



No. 263  
January 2015

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# Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

*The Old Huntsville Airport -  
60 Years Ago*



*Also in this issue:*     **History of the Monte Sano Hotel**

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*Domie Lewter*  
*Mac Lewter*

# The Huntsville Airport - 60 Years Ago

by Johnny Johnston

Over sixty years ago this month Mr. William P. Fanning and I were in my mother's 1950 Plymouth looking for a job for me. I was enrolled in the Diversified Occupations Program at Butler High School which required I find a job that would be in line with future employment opportunities. Mr. Fanning was a very familiar teacher to me because he had taught all my older brothers and my sister at Lincoln and at Butler.

I would be attending Butler until 1:00 pm, then work until 5:00 pm for at least five days a week. The job should be a vocation, which might develop into a career after graduation from high school. My oldest brother started the program during the war. He worked at the I. Shiffman Garage. Fred completed about 44 years at the Huntsville Times after being hired in this

capacity and my sister Nell worked at Wilson Laundry. I can't remember my brother Lloyd's employer, but he was an architect on Cotton Row.

We had been to Automotive Machine Shop where Mr. Boles offered me a job as a machinist apprentice.

We were now driving up Airport Road crossing the railroad tracks hoping to ask the airport manager if he had some work in the airplane mechanic area where I could learn to work on airplanes. I got the job at \$40 a month providing I could get to work on time and do a few other things such as put gas into airplanes, clean up the shop, cut grass around the runways and generally be a "gofer". That \$40 per month was it, no overtime pay or days off including Sunday. Ronnie Boles and I have discussed my decision of 60 years ago and why I took the job at the airport. I still don't know except being able to see the airplanes up close was exciting!

We crossed over the railroad tracks and came upon a winding narrow road, which turned slightly to the north and around an embankment on the south side of the road. As I experienced the layout of the airport I learned that the rise was the end of the SW/NE runway which was positioned adjacent to the old airport terminal (shack) just by the hill.

That building had been abandoned just a few months before



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our visit to become storage for extra wings, air surface pieces, engines and various other surpluses. Huntsville Air Service was into pilot training, fuel and maintenance service and aircraft storage (in the 11 T-Hangers). Mostly however, the business was reliant upon revenue from crop dusting. All the parts in storage were for crop dusting aircraft. All the old airline signs and furniture were left inside the dirty and wasp-infected shack which for ten years (1942-1952) had been the entire passenger operation of the Huntsville Madison County Airport.

Before long I was working from half a day at school to dark every day and from early on weekends to closing. What a job! I was there even when I didn't have to be and didn't get paid for most of it. In 1956 when I interviewed with Eastern Airlines I had made \$327 that month at \$1 per hour with no overtime incentive averaging over 75 hours weekly. However, I made friends with a lot of Huntsville flyers who were supportive of me in many ways.

Jack Heffleman, theatre owner, paid for my first flying lesson. Several local doctors and other professional men became close. Even Dr. Von Braun came out to fly. I had delivered the Huntsville Times newspaper to his home when he first came to Huntsville.

In 1953, that entire area from Airport Road to where Drake Avenue is now was part woods, part corn or cotton farming. Mr. Walton (Fleming) rotated the crop from corn to cotton and back again. The area wasn't even in the city limits let alone downtown. I loved to be way out in the country so much that when I took a lunch I parked on Airport Road, by the open ditch where the shopping center is now, just to be alone and enjoy the country.

Now let me do a little calculating. The Huntsville Times has said there were currently 7700 people working at the Port of Huntsville. In 1953 there were 12 people working at the Huntsville Madison County Airport all together. This included 4 at Capital Airlines, 3 at Eastern, 2

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as part time weather observers and 3 at Huntsville Air Service.

So - if the growth of Huntsville had matched the growth of the airport during that 60 years thre would over thirty million people living in Huntsville! Wow!

There were three rental cars, managed by the employees of Eastern Airlines. I don't know how many there are now but I assume well over 3000. The 1953 Chevrolet cars, all black, had one option, a heater. There were no turn signals, radio, fancy lights, white wall tires; these cars were basic.

In 1957, Dr. Von Braun flew to Germany with his family. By then I was working for Eastern. I checked his luggage, took care of his connections in Atlanta and bid them farewell. After the flight left at 3:35pm, I walked around to the other side of the counter to inspect the ticket counter. What I found was all of the Von Braun passports he had left lying in the lobby. He couldn't go to Germany without them.

I grabbed the passports, found Frank Anderson at Huntsville Air Service. After telling my Manager, Jim Lindsay what was going on, Frank and I left in a rented Cessna and flew to Atlanta. By radio I talked Eastern into allowing us to park at Gate One of the old concourse and we literally ran inside. We paged Dr. Von Braun to come to a certain place in the terminal.

When he walked up he showed no signs of recognition. I said "Sir you left your passports in Huntsville and we flew them over." He said "Thank


You," took the passports then turned and walked away. When we got back to Huntsville, Russ Kyle, owner of the airplane, said "Who's going to pay for this?" Frank and I said we don't know. So far as I know this incident was never mentioned again but one of my favorite people and his family was able to make their flight to Germany.

Not long after going to work at Huntsville Air Service I came into the office just before 8:00am to be met by another of my very favorite people - W. A. Branum who was with Eastern Airlines. He said, "Someone from here needs to take care of a problem in the lobby."

The lobby of the Terminal consisted of three leather couches, two leather chairs and not much else. It wasn't very large. Matter of fact, at night the airlines wheeled all their airfreight into the lobby for safekeeping. Baggage from a rainy day was

claimed in the lobby from the half dozen flights per day.

Today's problem was a little different. During my stay at this old airport, animals were always around. A cat hung around for employees to feed. There was a dog that met every airplane for years. He actually walked up



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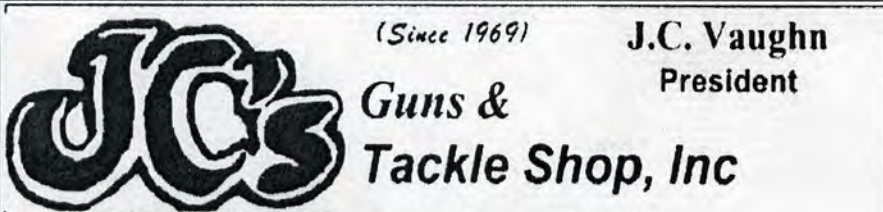
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**One of the most profoundly human things you can do is talk TO someone instead of ABOUT them.**

to the steps to accept food from the Flight Attendant. In 1990 I was at an Airline Memorabilia show in Atlanta. An elderly lady recognized me, asked if I didn't work in Huntsville in the 50's then started talking about that little yellow dog that met her flight every time she came in as Flight Attendant. With tears in her eyes she talked about the little yellow dog.

Animals never seemed to get in the way; so they were tolerated: except for the cattle on the runway. That morning's problem as I said was a little different. The cat had crawled into the middle of one of those beautiful leather couches and had had a litter of kittens. It was messy. I took the family to a better location, gave her some milk and left them alone. Cleaning the leather was another matter, especially with all those people in the lobby waiting for a delayed Eastern Airplane and looking for a place to sit down.

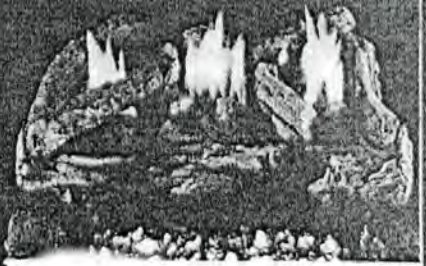
After taking the job at Huntsville Air Service in 1953, I met some lifelong friends. One of those people was Bud Cramer.

