, at first, lacked performing confidence, I quickly unleashed acting ability as I auditioned for and won several small parts; one of which earned me a "Best Supporting Actress" trophy.

In those early years, due to the lack of interest in directing children's plays, by their cadre of directors, the board was forced to ask if I could tackle it. Dumbfounded, I accepted. First of all, using the director's prerogative of choosing a reviewer, I sought out the one that most local directors avoided because he was so critical, which is what I wanted - an honest review.

"How do we make holy water? We boil the Hell out of it."

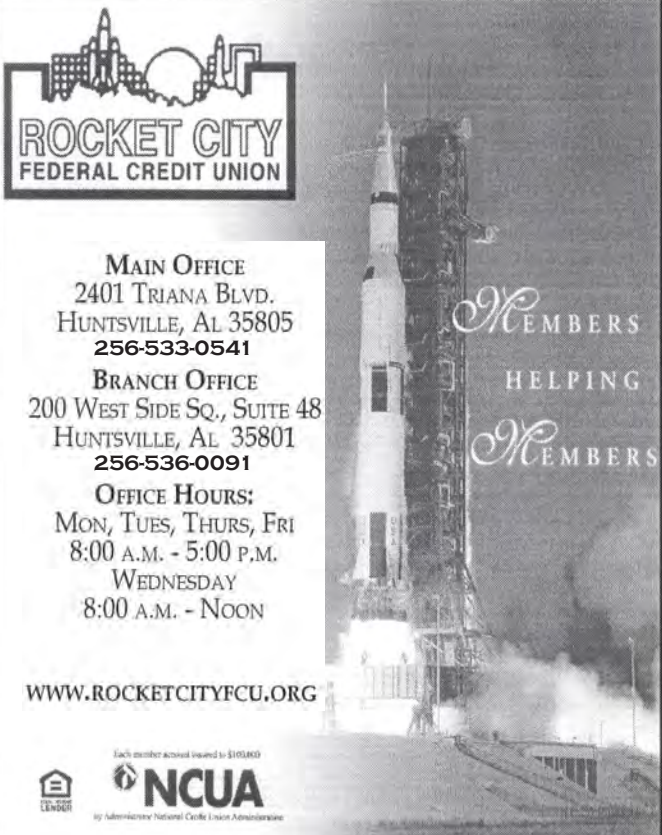
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He reviewed the play starting with the headline, "Little Theatre Works Magic with Alladin" and wound up with "This is by far the best work I have seen from this non-professional theater group. They were non-professional only because of the fact they didn't get paid."

I can only surmise that hurt feelings were involved in the denials of parts for which I auditioned, for it had become known that actors had been asking me for help in developing their characters. But my help backstage was always sought. Despite the disappointment of rejection, when again, a director could not be found for the play "Angel Street", I agreed to direct it and, again, an excellent review bolstered my confidence.

Leaving HLT behind, I accepted an offer to teach drama for the Parks and Playgrounds. I began teaching "creative dramatics" and also culminated the lessons by presenting my students in short versions of Grimm's fairy tales, written by me and presented free of charge for the parents and any other interested persons, at the Electric Company's small auditorium. In retrospect, I have to think that THOSE plays were the actual beginnings of Fantasy Playhouse.

One day I received a call from the newly elected HLT president, who for some reason, liked me, and she told me HLT again couldn't find a person to direct the yearly Christmas play. I told

her to offer my services to their Board. She called back to tell me they had rejected my offer. Not only that, had decided to take the play off their scheduled season, thus depriving the Huntsville children of their eagerly awaited Christmas treat.

That action infuriated me and led me to call the few HLT friends I had, to ask them to come to a meeting at my house, at which I asked them to join me in forming an actual children's theater. They agreed and we had an intense session beginning with a quest for a name. Eventually I suggested "Fantasy Playhouse" and it was accepted. A decision was made that we do an adult play (which was easier to mount) to raise the money to start the Playhouse. Everyone pledged to go look for donations to pay for the needed items, the FIRST of which was an inexpensive place to present the play (as yet unnamed).

At that meeting, we decided upon a play which met all our requirements - a small cast, modern dress, one set, AND a Siamese cat (which I could provide). We agreed on "Bell, Book and Candle". We cast it from the attendees and I was nominated as its director, after which they all straggled home. I, of course, didn't have far to go, the bedroom being at the end of the hall.

The FIRST requirement was quickly filled by the generous offer of the use of the Ballroom of the Russell Erskine Hotel - free of charge.

Johnny Evans, the reigning television kids show host, agreed to tell the kids on his show and his dedicated TV audiences all about us and later joined us as a board member.

The Huntsville Times was very generous, printing

"When I first got married my bride said 'I'm the lucky one!' I countered with, 'No I'M the lucky one!' Turned out we were both wrong."
Don Broome



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stories of our new beginnings and aims, the result being donations and offers of help that began to come in. Mr. Wilfred Van Valkenburg procured the loft in the "Cotton Row" (which was the place where cotton was stored for the auctions that took place in the olden days), thus solving our rehearsal, storage and set building problems. We promptly named it "The Tower" due to the fact our logo had become a Jester figure holding a castle, and, in the cleaning of the area, we had to chase bats out of the rafters. Bats in the belfry, as it were.

Donations and the ticket money accrued from the successful run of the play was enough for us to present our first production of "The Pied Piper of Hamelin" in which I played the "Piper" and earned another glowing review. Fantasy Playhouse was off and running.

Our audiences grew and we arrived at our 5th production year. I was seasoned enough by then to decide to tackle a play I had wanted to act in for a long time and, I had thought, would fit the Easter Season. It was the story of a little girl, "resurrected" from a life of silence and darkness to become a world leader, all because of the faith of one young woman, Annie Sullivan - "The Miracle Worker".

I had invoked the directorial help of Mr. Tom Moore, who was a director employed by the new TV Branch at Redstone Arsenal, so felt free to audition for the part of Annie Sullivan. He chose me and all the other play-

ers, except for the black servants, the choosing of whom would have to be handled discreetly, due to the fact we were currently in the middle of the Civil Rights unrest, and were bucking the prevailing custom of not allowing blacks and whites on the same stage.

Rehearsals had barely been scheduled when I received a phone call which changed the whole ball game. Mr. Moore had accepted a job in Africa, that of setting up a functioning television network for one of the many small countries that emerged after the war.

Devastated, I took on the

task myself and was in the process of blocking the play (meaning figuring the movements of the actors on stage) when we received an invitation from the college in Tuscaloosa asking us if we would like to present a scene from our current play. It would be critiqued by the director of Richmond, Virginia's prestigious "Museum Theater", Mr. Robert Telford. This which would take place at the yearly Alabama Theater Conference coming up in four weeks.

The Board voted to accept "the invite" and agreed to let me present the dramatic "food fight" scene between Annie and Helen. I began to block the fight right

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Phyllis Diller

away, after arranging with the mother of Mickie Knowe (Helen) to bring her to the extra rehearsals, which she was more than willing to do.

It was a very physical scene, especially since I had told "Helen" to be as realistic as she could without injuring me, for I wanted it to look like a REAL fight, not a phony. The result of this directive was I had to have padded guards made to protect my poor shins from the "realistic" kicks Helen made. If you have seen the movie fight, you have seen what we did. Helen, over and under the table; Annie lifting a chair with Helen sitting in it and shaking her out of it; Annie slamming Helen into her chair or onto the floor, forcing her to pick up one of the many spoons she had thrown away; and forcing it into her mouth with the food she was supposed to eat, only to have her spit it into Annie's face. By the time we were ready to leave for Tuscaloosa we were both in excellent physical shape.

Arriving at the college and feeling like total misfits, we were stuck in a corner, surrounded by other invited college drama students, speaking a "drama language" that was totally over our heads. We prepared as inconspicuously as possible, as we awaited our turn on stage. I was told later that our turn was picked by Mr. Telford, his words being, "Let the kiddies come on last".

Our turn finally came, and we were escorted up the stairs. In the short time, the curtain was closed from the scene before, the table and chairs were put in place according to my directions and the tableware (plastic for rehearsals) was placed. We barely got into our seats as the curtain opened and we began the scene.

The applause, as the scene ended, was very encouraging to us as we were being ushered off the stage and down a corridor at the end of which had a door into the audience area. As we came down the aisle to our seats, loud applause was ringing out, which, I assumed, was for Mr. Telford, who was standing behind a podium on

stage. I was later told it was still the applause for our performance! Who knew?

Mr. Telford welcomed the attendees and began his critique, some of which were not the gentlest, causing us to sink lower and lower in our seats as we awaited our turn.

When he announced the name of our scene, spontaneous applause rang out. Calling for silence, Mr. Telford's opening words are still etched in my brain. He said, "Well, what can I say? When you've seen perfection, what is there to critique?" Applause broke out again, during which, (savoring the moment), I was



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Congress and just pick
money out of the air."**

Will Rogers

thinking about what the HLT members (who were there as workshop and audience attendees) were thinking. Revenge is sweet!

Mr. Telford asked if the director of the scene would stand up and when I rose to my feet, he hesitated, then said, "Didn't YOU play Annie?" When I said "Yes" he went on to say "and you also directed the scene?" When I again said "yes" he asked "would you mind if I asked you a couple of questions?" When I nervously agreed, he asked why I had seated Annie and Helen at the table with their backs to the audience, which is not usually good stage blocking.

My answer, "So the audience would not miss the opening actions of Helen pinching Annie and Annie pinching her back" seemed to satisfy him. He then asked why we had whites playing the black parts and again was seemingly satisfied with the answer of "We didn't have time to do a search for them." Then he said "When you find them will you let these other actors go?" I answered, "they have already agreed to do so."

He then asked Mr. Lee Edwards, (director of the very prestigious Baton Rouge Little Theater) if he had any comments. Mr. Edwards rose and said "It's not often I've had to say that I saw performances as good as anything we could do - but we saw it here today."

Then Mr. James Hatcher, Director of the Town and Gown Theater in Birmingham, (another theater not to be sneezed at) rose to his feet and asked for permission to speak. Granted, he addressed us saying, "Would you please advise my office as to your play dates so I can be sure to attend?" Wow!!

Mr. Telford closed with, "Well, all I can say is that I hope the rest of the play measures up to what we saw here today, else it will be very lopsided." He then withdrew to a round of applause.

NOTE: NOT A CRITICISM IN SIGHT.

Absolutely dazed, we rose out of our seats and got ready to leave. As I stepped out into the aisle, I was surrounded by young students congratulating me and asking questions as to where and with whom I had studied. One student was saying how the fight scene was choreographed like a dance, another asking had I studied with a well known choreographer. It was very heady and I wish we could've stayed to enjoy it, but we had to be back in

Huntsville to greet a Puppet Show Company we had engaged for a performance that night and so we, reluctantly, left the scene of our triumph.

Next day, the real drama began, the drama of trying to find black actors, under the radar, to play the servants. We all began to ask our maids if anyone they knew could or would be willing to join us by taking these parts.

Astoundingly "Yes" turned into "No" over and over and over again. This resulted in me taking (which was to my mind) the courageous step of driving out to the A&M College, the "Black College", to talk to the drama teacher

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there, which, tho' scared to death, I did.

After the shock of seeing a white woman in his doorway, he politely asked if he could help me. I explained my problem and got the answer I had hoped for, that he was sure he could fill the part of the housekeeper from his drama students. He thought some of his married students had kids who could fill the two children's parts. He was excited and happy when I left. But two days later he called to tell me he couldn't help me.

We were now at the week of dress rehearsals, a busy week of putting the two-story set together on stage as well as all of us learning how to adjust to it. I had to rehearse the ignominious descent from an upstairs window, clinging to Captain Keller's back as he carried me down the ladder. "Helen" had to memorize the number of

steps it took to get from here to there without looking. The young teen playing Helen's brother had to be rehearsed in the TIMING required, of his carrying in, and exiting with the

LONG ladder in order to get the comedic effect (which lightened up the scene) without his knocking over the, now in place, very important set piece, the WATER PUMP!

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The young pre-teen who played Annie's dead brother, Jimmy, had to have his entrances and exits timed expertly by the now returned ex-director, who was coordinating all the lighting and sound cues from the projection booth located at the back of the balcony. All of this was being done as the stage crew were carrying in sound equipment, furniture, props, costumes, make up, entrances and exits. It was mostly bedlam, a very busy and chaotic week.

The night before the full dress rehearsal, still without our black actors, I was standing in the aisle of the audience, shucking off my role of Annie for the job of director, giving instructions to the stage crew, when I felt a tap on my shoulder. Tilting my ear towards the person, (my eyes being busy observing the stage crew) I heard the words, "There's someone out in the lobby wanting to talk to you." Impatiently, I replied, "I can't leave right now, I've got to"and was interrupted by the voice saying, "I think you better go, it's a black man."

Yelling to the crew, "Hey - I'll be back", I raced up to the lobby and pushed thru the door to see a man, in a black suit, with a preacher's collar, standing there. We introduced ourselves and he asked, "Do you still need those two black children?" When I said a fervent "Yes" he continued with, "I have two kids willing to play the parts, tho' they're a little older than you wanted." Laughingly I told him that at this point, age didn't matter, and then to cap off the happy news, he added that he had a college aged daughter who was a drama student, coming home the next day, who would be glad to play the house keeper.