Bud is the father of former Congressman Bud Cramer Jr. Bud Sr. worked for Capital Airlines. John Higdon was the manager of Capital who later became founder of Channel 31 and after that Publisher of the Huntsville News. Richard Hughes was at Eastern along with W.A, and manager John Alford.

James McAlister was the Airport Manager and owner of Huntsville Air Service. "Mac", as he was known, was a mountain of charisma, a tough taskmaster and had a million friends. Mac had a serious heart attack, which happened just after he had moved into the second floor of the airport terminal and set up living quarters. He was tired of driving back and forth to Decatur where he had owned a float airplane base where the boat harbor is now.

During recovery, he came back to the terminal to live and work but could not climb stairs for three months. It was my job to carry him up the steps at the end of each day. Having him downstairs during the day was better, then he couldn't stand on

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the roof and yell down orders all day long, which he did.

One of the most popular people there was Raymond Sherrill; he was chief mechanic, crop duster pilot and designated CAA inspector. CAA was the Civil Aeronautics Authority. It was redesigned as the FAA years later.

There is a story I remember about Raymond. He grew up in Town Creek, Alabama between Decatur and Florence. He was drafted during WWII and was taught aircraft mechanics. Raymond was good at his job so he was transferred to the Army's new base in Alabama. They built it in Town Creek. Raymond was transferred to Courtland Air Base and spent the entire war there. Since he was married just before being drafted he was able to slip below the fence each night and go home.

We had a lot of fun at the airport! A slow teletype was our communication. We did our own CAA control by radio, our own weather observation and ran cows off the runway - all in a day's work.

My first week on the job, Raymond had me going all over the place for hours with a bucket. He had asked me to find

him a bucket of "prop wash!" It was funny, all 11 employees on the airport got into the act; one would send me to the next until I was the laughing stock.

Dick Hughes bought a new VW, he bragged daily about his gas mileage. We started adding a gallon every two days until he was bragging about 70+ miles per gallon, then we started siphoning until it got down to 17. He never knew what we were doing; at least until he read this.

The men and ladies rest rooms were side by side; many people chose the wrong one. When the employees saw this mistake several would get close by. When the user came out of the room they stood there looking and saying "shame, shame on you".

This happened to one of our Brig. Generals once; he was changing into his uniform when a young lady came into the ladies room. I didn't see that one but he tells me he grabbed his clothes and came out in his

**I consider myself a crayon - I might not be your favorite color but one day you'll need me to complete your picture.**

shorts.

I smoked a pipe on a regular basis, only in the back room of course. On one occasion when I walked out to help someone at the counter, an associate took out the tobacco, put ground-up

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rubber bands in my pipe then placed the tobacco back. To this day I can still taste and smell that foul thing that was done to me. I don't smoke anymore.

We had a very likeable employee at Eastern who really didn't like to work hard: this was not a good place for anyone who had that attitude. We were all up to our ears handling passengers and their problems from a late flight. When the workload decreased, I walked to the back room and there he was, intently reading a newspaper. He didn't even notice it when I lit a match to the bottom of his paper. I was out front again when he began to yell.

Eastern's best employee may have been Bill Vinson. Bill had a cigarette habit and was always smoking. He would get busy at the reservation desk and sometimes use the wastepaper can for an ashtray. He would occasionally set it on fire, grab it

up and run outside with it. On one occasion he set fire to a can full of paper but the customer would not get out of line so he couldn't take it out.

After squirming for awhile it looked like the place was going to burn down. I was standing behind him with a bowl of water and put out the fire just before the can melted. The office was a mess. Bill never did it again!

Probably the dumbest thing I ever did was losing my temper at the wrong time. Mac had hired a part-timer to work at Huntsville Air Service. He was very big, over 6 feet, tough talking and would not leave me alone, always picking on me. On one occasion he did the wrong thing when we were in the office. I shoved him up against the wall and slapped him. He simply put his arms straight up in the air and apologized to me. *Hey don't be critical, I was only 17.*



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He left the room and a friend who was standing by said "You dummy, you don't know how lucky you are." It seems the man I slapped was on parole from prison for killing someone with his bare hands. If he had hit me he would have been sent back up, worse might have happened to me. I took a long breath of air and never, ever slapped anyone again.

The police approached me just as we had closed the doors on the Eastern Lockheed Electra and asked if we had a gentleman board in the last few minutes who may have been shaken up, possibly intoxicated and gave me his name. Yes, we did have him onboard. I told the policeman this and he said, "You'll have to get him, I must talk to him." I invited the cop to go get him and he said no, that would cause a scene.

I, like I was trained, brought the fellow off without trouble and did so thinking he must have a family emergency. To my surprise the policeman asked the passenger his name, then slapped handcuffs on him. After we dispatched the airplane I asked the policeman what was the problem. The policeman said the man had left his car in the street.

His answer surprised me and I asked "handcuffs for illegal parking?" He invited me to go with him to the airport entrance where the road curved into the parking lot. The fellow had left his car in the middle of the road all right. Not so bad you say! Not enough to arrest him! Well, you see the car was completely upside down. He, in his drunken state, had taken the turn too

quickly, turned his car upside down, crawled out, taken his bag out of the trunk and walked to the Eastern loading gate.

We had a colorful fellow that everyone liked. His dad had obtained the airmail hauling contract. He picked up the mail from the airlines and delivered it to the Post Office several times a day. Like most of us, he too was under fire with tricks and scams. When he became excited his stuttering became worse.

Most of us would find some way to get him started every day. We might put something live in a mail sack just for him to discover or perhaps lock his car up with the key inside. Anything to hear him stutter. We were really mean! His redeeming factor was his father who held a responsible position at the Huntsville Police Depart-



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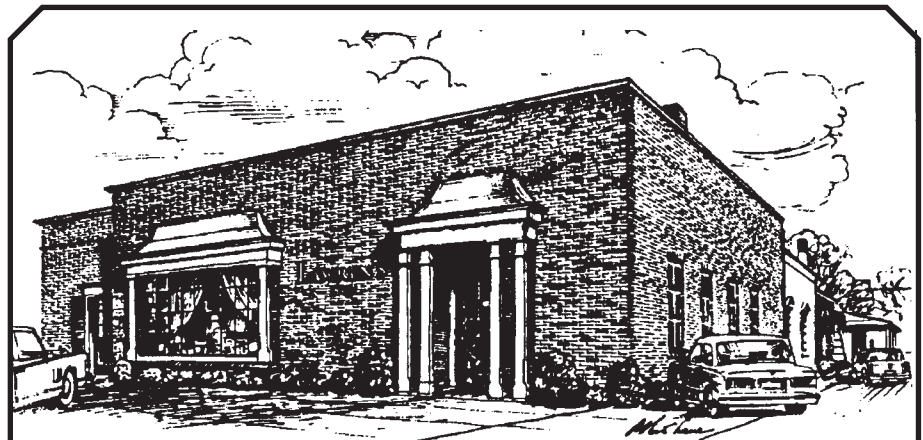
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**"It's better to walk alone than with a crowd going in the wrong direction."**

*Diane Grant*

ment. That is all you needed in those days, to be employed as a policeman. So this young man was eventually hired as a policeman.

During integration the black population was planing to test the integration of Huntsville restaurants and the police heard about it. Our friend, as a new policeman, was dispatched to a local strip mall where a sit-in was rumored to be in the planning stage. He was put into a patrol car with a two-way radio and told to call in if he saw the local college bus approaching. However when the bus did appear he got completely out of control, picked up the microphone and yelled loudly "he- he- hea - hear th- the- they come daddy!"

He later perished in a bad motorcycle accident while on an emergency.

Did I ever make a fool of myself? You betcha. Aircraft batteries must have a generator charging the system when they are loading, unloading and especially when starting the engines. These units are called GPU (ground power unit). APU is the onboard aircraft power unit. Most aircraft did not have them onboard until the Jet age in the late fifties and early sixties.