Absolutely bubbling over with happiness I arranged for them to come early the next night so we could run through their parts and after getting his promise that "they would be here",

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I raced back to share the good news with the cast and crew.

Next day they arrived, the older girl dressed in appropriate attire, a long sleeved blouse tucked into a long skirt, a long white apron and Aunt Jemima scarf on her head. She introduced herself and her siblings in the appropriate dialect of the times. She was perfection!

After a shadowing session (a theatrical expression meaning the new actors follow the other actors playing the part to see where to go and when to speak, etc.) we were able to attain an almost flawless dress rehearsal. I forgot to mention, Mr. Moore had arrived back from Africa in time to do his magic with lights and sound, so it had all, miraculously, come together the day before opening night - a night which still held some foreboding of "what might happen."

We had hired off-duty policemen, just in case. They earned their money easily, for nothing happened to cause any problems.

At our last performance, when, as usual, we invited our audience members to come up on stage to meet and greet the players, an elderly lady was guided to me by a gentleman. As she felt my proffered hand she grasped it in both of hers, and said tearfully, "My dear, the play was wonderful! I didn't need to SEE it, I heard it and that was enough!"

I thanked her and, as I watched the BLIND lady being ushered off, I thanked the Lord, for a nicer compliment I never could have conceived of, and I treasure it to this day.

There's a lot more to the

"Traffic lights are always green when you're not in a hurry."

Judy Smith, Huntsville

story, but these are the nuts and bolts of it.

The Reddick family was invited to our version of the "Academy Awards" and were given certificates for their performances. They were treated the same as any other attendee - and I am very proud of the Alabama people who were in attendance that night, for their sweet actions. I would dearly love to be reunited with that family, for I think of them often.

As the anniversary of the Martin Luther King speech rolls on, I think that Fantasy Playhouse and we (now) old timers, who participated in the "Miracle" play should be accorded a little appreciation for the staging of our own little "Civil Rights Action". This, I

was told, may have been the first mingling of blacks and whites, in a stage play, in the South.

Thank you.

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Segregation Laws and the Mailman

by James E. Taylor

From 1926 until I-565 took our property in 1990, my parents' home was on Mitchell Drive. It was a couple of blocks from Pulaski Pike and West Holmes Street, both of which were predominantly black neighborhoods.

Around 1931 when I was 10 years old, I became fascinated with the black postman (Clarence Powers) who delivered our mail primarily because of his gentle manners and his mode of transportation. He delivered the mail by driving a horse and carriage. The carriage was enclosed much as in the manner of the small enclosed trucks of that day.

After the war, I returned to work at the Russel Erskine Hotel and in 1947 was made manager.

Around 1948 or '49, the local postmaster contacted me and advised that Clarence's fellow workers at the office wanted to give him a retirement party but didn't know how to get around the state segregation laws. (Remember - in 1948 there was only one Postmaster in Huntsville and not very many postmen).

Our blue room would seat 50 persons which was about the number in attendance. In the center of a dividing wall, there was a door to an adjoining room. We removed the door and placed a separate single ta-

ble for Clarence in the door to give him the appearance of being the guest of honor, which he was. Thus, we legally beat the segregation laws.

I recall it as being a beautiful retirement party. Clarence seemed so proud of the event and knew all of the names of the people attending, greeting them all by name.

As I recalled this event in later years, I only regretted that I failed to tell Clarence that I was that young teenager that he delivered mail to in the thirties.

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* If you are cursed with cramps occasionally during the night, do this. Sleep with a piece of pure silverware - a spoon is the best - on your night table. As soon as you are awakened with the troublesome cramp, grab the spoon and put it right on the spot. The cramp should disappear instantly.

* A spicy apple scent, like that of a just baked apple pie, has a calming effect on one's nerves. It may even help some people avoid panic attacks. Yale University experts have found that by simply imagining the look and smell of a freshly baked apple pie, people can immediately relax.

* Trying to control your sweet tooth? Dissolve 1 teaspoon of baking soda in a glass of warm water and rinse out your mouth with it. Spit out the water, do not swallow. The explanation is the hypothalamus is stimulated, releasing saliva and the craving for sweets. Within minutes the rinse should help you control that craving.

* An old remedy for swollen glands: scrub and peel seven limes. Bring the rinds to a boil in 2 cups of milk. Simmer for 5 minutes. Cool, then gargle with half of the mixture. An hour later, gargle with the other half.

A hangover is the wrath of grapes.

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“FINE, LADY, JUST TAKE IT.”

by Judith C. Smith

"My Motto, never pay full price for anything - bartering also works."

At certain seasons through the years, I am full of energy, don't need to sleep very much and I love a bargain. I also love to bargain down prices on stores where I am shopping and especially at flea markets and other public vendor locations.

It seems like a victory and to have my friends say that what was already a good bargain, I was able to bargain down even more, sometimes a LOT more, feels like a real accomplishment. In middle Eastern and European countries, no one expects you to pay the marked price and they think you are a fool (or a dumb American) if you don't bargain and bargain.

Thrift stores are where real finds are waiting on Tuesdays at one of my favorite ones. They have 30% off on that day and 50% off on holidays, but you better get there early. It will look like Black Friday sometimes. Designer clothes for pennies on the dollar are common. Upon walking in and seeing those lines from front to back waiting on three darling girls ring up one's find as fast as their hands could work.

I had my cane that makes into a stool, so I was well prepared for the wait. Of course, I struck up a conversation with a nice lady and her grandson who had just moved to Huntsville. She insisted that I get in front of her and hold her place in line while she ran off to fill another basket full of wonderful finds.

Meanwhile, I proceeded to talk to the twenty-one year old grandson. I was telling him where to apply for a job and where to eat. By the time we got to the register forty-five minutes later, we were old friends. They insisted on taking me to lunch and we all agreed that the thrift store morning was one of our best.

Dealing at a flea market with vendors is another matter. Here prices are only "fixed" for the uninformed. If you are prepared to haggle and even play a bit of strategy, you can save even more over the discount prices. At a recent "hamfest" I attended with my husband, the first thing that caught my eye was a shiny steel cart with two wheels on it and collapsible handle. Sitting in the bottom was a very nice black plastic carton, similar to what 4 gallons of milk might come inside of it. The price was \$10, not bad and a lot less than others I had seen, but I offered \$5 for it. The vendor said "no" but I didn't stop there. I offered \$6 and finally when I lingered longer examining it and

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Mae West

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saying how it was just what I needed, and others were getting behind me wanting to buy some lovely trinkets, I finally offered \$8 and he said, "OK, Lady, just take it." Wow, I was off and running at this flea market and now had a wheeled cart to put everything in.