We had a power unit, which drove very much like a car with a three-speed transmission and six-cylinder engine. You drove the unit under the nose of the Martin 404 and backed it close so that the cable would reach. You placed the engine into high RPM, jumped off, plugged in the cable and then threw the switch, which loaded the generator.

When I was very young, I got things mixed up a little. I backed up to the nose of the aircraft, set the governor which increases the engine speed, then jumped off the seat to plug in the cable. I had left it in forward gear! The unit took off down the ramp at a fast clip. Nothing in the way,

thank goodness.

I took off after it and caught it in about 500 feet, jumped on and got it under control, then turned the unit around to face the aircraft a hundred yards away. The Captain was hanging out the left window, First Officer out the right window and they were laughing hysterically. From that day on that flight crew and others who saw it called me "Cowboy".

I returned to Huntsville in 1983 as the District Manager

for Eastern Airlines. So many changes we had seen during those many years. I can't forget the happy times working out of the T Hanger as an apprentice mechanic. Someone would always get on the speaker and yell "Plane on the front, Johnny!" prompting me to run to the ramp and meet that airplane for service.

So many wonderful people worked there then as now. I retired from Eastern and left the Airport after some 35 years.

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# Early Days of Monte Sano

*Newspaper clippings from the scrapbook of Susie Dement Moorman (1886-1979) grandmother of John Shaver*

## **Waukesha, Wisconsin**

*Healing Waters, Beautiful Flowers, Warbling Birds, Lovely Women and Sweet Music Waukesha, Wis., July 9, 1884*

We bid Dr. J. J. Dement and Mr. Sol Schiffman Godspeed in their visit to Waukesha, Wisconsin, for which place they left on Monday evening. May they have a safe trip, a pleasant Summer, and may they return in excellent health. Our reporter will keep posted of their behavior from time to time.

Mr. Sol Schiffman will, we are informed, accompany Doctor Dement to Wisconsin on a fishing and hunting excursion, in search of rest and diversion. We wish him a pleasant and invigorating trip.

## **Waukesha and Monte Sano**

For thirty years or more, we have urged the citizens of Huntsville to build a hotel on Monte Sano and make it a summer resort for persons seeking health or recreation, whether they lived in Huntsville or elsewhere. When we were young and the Virginia Springs and other distant Summer resorts were not so easily accessible by railroads, Monte Sano was regarded with great favor by the people of Huntsville as a

place of resort every Summer. Invalids and pleasure-seekers were happy to go there. Let any epidemic prevail or threaten Huntsville, Monte Sano was the place of refuge. Let children suffer from teething or any Summer complaints, and physicians said: "Go up to Monte Sano." And many a suffering adult or child was rescued from the insatiate jaws of death by the pure air and water of Monte Sano, realizing it, as its name denotes, is the "Mount of Health", or "Healthy Mount."

Thus realizing it, some sensible men erected a stone building for a seminary of learning for both sexes, of which (we believe), the first teacher was a Methodist minister, Rev. Watson. He was succeeded by another Methodist minister, Rev. Wm. Rowe, from whom the locality obtained the name "Rowe's Mountain".

We believe that it was, under both Principals, chiefly a Summer school. Subsequently, some enterprising citizens of Huntsville, wanting a permanent place of Summer resort, bought lots of a quarter to half an acre of ground, and built log cabins for Summer occupation, and a plot for a village was prepared, lots sold, and some cabins built on them. The name "Viduta", "View" in Italian, we believe

was given to the village "Monte Sano" to the whole mountain site.

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recreations, and genial, whole-souled pleasures.

So it may be again, if the people of Huntsville will only rise to a just appreciation of their opportunities, and avail themselves of the advantages that bounteous Nature - and a good God - has bestowed with lavish hand.

Our attention to Monte Sano has been re-drawn by the following extract from a letter from Dr. J. J. Dement at Waukesha, Wisconsin, June 29 to Mr. John L. Rison, who has kindly placed it at our disposal. It reassures us in the belief that, with a good hotel on Monte Sano, crowds of people from further South and the Southwest would resort thither every Summer, instead of going further North. Huntsville would be greatly benefited socially, commercially and financially. Read what Dr. Dement says:

"John, this is, certainly, the purest and best water I ever saw, not excepting the "Cold Spring" on our Mountain, which must be the purest I ever saw before, (next few words not legible) owe their virtues as much to their PURITY as to the mineral constituents which they contain. I have often thought of Monte Sano as a health resort, since I left home, and I know you have often heard me speak of it."

"I am clearly of the opinion that there is no better locality on earth. It only needs the free expenditure of money and printer's ink to make it one of the most popular resorts in the

South; but, to do so, money must be used, and that freely."

"No half-way expenditure will do any good. There you have more attractions than any place I know of. The purity of the "Cold Spring" cannot be excelled, short of Wisconsin. You have as fine chalybeate as can be found anywhere. The alum spring, also, containing iron, largely, the spring of Mr. Carter, certainly contains minerals largely."

"All these waters ought to be carefully analyzed and their virtues set forth, and then, expend your money freely, and you need not have any fears but that it will yield large returns."

"I visited a place last week, six miles from here, Pawakee Lake, and dined at a Hotel on the Lake, called Lakeside. The hotel was built by a banker of Milwaukee, at a cost of \$150,000 or \$200,000, and, although the season lasts only three months, yet it is said to pay handsomely on the investment."

"While it is perfectly grand and magnificent, it is not more so than "Monte Sano" could be made by a like expenditure of money. It is true Monte Sano has not a beautiful Lake at its foot, yet Lakeside has not the lovely mountain."

"But pardon me, John; you know as much about Monte Sano as I do. I did not sit down to write about it at all, but I could not help thinking."

*Newspaper clippings from the scrapbook of Susie Dement Mooreman (1886-1972)*

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**Hotel Monte Sano Breeze (Newspaper)  
July 26, 1890**

**The Wasting Diseases of Children**

From our earliest recollection, this mountain has been noted as a place to restore the little sufferers from the diarrheas incident to the period of dentition (teething), as well as to prevent them from becoming sick, by taking them there before the heat of summer. It has become an almost proverbial wish of doctors and people, that they will pass through summer's heat without becoming sick or soon get well should they have become ill before going there. We could mention hundreds of children, many of them our own patients, who owe their lives to the virtues of Monte Sano, after exhausting all the therapeutic and dietetic remedies which could be brought to bear on their cases. Our invariable advice, to our patrons and friends, has been to go early and remain through September, and we have the satisfaction to believe that, where this advice was acted upon, much suffering has been spared the dear little ones and oftentimes a life has been saved. Very truly and respectfully,

A. E. Erskine, M. D.  
J. J. Dement, M. D.  
M. C. Baldrige, M. D.  
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# New Year's Resolutions from the Past

by Malcolm W. Miller

It is that time of year again when folks start thinking about making New Year's resolutions. Most of us are making a determined effort to do better in the coming year. Some of these resolutions are intended to help us do a better job of the things we normally do and the things we feel are important and right. Other resolutions are intended to cause us to refrain from those things we feel have been detrimental to us in the past. You are all familiar with those, the over eating, the smoking, the not exercising.

Have you ever thought about how different our resolutions are today compared to those that were made many years ago? We all know how most resolutions of today sound, but let's (for a few moments) take a mental trip back seventy-five years ago to January 1, 1939, and think of some of the things our resolutions would pertain to. Yes, I was around at that time, I was twelve; however, I was not the one making the resolutions.

I will use my parents as an example, because I still recollect those "good ole days" and the better life they so desperately hoped for themselves and their family. We were a family of share croppers. Meaning Daddy would get a share of

the crops he grew and the land owner would get the remaining share.

My Daddy, I am certain, resolved to try to rent a crop each year where the landlord would be honest, where the land would be fertile, and not be eaten up with Johnson grass, nut grass, etc. Daddy surely must have vowed to put more land into hay and corn so he wouldn't have to worry about having enough feed for the live-stock during the hard winter months.

Daddy no doubt resolved to drag enough wood off the mountain during the year and have the boys cut it into firewood for the fireplace before the bad weather set in next year. He also no doubt resolved to put more straw in the straw ticks for the beds next summer since

there just weren't enough feather beds to go around in our family.

I am certain he must have resolved to not let us boys run the battery down on that old Philco radio listening to such things as

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**"Don't be so humble - you're not that great."**

**Golda Meir (1898-1978)  
to a visiting diplomat**



"Jack Armstrong, the All American Boy," and try to save it through the long winter to listen to the important programs such as the news, The Grand Ole Opry and "Lum and Abner".

Daddy obviously vowed to try to afford a sack of coal the next time he had to go to town in the two-horse wagon. We boys had been walking up and down the railroad track picking up coal dropped off trains, to use in the forge sharpening plow points. He obviously vowed to look for some thick boards to lay through the barnyard so when we had to go out there in the rain to milk the cows and feed all the stock we wouldn't have to wade through "you know what," and hear Mama fuss when we came back to the house. He no doubt resolved to have Mama make chicken and dumplings from that hateful old hen that kept getting into the corn crib and messing up the corn we needed to feed the stock.

I bet my Mama had a few New Years resolutions of her own. First off she surely resolved to make Daddy consider the house we would have to live in, and not just the land, when he rented property the next year. Sometimes it seemed as though we moved from rental property to rental property much too often and the houses were not always that livable. Mama also would have resolved to have Daddy make certain the well wasn't too far from the house so she wouldn't have to carry the water so far and had a windlass on it so she wouldn't have to draw wash water by hand. It took a lot of wash water when you had seven boys.

Surely Mama made a resolution to make Daddy build a two-seater outhouse to replace the old one-seater. In this modern day and age she certainly hoped for that much. She probably resolved to talk to Daddy about taking the daily newspaper through the mail. No, she wasn't going to read it, she didn't have time, however it became very useful for other purposes.

When I really stop to think about it, Mama didn't want or expect a whole lot out of life, she would only resolve to keep her family safe, healthy and fed.

Much of this may sound funny

**"Experience - Watered, groomed and fed the family dog for years."**

**Seen on clerical job resume**

and far-fetched to many of you readers; however I assure you the resolutions I have mentioned above and more like them were made time and time again each year. Some were kept, most weren't, and some were resolved again the next New Years and following New Years. That is the only similarity to our resolutions today, some are kept, most aren't and we repeat the same resolutions each year.

Happy New Year to all my family, friends and readers of the "Old Huntsville Magazine." Good luck in the year 2015 and don't forget to make your own special resolutions.

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# Heard On the Street

by **Cathey Carney**



Congratulations to our Photo of the Month winner for November. It was **Mary Ann McGaha** of Brownsboro, who correctly guessed that the picture was that of attorney **Buck Watson**. Buck spearheaded the project to turn the aging YMCA downtown into the beautiful space that it is today. Mary Ann is retired, and told me she worked in banking for 39.5 years!

**Jennie Stevenson** of Athens was the first caller to spot the tiny candle in the December issue - it was hidden in the Renfroe Animal Hospital ad. Mary gets a year's subscription for being observant and quick!

**Richard Ferguson** was someone who let you know exactly where you stood. If he was your friend, he would do whatever he could for you. Richard passed away Dec. 9 at the age of 70, having lived in Fayetteville, TN for many years. He was a member of the Elks Club and his survivors include brothers **Bill (Paula) Ferguson** of Fayetteville and **John (Shirley) Ferguson** of Brooksville, AL as well as several

nieces and a nephew. He was a character, and a very loyal friend who will be missed.

There were many great holiday parties through the month and one of them gave back. **Rebekah Keith McKinney, Buck Watson** and the staff at the old YMCA building downtown hosted a Christmas party. The only requirement was that you bring items for the project called "Free To Teach", headed up by **Eula Battle**, that gives free supplies to teachers such as notebooks, paper, pens, lotions, etc. There were several large boxes that were filled to the brim because of the generosity of the party-goers and the party host.

**Debra Cornelius** wants to send LOVE to her sweet Dad, **Kenneth Cornelius** who lives in Gadsden, AL.

**Jim Hudson** is the co-founder of Huntsville's HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology as well as the buyer of the Lowe Mill off Seminole Drive. The HudsonAlpha Institute is a leader in

worldwide genetics research, an incubator for biotech businesses and a teaching center for genetics for Alabama students and teachers. The Lowe Mill was a former shoe factory and in very bad shape when Jim took it over, transforming it into a spectacular arts and entertainment center. A third wing of the Mill opened in late December and if you haven't visited, you will be amazed by the huge variety of artists and their creations. No charge to get in, except for parking on entertainment evenings.

Jim, in addition to his many other accomplishments, was a decorated Army Pilot in the Vietnam War. He recently was inducted into the Alabama Academy of Honor - a group that included Apple CEO **Tim Cook**, University of Alabama football coach **Nick Saban** and University of Alabama President **Judy Bonner**. We are so proud of you, Jim!

**George Boone** was a master brick mason, and if you live in Huntsville, chances are you've been inside one of his structures. He built the Governors Drive Post Office building; when he saw how bad the existing structure

## 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: You might see this little girl every day if you watch local TV.



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was he just tore it down and started from scratch. It was said that when he built you a chimney he would take a piece of paper, light it, and if the smoke didn't draw, he would tear it down and start all over. He was meticulous and very proud of his quality work. Mr. Boone passed away at the age of 91. He leaves daughter **Diana Boone; two sons - Bishop Calvin (Denise) Boone and Terry Boone** and as well as 5 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren.

Rosemary Leatherwood wants to wish her grandson Alex Happy Birthday on Jan. 7th. And hers is Jan. 28, so Happy Birthday to you Rosemary!

Alabama Bird Supply off South Mem. Parkway is a treasure trove of bird supplies if you love the little critters. While there recently (to take care of my indoor bird Tweetie and outdoor wild birds) I met **Jim Garner** who works there. He and wife **Carol** love living in this area and say the people are the best. The store owners are Lori and Tommy McAulliffe.

Church Street is a very busy downtown road that is located adjacent to Big Spring Park. One day recently I noticed 3 ducks trying to cross from one side of the road to the other, and traffic completely stopped to allow the little guys to get safely across. You gotta love Huntsville!

**Gale Nichols** of Athens was thrilled to host her son **Kevin Nichols**, Kevin's wife **Melanie** and their son **Garrett** who trav-

eled from Bristow, OK to see her for Christmas. It was a time to get re-acquainted and was a wonderful visit for the whole family.

**Geraldine Penney** was a gentle, nurturing mama whose life revolved around her family and her church. She was also a grandmother to 7 and great grandmother to 14. She was a devout member of Southside Baptist Church. Her husband of 62 years, **William E. "Bill" Penney, Sr.** preceded her in death and she leaves sons **William E. "Bill" Penney Jr. (Sara); Jerre Penney (Jean)** and daughter **Judy Penney**. Her brothers are **Wildon Bennett** and **Joe Bennett** of Huntsville. Family & friends will never forget this dear lady.

**Cheryl Tribble** wants to send a special hello to her good friend and cousin in California, **Doris Barenchi**. Doris is 91, reads every newspaper she can find and loves reading "Old Huntsville" when it is mailed to her. She has never been to Huntsville but thinks it sounds like a great place to live.