I made several other purchases in the \$5 to \$10 range, but near the end, my husband and sister who had also come were amazed at my bargaining skills. My husband wanted 3 small antennas that were marked \$18 each and he felt they were already a good bargain for a total of \$54.00. But I told him to give me the cash and I got lots of dollar bills along with two twenty dollar bills. I took the 3 antennas up to the table where the vendor woman was standing. I had already found that women would not deal as well with my discount offers as men would, so this would be a challenge.

I took the three packaged antennas, each about four feet long, to the vendor and at these places they don't charge tax. I said, "How Much?" and she replied, "Fifty-Four Dollars." I said that I was getting them for a special occasion for my husband but I didn't have that much money. I got the twenties and ones a couple of ones and said, "How about \$42.00?" She replied, "Fifty-Four Dollars."

So having carefully hidden dollar bills in every shirt and jeans pocket I had, I proceeded to pull out another dollar, and each time the woman vendor would again say, "Fifty-Four Dollars." I was now up to \$47.00 and her reply kept being the same.

At this point I just kept putting my hands in each pocket and coming up empty . . . while saying all along, "My husband sure would like these antennas." There was a group of sev-

eral other men wanting to buy things and the lady was getting antsy I could see, so I felt deeply and got all the change in the bottom of one pocket and fished out a total of \$.68 and said, "this is all I have got. Won't you take \$47.68?"

She breathed a big deep sigh and said, "FINE LADY, JUST TAKE IT."

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Russel Erskine Hotel Letter to Employees - March 9, 1933

This letter was given to "Old Huntsville" by Charlotte Neal, whose father worked at the Russel Erskine Hotel at the time the whole country started to feel the economic downturn. Her Dad was Lacy Strong. Some of the signatures are more legible than others. Thank you to Charlotte for providing this.

March 9th, 1933.

When you were paid in full in cash on March 4th, you were advised that you were fortunate, due to the scarcity of money at that time; you were also told to make the cash received go as far as possible because we could not guarantee another such payment. . Since that time, conditions have not improved and we are not encouraged about the outlook for our next payroll. Due to the national emergency and conditions over which we have no control, it is necessary that we put every employee on notice that the Huntsville Hotel Company will not be further obligated for the payment of salaries or wages. However, it is our purpose to continue in operation and we shall be pleased to have the continued services of its employees under and subject to the direction of its manager.

If and when money begins to circulate sufficiently, the Company will pay each individual employee on as fair a basis as it deems practical, the Hotel Company reserving at all times the right to do what it thinks best and advisable for the best interest of the employees and the Company.

Huntsville Hotel Company
Operating Russel Erskine Hotel

By Rumrider
Manager.

We, the undersigned employees of Huntsville Hotel Company agree to the foregoing.

Rumrider	Fannie Pope	Lee Smith
H. M. Whigham	W. A. Davis	Lacy Strong
	Walter Hopton	Salmon Dade
Edna Lison	P. B. Rubenier	Edith Jones
Curtis Cameron	Will Nash	James G. Adams
Marion Pogue	James G. Adams	W. Anderson
Edward Lee	John Anderson	Paul D. ...
A. C. Kestner	John D. ...	John D. ...
Jac Cantess	Robert ...	John ...
J. A. Strong	John ...	Jack Smith
B. B. ...	Lee ...	James Hill
F. D. ...	Herbert ...	
J. D. ...	Coy ...	
W. M. ...		

R. E. ...

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.

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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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.
204 LOWE AVE.
SUITE 11**

**HUNTSVILLE, AL 35801
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School Days at Central

by Austin Miller

One afternoon at Central School, during study hall, the principal picked five of us to work on the ball field. It was around 1955 and I was about fourteen. I resented this because I did not think it was my responsibility to work at school, especially on the ball field. I was not on the baseball team and it did not escape my notice that none of the ball players were selected for this duty.

(Central is on Ryland Pike at Moontown Road, about seven miles east off Highway 72. It's where everyone goes through 8th grade if they live in Ryland, Brownsboro and Maysville).

When we got to the field, I saw that he had chained a long piece of flat iron plating to the back of a school bus. Our job was to add weight by standing on the iron plate as he used the bus to drag us and the iron plate over the field in an attempt to smooth off rough spots. I immediately refused. I told him it was too dangerous and we could get hurt. He gave me a tongue-lashing and told me that I was going to do what he said. When I still refused, he kicked me in the seat of the pants and sent me back to study hall with a threat to deal with me later.

Walking back, I saw white smoke coming from a high crawl space opening under the southwest corner of the school. I knew there were smokers in there so I peeped in and saw several boys from my class puffing away. They motioned me in and asked if I wanted to play hooky the rest of the day. I said no and told them that if they all left together they would get caught.

They called me chicken and I told them that they were all stupid. When they finished smoking, they came out one at a time and slipped into the woods. As I watched them leave, it occurred to me that if I did it right, I could probably skip school without getting caught and if I did get caught I was already in trouble with the principal and it

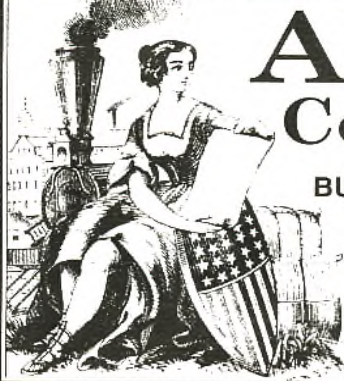
wouldn't make that much difference anyway. When they were all out of sight, I took the most direct route off the school grounds. I walked past two PE classes and some other unsupervised students who were playing softball during their play period.

Out of the corner of my eye, I could see the school bus pulling the other boys slowly around the ball field. I was gambling that the principal would be too busy to look my way. I was also gambling that walking with purpose would not raise suspicion and the other teachers and students wouldn't notice that I was leaving school. I was thinking if I didn't look guilty nobody would think I was doing anything wrong.

There was no indication that I was noticed when I walked out of the schoolyard and headed south on Moon Town Road. After walking a short distance, Mr. Tobe Hudson came along and offered me a ride.

Mr. Tobe owned and farmed the land on the west side of the school. He and his wife had four children, all of whom I knew. There was Bonnell, Margie, Carl and a younger daughter named Lois. Bonnell and Lois still live on the home place. Margie and Carl passed away a few years ago. Mr. Tobe's grandson Wallace Hudson (Bubba) is the current custodian at Central and also lives on the home place next to the school. Bubba loves the school and its history and is a valuable resource always willing to share his knowledge of the school's history with anyone interested, especially former students. My brother Berns taught Bubba when he was a student at Central and says he was one of the brightest students he ever taught.