Downtown Huntsville was really rocking during the holidays and seems like it's taken on a life of its own. Even in the cold weather you'll see people walking around trying out the restaurants and listening to music. **Chad Emerson** is the CEO of Downtown Huntsville Inc. and in less than a year his ideas for downtown have been so creative.

In late December **Lowe Mill Arts & Entertainment Center**

had a grand opening for the new north wing, adding 37,000 square feet and bringing the total number of artists to 200. It's gallery space for artists who are able to work while visitors watch them. The artists' works are for sale as well, and this makes the Mill the largest of its kind in the Southeast U.S. Very much worth a visit if you haven't been there yet, just off Governors Drive/Seminole, and is free of charge.

Wishing you all a safe, healthy and prosperous 2015! And make sure your older neighbors are doing OK.

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# Latham UMC Cooks

## Chicken Cheese Ball

2 (8 oz.) cream cheese at room temperature  
 2 T. Worcestershire sauce  
 2 T. dried minced onion  
 1 lg. can boneless chicken breast  
 1 c. chopped pecans  
 Add all ingredients and reserve 1/2 cup of chopped pecans. Shape into a ball and roll in remaining 1/2 cup pecans. Wrap in Saran Wrap and refrigerate overnight.

**Neeve Weinberger**

## Hot Bacon and Swiss Dip

1 (8 oz.) cream cheese  
 1/2 c. mayonnaise  
 1 c. grated Swiss cheese  
 2 T. chopped green onions  
 8 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled

1/2 c. crushed Ritz crackers  
 Soften cream cheese in a mixing bowl. Add mayonnaise, Swiss cheese and green onions. Mix well. Transfer to a baking dish, top with bacon and crackers. Bake at 350 degrees for 15 to 20 minutes or until bubbly.

**Louise Avery**

## Grits and Cheese Casserole

3 c. cooked grits  
 1 lb. Velveeta cheese  
 1 stick butter  
 Dash crushed red pepper  
 6 eggs, beaten  
 1/2 c. milk  
 2 t. baking powder  
 Into the hot grits cut cheese and butter. Add red pepper. Beat eggs, adding milk and baking powder.

Stir into hot cheese mixture

and pour into a buttered 8x11 inch baking dish. Bake 45 to 60 minutes in 350 degree oven. Great for brunch; also can be used as a side dish instead of potatoes or rice.

**Carolyn Burkhalter**

## Chicken Breast Casserole

2 jars dried beef  
 8 slices bacon  
 1 ctn. sour cream  
 8 chicken breasts, boned  
 2 c. cream of mushroom soup  
 Paprika

Line a 13x9" casserole with dried beef. Roll each chicken breast and wrap with slice of bacon. Place on top of the beef. Combine soup and sour cream and pour over the chicken. Sprinkle with paprika. Cover with foil and bake 3 hours at 300 degrees. Remove foil for last 30

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 One Pint Cole Slaw  
 Hot or Mild Sauce.  
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(for 12 People)  
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minutes of cooking to brown the chicken. Do not cook too fast or the sauce will boil away. Serve over rice or favorite pasta.

**Ann Hodges**

### Brisket of Beef

3-4 lb. brisket of beef  
1 pkg. Wylers onion soup mix  
Spread soup mix evenly over the meat and wrap tightly with foil. Bake at 300 degrees for 4 hours. Cool the beef and refrigerate, then thinly slice across the grain. Reheat and serve with au jus.

**Pat Wyne**

### Jean Rothwell's Coconut Crunch Torte

1 c. graham cracker crumbs  
1/2 c. shredded coconut  
1/2 c. chopped walnuts  
4 egg whites  
1/4 t. salt  
1 t. vanilla extract  
1 c. sugar

Combine graham cracker crumbs, coconut and walnuts. Beat egg whites with salt and vanilla til foamy. Gradually add sugar and continue beating until egg whites form stiff peaks. Fold graham cracker mixture into the egg white mixture. Spread in well greased 9" pie plate. Bake at 350 degrees

for 30 minutes. Cool and cut in wedges. Serve with vanilla ice cream, peaches or cherries.,

Thicken peaches or cherries with:

2 T. sugar  
2 T. cornstarch  
A little juice & water

**Shirley Hayes**

### Joanne's Orange Balls

2-1/2 boxes vanilla wafers, crushed fine

1-1/4 c. frozen undiluted orange juice concentrate, thawed  
1-1/2 c. confectioners sugar, sifted

2 c. coconut  
1-1/2 c. nuts, chopped  
5/8 c. white Karo syrup  
Additional powdered sugar for sprinkling

Combine all ingredients. Shape into small balls. Sprinkle with powdered sugar. When shaping into balls, it is easier if you spray your hands with Pam.

**Jan Bevis**

### Peanut Butter Pie

8 oz. cream cheese  
1 c. powdered sugar  
8 oz. Cool Whip  
1/2 c. peanut butter  
1/2 c. milk  
Oreo pie shell  
Mix all together and pour into pie shell. Refrigerate.



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# Monte Sano Hotel in the 1890s

by Steve Gierhart

"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."


*Prelude-The Hotel Monte Sano-Huntsville in the 1890s*

The late Tom Carney, publisher of Old Huntsville, was well known for his wit in writing and his love for local history. He frequently wrote of the Civil War and its impact in North Alabama, but he was also interested in its "after-shocks" and the local celebrities who guided Huntsville's growth through the balance of the 19th century. His articles on the history of Monte Sano and the gaudy but also somewhat forlorn hotel document a dichotomy of boom and bust, of hope yet failure. Nonetheless, in its brief history, the Hotel Monte Sano burned bright.

Local author, Charles Farley, has written a lively novel of that time, "The Hotel Monte Sano" (The Ardent Writer Press-2015). With a background of romance and mystery set in the grandeur of an "age gone by", Farley integrates his characters into Huntsville's interesting history of the 1890s.

Old Huntsville will dedicate some of this issue as well as most of the February issue toward articles surrounding the people, places and events of 1890s Huntsville as well as the history of Monte Sano Mountain, the "mountain of health".

Residents may not realize how closely related are many of the landmarks of our history, such as the convergence of not only the hotel, but also Dallas Mill, Mollie Teal's famous brothel and Lily Flagg, our famous butter-maker, to name a few. Following is an introduction to the novel but, more importantly, a buffet of past and fresh material that will immerse the reader in the "elegance and gay times" noted by Tom, hopefully leaving in its wake the bitter taste of the loss of that bellwether of success and replacing it with the satisfaction of the great mountain's wonderful memories and legacy.



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## Huntsville's Beautiful Monte Sano Hotel

*by Charles Farley*

Huntsville was once a summer destination. Rich people traveled from all over the country to breathe the cool mountain air and drink from the mineral springs on top of a mountain four miles east of downtown. And from 1887 to 1900 many of these vacationers rode a custom-built train up Monte Sano to stay at an exclusive resort hotel overlooking the mountain's western bluff and the city of Huntsville a thousand feet down in the hot, humid valley below.

The hotel, like the homes of two of the hotel's owners James O'Shaughnessy and his brother Michael, was designed by John Rea in the Queen Anne style of architecture that was popular at the time. James Moun-

Lee



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tain Villa or Castle Delight was a couple of miles southeast of the O'Shaughnessy home which sported two high stories, round corner towers, soaring roof lines, four fancy chimneys, a carriage porch with an observation deck, and a detached kitchen with its own root cellar.

The house was torn down some time in the 1920s, leaving only the remnants of a shallow lily pond nearby. A group of investors consisting of the O'Shaughnessy brothers, two men from Memphis, and eighteen Huntsville businessmen formed the North Alabama Improvement Company in 1886. They soon selected the hotel's site in the summer village of Viduta about a hundred yards from the northwest edge of the mountain top. Sixteen teams of mule skinnners were hired to haul building supplies up the Monte Sano Turnpike to the construction site.

The imposing structure, 308 feet long and 200 feet wide, was built by L.S. Melbourn and completed on June 1, 1887. The two-story hotel sported a two-story wraparound porch on three sides of the building. Rising above it all was double-decked, bell-roofed observatory where guests congregated in the evening to enjoy the view and buckets of adult beverages.

Its owners spared no expense in outfitting their new 233-room hotel. The Embassy Suites in downtown Huntsville has 295 rooms, but would be hard put to match the Hotel Monte Sano's amenities: rich oriental carpets through-

out, carved wood paneling, stained glass windows, steam heat, and gas chandeliers fueled from three metal cylinders just south of the hotel.

Rich guests like the As-tors, the Goulds and the Van-derbilts amused themselves at the hotel by dancing to live orchestras in the forty-by-sixty foot ballroom, bowling in one of two ten-pin bowling alleys, riding or hiking the twenty miles of well-marked trails, playing pool in the billiards room, or croquet and tennis on the hotel's well-manicured lawn. There was

also a large dining hall where guests enjoyed gourmet meals on china and flatware engraved with the words "Monte Sano," a barber shop for the men, a saloon for the ladies and bathrooms with porcelain-lined tubs. Water was pumped by an elaborate system of pumps from Big Spring in downtown Huntsville up the mountain to the hotel's 8,000 gallon water tank. Pure drinking water was piped from nearby Cold Spring.

There were no inside rooms at the Hotel Monte Sano. Every room opened to the outside, most overlooking the bluff and its wide



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*William Blake*



wooden boardwalk in front of the building. Plush furniture was planted throughout the hotel, but no two rooms were decorated identically.

The grounds, designed and maintained by the noted landscape artist, Major Schrimshaw, flowered throughout the summer and were illuminated by gaslight for romantic evening strolls. When guests arrived either by train or by the four-in-hand carriage called the Tally Ho, they would be led by uniformed attendants along walkways lined with Schrimshaw's carefully trimmed shrubs and colorful flowers to the main entrance where they would pass through the wide double doors.

In addition to the hotel's many pleasures, guests enjoyed the natural beauty and unusual sites surrounding the hotel grounds on Monte Sano. Mineral springs, steep cliffs, unusual rock formations and caves abounded, not to mention thick forests with 196 different kinds of trees, over 200 species of wild flowers, birds of many feathers, including eagles, owls, and multitudes of melodious songbirds, and a wide variety of other wildlife, including bears, foxes, panthers, raccoons, woodchucks, opossums, bobcats, coyotes, deer, and all the snakes, lizards, frogs and turtles a nature lover could desire.

By the end of its first summer season, more than a thousand guests had registered and the Hotel Monte Sano was showing a handsome profit. It was soon being hailed by travelers as "the Saratoga of the South," an island of beauty and pleasure in a fin de siecle world of ambition and decadence — when rapid changes elsewhere in American society were leading to mounting ten-

sions between rich and poor, black and white, and North and South.

A perfect setting for a story, or so I thought, perfect for my novel about young love and bloody revenge atop the mountain in the steamy summer of 1892. Entitled appropriately enough, "The Hotel Monte Sano", the book is a historically accurate tale of a trio of teenagers; Sophie, the young socialite from New York, Jude the handsome stable boy and Smokey, his Negro friend, who all set out to solve a gruesome murder that has occurred at the hotel. But what they find instead is a Gothic maze of Jim Crow bigots, Yankee carpetbaggers, pistol-packing gamblers, menacing ghosts and revenge seekers determined to settle a Civil War grudge not so long since passed.

Along the way, I introduce the reader to some of Huntsville's most intriguing, historical characters, like Dr. Thomas Fearn who established a health colony on Monte Sano in 1833 and built the country's second public water works in downtown Huntsville; John Martin who built a house near Cold Spring in 1815; Reverend James and Malinda Rowe who established the Monte Sano Female Seminary in 1830; Ella Milliard whose lover, James Donegan, named a scenic Monte Sano rock outcropping after her; George

Steele, who designed many of Huntsville's most handsome buildings, including the First National Bank Building that still stands on the southwest corner of the square downtown; Mollie Teal who was once the town's best-known madam and later bequeathed her Victorian house at the corner of Gallatin and St. Clair Streets for Huntsville's first hospital; and, of course, a famous cow named Signal's Lily Flag who, in 1892, became the highest producing butter cow in the country.

But the book is no staid historical tome. Between these historical threads — by way of a fascinating, fast-paced mystery and love story — is an interwoven quilt that places the reader smack-dab in the midst of a time and place that was both pivotal and playful in Huntsville's long and rambunctious past.

The Hotel Monte Sano is published by the Ardent Writer Press in Huntsville.

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# Shocking News from Across Alabama

## Strange Suicide In Marshall County

On Tuesday of last week, the body of Joseph Godsey was found in Marshall County, about four miles from Vienna, under circumstances that left no doubt that the deceased had come to his death by his own hands.

Godsey had taken his hoe that morning and gone to the field as usual. He hoed four short rows of corn and failed to come to dinner, but nothing strange was thought of his absence from dinner. About sunset a Mr. Saint went to the field to look after him and, finding his track, followed it across the field and found the body hanging to a limb just as he had hung himself, with hickory-bark. He had deliberately tied the bark around his neck, gotten up on the fence and jumped off, breaking his neck.

The deceased was about 21 years of age and had recently separated from his wife of three years.

**From 1878 newspaper**

## Corpse "Winks" at Undertaker

In Birmingham a local undertaker received a telephone call, telling of the death of an old woman, who has for years been an object of charity here.

On entering the door of the room the undertaker's assistant went first, but he remained only a very short time, for the "corpse's" eye winked at him. There was an open door near, and he didn't stop to tell his employer of his astounding discovery, but took advantage of the opportunity for getting out of the room as fast as possible.

But the undertaker made the same discovery himself, and instead of bolting, he made a hasty examination and found the woman indeed alive. Then he decided that the woman's condition was critical, believing that she was in the last throws of death, and he decided to sit down and wait.

He waited about two hours and on discovering that the woman was breathing stronger he made another exam and found that her strength was rapidly returning. She was not even dangerously ill. He has since learned that she has been guilty of "dying" a number of times be-

fore in order to get sympathy from the people.

Now this young undertaker (who has many friends here) is looking for the person who sent in the telephone call.

**From 1915 Newspaper**

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# MONTE-SANO FEMALE SEMINARY.

**T**HIS Institution, under the superintendence of MRS ROWE and her Assistant, being now considered by the proprietor as permanently established, he asks leave to call public attention to its claims, under a belief that it possesses advantages seldom equalled, and not surpassed by any Academy in this section of country. In point of local situation, being about 3½ miles N. East of Huntsville, this Academy is unrivalled. Occupying one of the summits of a range of mountains, the elevation of which is 1100 feet above the plane beneath, a prospect, the most beautiful, variegated and extensive, forever charms the eye. Fanned by the mountain breeze, roseate *Health* seems here to have made her favorite residence; whilst *Retirement*, with her handmaids, *Contentment* and *Happiness*, follow in her train. The experience of nearly three years has conclusively proved that Monte-Sano is entirely free from the noxious diseases of this climate; not a single case of fever having occurred, either in the school or family, within that time. In elevated situation, pure and constant breezes, and an abundant supply of cool and limpid water, present any claims to an exemption from disease, then is Monte-Sano thrice blessed.—In addition to the now ample buildings of the Academy, the proprietor is erecting a spacious and commodious two story stone building, which will, it is probable, be finished early in the fall. With this addition, a still larger number of pupils can be furnished with suitable and comfortable accommodations.

The scholastic year invariably commences on the 2d Monday in February, and terminates on the Friday preceding the second Monday in December, in each year: at the last mentioned period the anniversary of the Institution will be held, and *diplomas* conferred upon such of the YOUNG LADIES as have completed the prescribed course of studies.