When I got in his old pickup, Mr. Tobe asked me where I was going and what I was doing out of school. I told him about my run in with the principal and that I was headed to Yankee Town to find



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my cousin Emmett McKinney. I knew Emmett might be at France Parton's store or Clint Mill's filling station. Also I knew he wouldn't care that I left school and would take me home about the time the bus ran so my parents would think he picked me up at school.

Mr. Tobé was a likeable, hardworking, salt of the earth kind of man and I enjoyed a pleasant chat with him as we rode along. He dropped me off at the intersection of Highway 72 and Dug Hill Road. If he ever told anybody about picking me up, I never heard about it. Emmett was not to be found so I walked south on Dug Hill (about a mile) to the Brick Graveyard at the corner of Dug Hill and Ryland Pike. Shiloh United Methodist Church sits on the northwest corner and the cemetery is on the northeast corner. It is called the Brick Graveyard because it is enclosed by an ancient brick wall that Ryland people have rested on for generations. The cemetery has the grave of at least one Revolutionary War veteran and several Civil War veterans. I decided to sit on the wall and wait until the bus came and then walk the short distance up to our house like I had gotten off the bus.

I hoped that my friend Jodie Rogers would be there because it was not unusual to see him sitting on the wall. Jodie was in his eighties and the son of slaves. Although he never went to school he was an avid reader and always informed on current events. He was a 32nd degree Mason and traveled throughout the southeast related to official duties of his position. I often wondered what he would have done with his life if he had been born a hundred years later.

Jodie was not there that day and I sat down to ponder what I was going to do next. After a while Mr. Will Johnson and his wife came walking up and sat down to rest on the wall ten or twelve feet from me. Mr. Will was eccentric and a curiosity in the community. He and his wife walked everywhere they went. People would stop in cars and ask them if they wanted to ride and they usually got the same stock answer, "No, we're in a hurry!"

They lived in a small frame house at the edge of the mountain at Cedar Gap. The house had a tin roof and it was common sport for teenagers to rock the house at night and yell out catcalls and other kinds of hoots and squalls. They made a living by hiring out to chop and pick cotton. Also, Mr. Will drew a pension for being in World War I. His war record interested me and I walked over to talk to him. I told him I heard that he had fought in World War I. He was very polite but had no interest in talking about that but did tell me that he had served in the 42nd Infantry Division under General Douglas MacArthur.

As they walked away toward home, I could not help but think that a war hero who served in the famed Rainbow Division should be treated with a lot more courtesy and respect in the community. I sat on the wall for a while and several older black people walked past and showed me

the deference that black people showed white people in those days, even to a young boy.

The whole school was abuzz the next morning. The other boys who played hooky had been caught. The principal was stopping them as they came in the building. When I walked into the school, several were waiting outside the office to get a paddling. When he let me walk by I breathed a sigh of relief. But this was not all the news. There had been an accident on the ball field. One of the boys being pulled by the school bus lost his balance and caught his right leg under the iron plating. The bus drug him about six feet before it got stopped and badly bruised, skinned and sprained his leg. As far as I know there were never any repercussions about this. Just one example of how much things have changed in schools since 1955. But I do know the principal never carried out his threat to deal with me later.

In hind sight I wonder if it might have been better if I had been caught because this was not the last time. In fact it was the first of many times and I never once got caught, I think the reason was I never talked, always had a plan that included a backup plan and was lucky. Or maybe not so lucky. In time I came to know that the effort was a waste and would have been put to much better use on my school work.

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Growing up in Huntsville

by Doug Raney

I spent 6 years of my growing up years in Huntsville and there are many fond memories. One big memory was Monte Sano Mountain. On the mountain were many telephone poles and on the telephone poles were wire insulators; blue green and clear in color. One day my dad brought a blue green one home.

At the church that I was a member of, the Pastor would do a children's service prior to the regular sermon, called "Message in a Can." He would have a different child bring an item in a 5 gallon paint bucket and base his children's sermon on it; such as a football or a doll. My friend's son wanted to participate, so I told my friend that I could have his son bring in an item that would give the Pastor a run for his money. I had him bring in the wire insulator and when the

Pastor pulled it out of the bucket, his first response was, "What is this?" Then he said, "I need help from somebody on this."

One lady in the congregation told him that he was too young to know what it was. I explained what it was and he managed to base a sermon on it. After the service an older gentleman talked to me about the history of wire insulators. A few Sundays later, I told the Pastor that I was the one behind my friend's son bringing the wire insulator and he told me that he knew that it was me.

In 1967 when we were living on Panorama Drive, I went to a pre-school at Monte Sano Methodist Church taught by Mrs. Jane Barr. Mrs. Helen Franklin assisted her.

Her curriculum consisted of teaching us art, religion, drama, science and music appreciation. We were involved in various activities outdoors and indoors. Of the

various outdoor games I remember us doing the Hokey Pokey dance, musical chairs and playing a record about the story of Peter and the Wolf and having the kids try to re-enact it.

We had great refreshments and a prayer was said prior to enjoying them. After that came rest time and I remember classical music was played during that time and it probably helped me form an appreciation for the music to this day.

After that we usually were involved in various art projects, painting on paper supported by easels, paper mache, etc.

I remember a science project that was done using ammonia, salt and bluing that formed colorful crystals. We went on various field trips as well; one to the Coca-Cola plant and one to Dunnnavants Mall.

Mrs. Barr was quite the innovative teacher for that time, trying to teach us pre-schoolers various things and form an appreciation for classical music.

I recently have read some of her articles in Old Huntsville magazine and was able to reconnect with her.



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Tweetie's Pet Tips

"One of my favorite columns, I have to say."

Cat Deterrents

Cats Digging in Gardens

Cats naturally like to dig but sometimes you don't want that in your garden. Here's what to do:

- * Scatter the following in your garden:
 - fresh orange & lemon peels
 - coffee grounds
 - pipe tobacco
- * Sprinkle vinegar, oil of lavender, lemongrass, citronella or eucalyptus
- * The herb Rue is something cats don't like - either in planted form or dried and spread.
- * Use lots of pine cones scattered in the soil, if you haven't planted seeds there. Or use Cat Scat™ - a non-chemical cat and wildlife repellent that uses plastic mats cut into smaller pieces and pressed into the soil. Discourages digging.
- * Exposed ground can be covered with river rock - they deter weeds too.
- * Chicken wire buried just beneath the ground surface might work in some cases.