The course of instruction pursued in this Academy is extensive, embracing a judicious selection of all the *English, Classical, Scientific and Ornamental* branches of *Education* usually bestowed upon young ladies in such institutions. The superintendents

will also give their most earnest and unwearied attention to the proper formation and preservation of the morals and manners of the young ladies committed to their care.

The scholastic year will be divided into two sessions of five months each. No pupil will be received for a shorter period than one session, and that only on condition of settlement by note. No allowance will be made for *absence*, unless occasioned by *sickness*; but a reasonable deduction will be made in case of patrons who place three or more scholars in the institution at the same time. The whole school will be divided into three classes; the studies of which, and the terms, are as follows:

1st Class—Classics and Belles Lettres (per session).....	\$15 00
2d do—The Sciences.....	15 00
3d do—English and Preparatory branches..	10 00

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French and Latin Languages, (per session,)...	\$8 00
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Plain Needle work, including marking &c.; Ornamental ditto, including open and lace stitches, &c.....	5 00
Embroidery,.....	5 00
Contingent Expenses,.....	1 50
Board, including washing and lodging.....	35 00

Patrons placing a pupil in the school for a regular course, and for *graduation*, will have the benefit of all the classes, solid and ornamental, with board &c. for \$120 per annum. At the anniversary examination (and at all semi-annual ones, for which arrangements will be made in future,) parents and guardians are respectfully invited to be present; and the invitation will be extended to the friends of the institution and the public in general.

The rules of the house, by which the school is regulated during the hours of study and recreation, can at all times be seen upon application at the Academy.

JAMES ROWE.

June 19, 1832.



## More Lincoln Mill Memories

by Jerry Keel

Not long ago I wrote an article for Old Huntsville concerning my growing up in Huntsville and some of the adventures I enjoyed. When you rake around in your memory cells you discover all kinds of memories hidden there. Here are some more.

I stumbled across several funny things that happened to me or someone I knew. I would like to share a few with you if I could beg your indulgence for a while.

**All the toilets in New York City police stations have been stolen. As of now, it appears the police have nothing to go on.**

My father worked in the Lincoln Mill, a textile manufacturing plant located on the northern edge of Huntsville at the time. The process of making the heavy fabric which was produced there involved taking raw cotton fresh from the cotton gin and converting it into yarn which was then woven into the cloth.

The process was a mystery to me because I never witnessed the actual manufacturing process. I did however see my daddy when he came home from work. He would be covered with lint from the cotton. I remember there was a card room where the cotton was combed out and converted into thread. The thread was then sent to the looms where the cloth began to take shape.

It all sounded so complicated to me. Of course at the time anything involving working in a huge building like Lincoln Mill was too complicated for me.

Anyway, when dad came home tired from the long hours of physical labor he would fall into a chair and rest for a while. When I first noticed the lint all over him I thought it would be fun to see how much of the stuff I could pick off him. The lint would be in his hair, his ears, his clothes - just all over him.



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He let me play my little game of lint removal until he had time to regain some of his used-up energy. Then he would run me off while he proceeded to take a bath to rid himself of the perspiration and the remainder of the lint.

You have to remember back then there was no air-conditioning in the workplace. The company placed large fans around the work floor to move the air a little in order to keep the workers from becoming too hot. The fans moved the air but also kept the lint stirred up as well. That was the reason all the workers were covered with lint.

Somewhere down the line people who worked at other jobs developed a disdain for the employees of the several textile mills located around Huntsville at the time. They certainly shouldn't have been envious of the jobs the textile workers had. Who in his right mind would envy a job where you worked twelve hours in a large room filled with lint being blown around by the huge fans, the temperature approaching 100° Fahrenheit, sweat pouring from every pore, the heavy lifting, the tremendous amount of noise created by all the machinery and the pay - or the lack of it. All in all, not a job too many would be envious of. But at least it was a job by which the people could support their families, so they just pushed ahead.

The people outside came up with a name for the cotton mill workers - LINT HEAD! That was what you were called if you worked in a textile mill because of the lint that accumulated in your hair, eyebrows, ears, nose and anywhere else it could find a place to stick.

All the above was said to lay the groundwork for what I actually wanted to share with you - the funny part (I hope).

In the mill, because of the lint everywhere, smoking was prohibited. Well, back then almost everyone smoked and since they couldn't smoke in the mill their nicotine fix had to come from some other source. There was chewing tobacco which many favored. There was also snuff, which was really just chewing tobacco ground into a powder.

Well, my dad preferred the snuff. By that time he had progressed to a "good" job (if anything in that place could be good). He was an oiler and helped take care of the machinery if something broke. Since the process was carried out entirely by the machines with their many, many moving parts, the oiler had a tremendous responsibility. If the parts were not lubricated on a regular basis the bearings would run dry

and wear out.

Since he had that job he had to have a large tool box to keep the various tools of his work in a central location. Some of his personal belongings were kept there also - the most important of which was his snuff box.

He noticed that his snuff box began to come up empty more often than it should. He suspected that some of his friends were helping themselves to his



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snuff, so he decided to keep a closer eye on the tool box. Well, lo and behold, one day he happened to see a good friend of his come up to the tool box, look around real good and, not seeing my father anywhere, he helped himself to a large lip-full of dad's snuff.

Well, he had caught the villain - now how could he exact the punishment due someone who would steal his snuff? He soon came up with a brilliant plan! He filled an empty snuff box with a mixture of snuff and red pepper, most of which was pepper. Then he just sat back and waited.

Before long his friend, Mr. Graham, came by and looked around carefully. Not seeing dad around the area he proceeded to fill his bottom lip with what he thought was good old Garrett snuff. He took about three steps and then broke into a mad dash for the bathroom so he could wash the burning snuff mixture out of his mouth. Needless to say he couldn't wash away the burning pain.

He was furious! He came back to dad's tool box where dad and some of his other pals were doubled up laughing at him. He threatened to kill my dad if he ever did such a terrible thing again. Of course my dad reminded him that the snuff he thought he was stealing didn't belong to him and that he had no business stealing it.

By then the pain had begun to subside and the whole bunch of lint-heads all had a great time laughing at the joke dad pulled on him.

In that day and time funnies were where you found them - even in a small snuff can in a sweltering room filled with blowing lint and a bunch of men who worked hard and played hard. Anything to lessen the boredom of a thankless, repetitive job.

It is amazing how many memories surface when you start digging around in your memory banks. I hope to be able to share more of my memories of how life was back in the past.

Those times were much simpler and everything moved at a much slower pace.



God didn't create anything without a purpose. But mosquitoes come close.

### Pat Lutz's Rosemary Potatoes

- 5 T. Olive oil
- 1 T. fresh rosemary, minced fine
- 2 lbs. new potatoes
- 2 T. white wine vinegar
- 3 T. mayonnaise
- 1 t. Dijon mustard
- 2 green onions, sliced
- 1 T. chopped parsley
- Salt and pepper

Mix olive oil and rosemary and let sit for 24 hours. Peel new potatoes or leave skin on, your choice. Bake til done and skins pop if you have left them on. Drizzle the olive oil/rosemary mix over potatoes. Mix the other ingredients and pour over the potatoes. Serve hot or cold.



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# A Good Dog

From  
1960  
News

A Rome, GA resident, Judi Bayley says she owes her life to the faithful companion who dialed 911 - her dog Lyric.

"I've got some kind of guardian angel sleeping on my bed with me even if it is red with a fur coat," Bayley said of her Irish setter.

Bayley, who sleeps with an oxygen mask on because of a breathing disorder, said she could have died early Tuesday when the breathing machine plug fell out and the oxygen cut off. But Lyric remembered her training.