Cats getting in Trash

They're looking for food, and are natural scavengers.

- * Place a tight lid on all trash cans.
- * Check if your neighbors have cats getting in their trash as well.

Cats walking on Cars

They like perching high up and a car is the perfect place. But oftentimes on their way down they slip and if they have claws can leave scratches on the finish.

- * Move cat shelters & feeding stations away from garages/cars.
- * Buy a good car cover even if the car is in the garage.
- * Don't keep loose food in the garage, you will attract rodents as well as the cats.



Cats Lounging in the Yard or on the Porch

Cats are very territorial and will stay close to their food source

* Apply cat deterrent fragrances liberally around edges of yards, tops of fences, porches and on any favorite digging area or plants.

* Install an automatic water sprinkler such as CatStop™ or ScareCrow™ that is motion-activated - most cats hate water and certainly when it comes as a surprise.

Cats are yowling, fighting, spraying, roaming and having kittens

These are all behaviors shown by cats that have not been spayed or neutered. For their sakes and yours these cats need to be spayed or neutered, they are very prolific in their baby-making.

* To combat the urine smell, which can be really bad, spray the area thoroughly with white vinegar or with products that use natural enzymes to fight the smell such as Natures Miracle, Fizzion Pet Stain and Odor Removal or Simple Solution obtainable at most pet stores.

Cats are sleeping under your Porch or in a Shed

They are looking for a dry, warm place away from the elements.

* Physically block the location the cats are getting in with chicken wire or lattice, once you KNOW they're out. Make sure there are no kittens inside before you block the entrance.

* If you like them around but not in your home provide a sand area for litter away from the house as well as a secluded shelter of some sort.

(Written & Presented by Alley Cat Allies)

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From the Desk of Tom Carney

The Fabulous Monte Sano Hotel

by Tom Carney

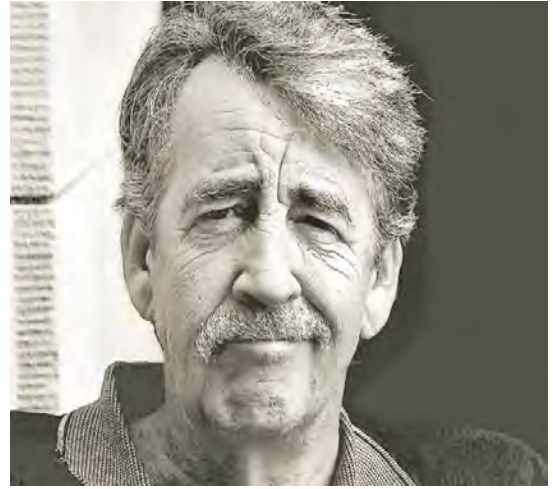
M. J. O'Shaughnessy was a man of vision. He arrived in Huntsville from New York in the mid-1880s and in true entrepreneurial style backed the formation of the North Alabama Improvement Company. This company included a number of Huntsville businessmen and its goals were twofold - to transform Huntsville into an industrial center and to make Monte Sano Mountain into a health resort and vacationer's paradise.

By 1886 the company had made a firm decision to build a huge resort hotel on the mountain. On February 16th of that year a site was selected on the northwest section of the mountain 100 yards from the edge of the bluff overlooking Huntsville on the present site of Old Chimney Road. (The chimney now standing was part of the

hotel.) John Rea, the architect, had designed the 233-room structure in the Queen Anne style encircled with broad porches on a 200 x 308 foot area.

One week later 16 teams were busily hauling lumber, lime, cement and other materials up the mountain as construction got under way. The hotel would be lighted by gas and heated by steam. Drinking water would be pumped from nearby Cold Spring. Bath water would be forced up the mountain from Big Spring and stored in a ground reservoir north of the hotel. An 8,000 gallon water tank and observation tower were to be built on top of the hotel from which guests could enjoy views of the distant countryside.

In late April 1887 furniture was being carried up the mountain by the wagon load.



A highly regarded landscape architect, Major Schrimshaw, was summoned from New York and he soon had workers transforming the grounds around the hotel into a veritable garden.

Twenty miles of bridal paths were built, and a driveway circled the town of Viduta. Terraces, walkways and lookouts were placed at prominent spots of geological wonder at various locations on the mountain. Markers pointed

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out Shelter Rock, Wildcat Glen, Hell's Half Acre, Brigand's Cavern, Vanishing Falls, Chalybeate Spring, Alum Spring, Magnesia Spring, Shelter Spring and Inspiration Point.

Local newspapers kept residents aware of construction progress. Extensive publicity was devoted to the hotel's opening on June 1, 1887 and the grand ball the following night.

Trains arriving in Huntsville were packed. A team-drawn bus seating from seven to ten persons met all trains regardless of time of arrival. A huge Tallyho, with seats above its closed compartments, carried special guests. Six horses drew this carriage up the narrow, winding road. Several stops were made along the way to view the scenery. Nearing the hotel the guests were whirled through a gateway of rock-bound flower beds and orderly lines of shrubbery to the hotel main entrance. There they were met by uniformed attendants who bowed to the guests and directed them through the double doors of colored glass panes into the lobby to the registration desk. The wall behind the desk showed "pigeonholes" for mail, and a call board listing 233 rooms. Alarms and speaking tubes were nearby.

A long south wing of the building was divided into the baths, barber shop, saloon and pool room. A separate house contained two bowling alleys.

A concert was given on July 1st and a few days later a ball was given which opened with a huge fireworks display. About 400 guests were present to hear Prof. Abbot's orchestra play. Dinner was served at midnight, and the ball continued. The huge dining room was "laden with everything to tempt the appetite."

The Huntsville Mercury wrote on August 24th that over 1000 guests had registered at the hotel since its opening. A profit was made the first year.

In 1889 a railroad line from Huntsville up the mountain was completed. Many local people paid the fare just to enjoy the ride and scenery.

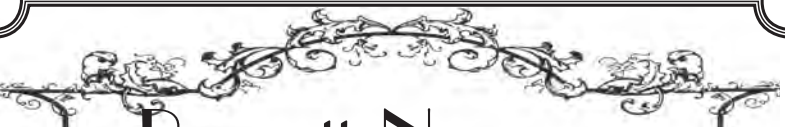
Many prominent people

signed their names to the register, including William H. Vanderbilt, William Waldorf Astor, Walter Damrosch, Jay Gould and Helen Keller.

In 1894 the hotel was opened early in June and attracted in August one of its largest registrations. However, due to litigation among its stockholders it was not opened the following year. The hotel opened for its last season in 1900. Transportation and other problems accounted for its drop in popularity.

Efforts were made from time to time to revive the hotel to its early successful operation but to no avail. The hotel was later sold to Mrs. Lena Garth. In 1944 the executors of the Garth estate sold the hotel building, with its dust and cobwebs, for \$9,000 for salvage. Later the land was sold as residential sites for modern homes.


The only visible evidence of the hotel itself is the tall brick chimney on Old Chimney Road. This rustic monument stands as a reminder of the elegance and gay times that once surrounded it over a hundred years ago.




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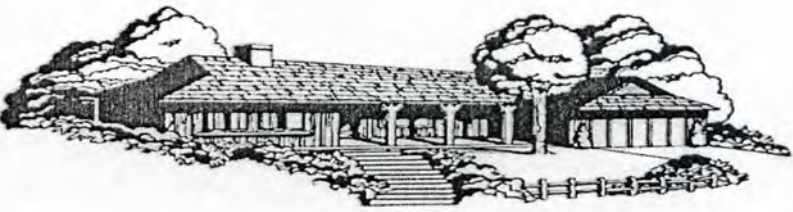


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- Huntsville Achievement School Huntsville • Madison County Special Olympics • Reading is FUNdamental •
- Riley Center • Veterans Memorial Museum •
- Scholarships for Alabama A&M, Oakwood College, Calhoun Community College and Drake Colleges

Golden K Kiwanians meet on Thursdays at 8 AM at the Downtown Rescue Mission, 1400 Evangel Drive, for breakfast and programs of interest

JOIN US AND WE WILL SET ANOTHER PLACE AT THE TABLE

Golden K Kiwanis of Huntsville, Alabama



Grandma's Home Remedies

* A man once had a very bad bronchial cough. He tried everything for it, until one day when he tried chewing on a piece of ginseng root. The cough stopped, and didn't return.

* An old remedy for curing Asthma is to swallow a tablespoon of aloe vera gel before each meal and one at bedtime. Do this for two weeks.

* If you have cramps, rumbling in the stomach or general yuckiness, eat some plain yogurt. Make sure it contains "living" or "active" cultures - those are the ones that destroy the pain-causing bacteria.

* If you want good luck do the following. Next time you eat a banana make a wish, then cut a coin-sized slice from the end of the banana that was attached to the stalk. If you can find the shape of a "y" in the piece of banana, your wish will come true.

* It is said that if you eat one kiwi a day you may decrease the risk of a stroke by as much as 40%, regardless of other known risk factors. The kiwi is very high in Vitamin C and potassium.

* When you have a painful canker sore, put a pinch of powdered sage on the sore. Also, drink sage tea, which you can get at most health stores.

* To fight flu or low-grade infection mince a clove of garlic into a glass of water or orange juice and drink it down. Do it

three times a day.

* For sinus attack sufferers try this: on a daily basis, eat fresh or juiced carrots and cucumbers, together or separately. Eat blueberries, too. These 3 foods have nutrients that can build resistance to sinus attacks.

* To calm your nerves, prepare celery-seed tea by adding 1

teaspoon of celery seed to a cup of just-boiled water. Drink the tea, seeds and all, as hot as possible without burning yourself.

* A lot of people report more energy after eating a handful of sunflower seeds. Try to avoid the salted ones, however.

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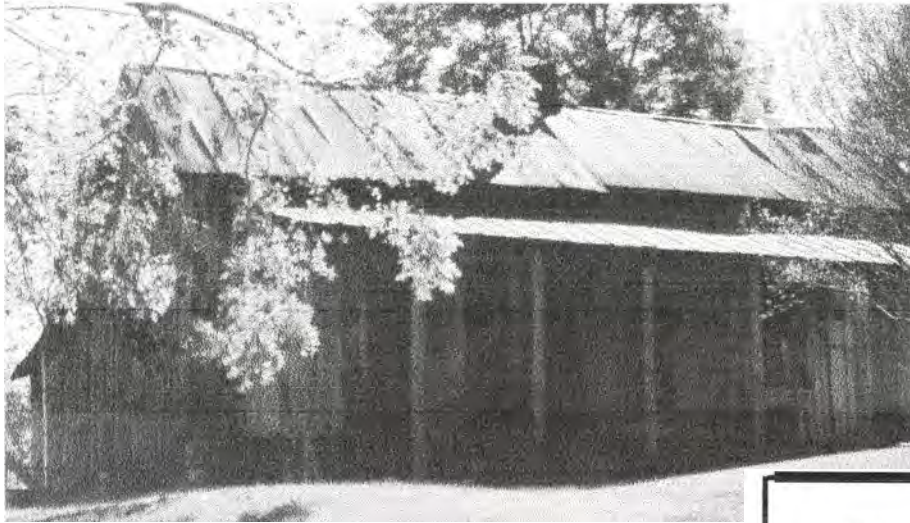
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Easter Memories from New Market, Alabama

by Cathy Bowen Bridges

With Easter coming up, I just had to tell you about my Easter memories of about 50 years ago, when I was a little girl. Am I that old already? Where did the years go? It's funny how some things stick in your mind more than others, as the years go by.

My great-grandparents, Squire and Sarah Hillis, lived on New Market Road just past the bridge and to the right as you go up the hill. I would say that it has earned the name "Hillis Hill", because I have relatives on the right side, clear up to where New Market Road goes left to Beth Road, and then my grandparents, Earman and Theo Hillis lived on the curve to the right. I picture Mamaw Hillis sitting on the front porch everytime I go by.

Easter egg hunts always took place in the woods behind my great-grandparent's house and barn, near the creek. Actually, it was more like behind

my great uncle Charlie's house. He lived up from them, and much of that land was his. There were always plenty of kids of all ages ready to hunt eggs each year, as we have always had a large family. On Easter Sunday, there was also lots of food, since everyone usually brought a dish with them, plus dessert. Food, drinks, dessert al-

ways stretched out on long tables put together, with a sheet or tablecloth thrown over them to keep the flies away.

I am not sure how many acres of woods there were where we had the egg hunts, or how many kids there were, but I remember kids running all over the place with their Easter baskets. Some were still dressed in their colorful Easter clothes. There is no telling how many kids were at the Easter

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egg hunts we had, but I sure am glad that I was one of those kids! The adults would help the little ones, and there was always a lot of eggs to find!

Those were the good old days, and back then, I did not have a care in the world. It was nothing to run through the yard chasing guineas or chickens with my cousins, while the grown-ups sat on the long front porch while they talked and swatted flies, all the while wishing they had not eaten so much.

There were so many things for a kid to explore outside at my great-grandparent's place. Like the outhouse, of all places! We girls thought it was the funniest thing the way the chickens scratched around underneath the outhouse, and why were we so interested in the outhouse anyway? There was a swing on a tree limb that I believe was hanging near the edge of the yard. I remember looking off the edge, or swinging out over the edge and looking down. There were lots of trees and the creek down below the house, but the boys would tell us girls that alligators were in the creek, so we would run off. They did not want us girls around.

The old house is still standing, but the front porch is missing. I remember when I was a kid, it seemed like that front porch was so long. You entered from one end, with old chairs and rockers full of adults sitting around looking at you when you walked by.

The house is around 150 years old now, at least. The old barn has been there for a long time also. With the woods and the creek down below, it is especially pretty in springtime, but fall is also a nice time to come and enjoy the turning of the leaves, and sit in the sun. It looks nice when the sun shines down on the rocks and water in

the creek.

There is a nice pavilion down near the creek, where the Hillis family reunions are held now, and....more great food! I try to go each year, but sometimes I miss it.

It is always good to see my mom's side of the family. Most of them I do not see often, and even those that live near me have a busy life just like I do, with grandkids, elderly parents, work and all the other time consuming things we have going on in our lives.

I don't live far from my great-grandparent's place and when I go that way, cross the bridge and go up the hill, I look to the right and there it is, so full of memories from a long time ago. Time that has gone by too fast.

Happy Easter to everyone!

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Habits of Cats

by Ted Roberts

Sometimes when a writer looks at a blank piece of paper he sees a blank piece of paper. He gropes for a subject and all he gets is a blank. I usually holler to the wife. "Hey Shirley, anything newsworthy happen to us lately?"

"Oh, your oldest son, Harry, got married, but he's done that before."

Nothing. But lately in the absence of wars in the Congo, new children born in the family, the house burning down, or car wrecks - there is one category of events that always serves up material - our two cats. They are so predictable, yet so unpredictable. Take their nighttime habits - and this one could win a prize at the planetary cat show: We're all laying in the bed watching TV. We're in our pajamas, they are nekkid, as we say down here. They like crime shows with a lot of action; explosions, fires, gunfire. Well, when 9:30 rolls around the male sedately, almost priggishly, heads for the door and with a sniff over his shoulder leaves the room. Bear in mind he carries no watch strapped to his leg as he leaves the room. Why? Maybe because once or twice earlier I ran him out at 9:30 and he remembered.

They have another crazy habit even more mysterious. They love to drink water out of the flower bowls. Bowls of clean water on the kitchen floor and these connoisseurs are lapping water full of fiber, worms, and microscopic algae out of the flower bowls. Outside, they also favor mud puddles wherein stray bipeds have relieved themselves. Maybe there are more vitamins in it - maybe we oughta try it. Maybe it's the long hidden remedy to cancer. Ever hear of a cat getting cancer? Or maybe the cure is a diet of mice.

Related to diet is the strange habit of these two free renters. They'll only eat cat food. Hold up a bowl of pate foie gras to their lips and they'll look at you like you're crazy and turn aside. Nothing other than cat food tempts them - not even ice cream.

And do they know how to conserve energy. One minute they're sleeping - the next they are streaking across the yard chasing an aggressive grasshopper. They gave up on birds as soon as they caught on to that flying trick.

But maybe their most endearing habit is to jump in any enclosure - like a box.

Nothing makes a cat happier than to sit in a box, survey the world and mistakenly think they're safe from any hungry predators. They're wrong, of course, but it's like you locking yourself in your room, hiring a Doberman and hiding under the bed. It makes you feel good.

Well, regardless of my cat's foibles, they're lovable, furry balls of delight. And did I tell you they're brother and sister? They're lovable, yet full of the wild.

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The New Hope Band

by Charlie Lyle

It was in 1954 and I had just gotten out of the Army. It was time now to get back to work. For starters that would be teaching private music lessons at Robbins Music Center on Jefferson Street. My first student was a young girl named Mary Martin. She played clarinet. A second student started taking drum lessons. Her name was Sandra Maples. A few lessons later Ms. Dora Martin came to me and said, "Mr. Lyle, it is a long trip back and forth from New Hope for us. Would you come to us if we got eight to ten students?"

This was a beginning of something important and a milestone for music in the county. This was a beginning of the county band program. Fortunately or unfortunately most aspiring musicians go to college majoring in music in order to be a great soloist. They end up usually as a music educator, primarily to make a living.

About this time a Ms. Ford at Gurley started a group and called me to teach them like I was doing at New Hope. Well, most everyone can count, especially money, and it was quite obvious that I was starting to do very well.

An outstanding parent who helped bring all of this together was Ms. Jo Ann (Tabor) Butler. She and other parents banded together and practically forced James Bell, a County Commissioner, to go with some others to Mr. Almon, the County Superintendent, to plead for a school band director.

Mr. Almon looked kinda shaken. He knew that he had been had. He knew that he had to act on their wishes and he was an awakening a sleeping giant. Because if he let Gurley and New Hope have a band director, he would have to give virtually every school in the county a band director. Other schools in the county wanted to get their band programs started, too.

The band started rehearsing on a regular basis during the end of the summer. The children started picking cotton about this

time and didn't have to go back to school until later in the fall. The band was very small in the beginning. There were beginners and more advanced players. We were not capable of meeting much competition and this point. However, the band did quite well marching. We did a few parades marching in half time shows for the new football program.

We realized that we needed to draw attention to our band. Since New Hope was called the Indians, I decided to dress our band in new uniforms and majorettes in Indian dress. I went directly to Anadarko, Oklahoma to buy squaw headbands, with one feather and a full headdress for the head majorette.

Once during a parade downtown, I saw a man put his hand up to his head and, spitting a plug of tobacco exclaimed, "Where are those damn Indians?" This made it all worthwhile.

I got married at this time to my beautiful wife Janet Moore.

I had one of the very best group of band parents that I could ever wish for. Everybody in New Hope not only supported the band, but also were really excited about it. One of these people was Dr. Carpenter. The doctor was well-known in the county and was a doctor who still made house calls. If a teacher made an office visit, he would say, "I don't charge teachers" and if a patient had no money he would tell him to bring him eggs, chickens, turnip greens or put money in the can located just outside his door the next time he came down his way.

His brother Pigg was another story. Pigg had the best basketball team for miles around. He had a bad habit of sleeping in the classroom and you could hear him snoring down the hallways. He told his students to put their heads on their

desks, to be quiet or to get their homework.

Like bands everywhere, purchasing instruments is something most people can't afford, such as tubas, saxophones, oboes and percussion instruments. They try their best but oftentimes just need help from the families & donors.

Great memories I will surely treasure always.

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