The dog heard the oxygen

alarm sound and first tried to rouse her master. Failing that, she knocked the receiver off a telephone, and bumped a speed-dial button on the phone three times to dial 911. Several buttons on the phone are programmed for the same number.

"It's amazing," said Charlene Hall, a dispatcher at Rome Fire Rescue.

"The dog is trained to go over and hit that phone three times to get 911 and she barks into the receiver." The town's 911 system automatically

gives dispatchers a caller's address. Rescuers arrived to find Bayley having a major asthma attack.

Bayley said of 8-year-old Lyric, "Dogs, they really are your best friends."

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# A Letter to Frank Sinatra

by Neil Cocker

12/29/1983

Dear Mr. Sinatra,

A few Sunday evenings ago, Dec. 11, 1983 I watched a testimonial to you on TV in which you were chided, praised and thanked by many friends. Finally you were honored by having a new wing of the Children's Hospital in Seattle named for you - the Sinatra Family Wing, at your request. In all it was a tribute to one whom others think is a fine and generous man. I have thought that for years. And here's why.

Back in the spring of 1946 I was a young Electronics Technicians Mate aboard the USS Griffin (AS-13), in San Francisco Bay. One night I had gone ashore on liberty with a shipmate. We met two friends of his from another ship and went to a movie in downtown San Francisco.

Later on in the evening we were walking up one of the side streets off Market Street when we came upon a well-dressed lady and her crippled

daughter, waiting on the sidewalk next to their limousine. A deserted street at night is no place for two ladies, so we asked if we could offer some help. The lady explained that her chauffeur was walking Frank Sinatra back to his dressing room at the theater. We waited with the ladies until he returned.

According to the young girl, who was about fourteen and confined to a wheelchair, she had tried unsuccessfully to get tickets to Sinatra's concert. She was heartbroken and begged her mother to let her wait by the stage door in hopes of seeing him. When he left the theatre she called to him. Seeing the girl in her wheelchair, Sinatra went to her. She said that she had missed his concert but had waited to see him in person. She told us that Mr. Sinatra then carried her into the theater, sat her on the edge of the stage and sang to her. What a truly wonderful thing to do!

That night Sinatra made a young girl the happiest child in the world. The four of us sailors waited till the chauffeur returned, then bid them goodbye. He made us realize what a generous and thoughtful person he really was.



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## Burned to Death in Meridianville Home - 1923

Three small children met a horrible death Monday afternoon about four miles from Meridianville, when their home was burned and they were trapped and burned to death without a chance to escape. They were the children of Mr. & Mrs. Hubert Whitworth.

The Whitworth home is located on an out-of-the-way road near Meridianville. It was necessary to leave the pike road at Meridianville and go more than four miles over a small narrow road. This finally turns off into a smaller trail and it was only after following this trail about a mile that the scene of the tragedy was reached. There is no means of communication except by automobile or other vehicle. The News has learned the following information:

Late Monday afternoon Mrs. Whitworth was alone with the 3 small children - a boy of five years old, a girl four years old and a boy fourteen months old - when she decided to lock them in the home so that she could go about two hundred yards away to give a cow some water. Neighbors living about a quarter of a mile away saw smoke rising from the house and ran there as rapidly as possible.

Mrs. Whitworth, attracted by the yells of the neighbors, also hurried back. A brother of Mrs. Whitworth was the first to arrive at the burning home and kicked the front door in. He attempted to force his way in to the little children, who could be heard behind the flames screaming. The fire was rapidly eating up the front part of the home and it was impossible to get the rear door open as it was heavily bolted. There were no windows in the rear through which they could be reached.

The neighbors assembled in

the front yard while the three little ones were screaming frantically as the flames closed in upon them. Mrs. Whitworth's brother reported that although he could get occasional glimpses of the children, who had crawled beneath a bed, he was badly burned about the hands, arms and face and couldn't get in to the children.

The mother of the children had hysterics as the burning walls fell in and the last cries of the little ones were heard.

Just how the fire started is unknown. Mrs. Whitworth says there was no fire in the house when she left. The theory was advanced that the little ones had played with some matches and had set the house on fire. However, when the flames were discovered all the front portion on the inside was burning and all efforts to force entrance were unavailing.

Those who witnessed the terrible tragedy could only stand helplessly by with tears streaming down their faces. It will never be forgotten.

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**Tales of the 319th by Joseph W. Connaughton**

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about the famous and not so famous men  
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*Tales of the 319th* by Huntsville's Joe Connaughton, a member of this elite group of men, is a series of chronological stories that reveal their beginning as well as the sacrifices and trials that hardened these men of the air and brought about their ultimate success. What emerges is a ringing endorsement of the intelligence, perseverance, and, yes, courage of these men of what many view as the "finest generation."

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# Dr. Pat Hamm

by Nolan Myrick

I spent a lot of time at the old Huntsville Clinic when it was uptown. It was a 2-story building at the corner of Washington and Gates. I'm not too sure of the street names. My doctor was Dr. Pat Hamm and he treated me until I was about 30 or so years old. He moved here from Arkansas and had four children and lived down the street from us on Beirne Avenue.

I was the same age as his son Kenneth and we got to be close friends. I was a regular visitor at their house. The telephone pole in front of their house was home base when we played hide & go seek. It had a street light on it so we could see at night.

Dr. Hamm got the first television set in our neighborhood. Sometimes they would put it out on the front porch on Saturday night and everyone would come sit in the yard and watch it. There wasn't a lot to do in the summer but work and play at night. Most everyone had a job to do.

I remember that they had a piano in the living room. It was pretty and it had a stick that held the top up. One time I took the stick out and the top fell on my hand. Sometimes Kenneth and I had to sit on the couch while he sang and Mrs. Hamm played the piano.

Dr. Hamm loved horses, too. He built a barn behind his house next to the back alley. His back alley had a road and the back doors of the barn opened into the alley. In the next block where we lived there wasn't a road - we had a ditch. I spent a lot of time at the barn. They had two horses - Sonny Boy was one and Tar Baby was the other. Sometimes when I see a black horse I automatically think of Tar Baby. I learned to ride on her because she wasn't wild. I was afraid of Sonny Boy because he often tried to bite people.

When the Huntsville Clinic moved to its new location down toward Humana Hospital, I helped Dr. Hamm move his office equipment. I was already married by

then. The last thing I did at the old clinic was a get a blood test. When Joyce and I were to get married we had to have a blood test. Everyone at the lab in the old clinic knew I had a problem with blood tests.

I was trying to impress Joyce. I had on my black leather jacket and was trying to be and look tough. I had brought her to the clinic in my metallic blue 1967 Chevelle with its 4-speed, tape deck and mag wheels.

The nurse came in and asked what we wanted. I told her we were getting married and needed a blood test. The nurse said, "Well Nolan, you better take your jacket off and lay down on this bed. You know how you always pass out when we take your blood and I wouldn't want you to hurt yourself."

All my acting and being tough went out the window when she said that. Even now, Joyce laughs a lot when she tells people about my blood test.

Later on, Dr. Hamm bought 60 acres from Mr. Kyle Elliott and built a big barn at Ryland. For a while he had about 52 brood mares and owned Go Boys Invasion. We had bought a farm from him and lived down by Central School. I was baling hay by then and I took hay to his horses. I even rented the farm when he quit having horses.

He was around me most all my life in all those years. I watched him help a lot of people. He turned nobody away. He doctored me until I moved to

Fayetteville. He kept me sewed up and healthy. I sure was proud of him and appreciated all he did for me and my family.

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# EFFECTIVE TREATMENT FOR VARICOSE VEINS

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

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

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

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

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## My Dad, Gordon McKinley Scott, CCC Worker on Monte Sano

*As told to Steve Gierhart by Gordon Scott, Jr.*

I'm unsure anyone from today can appreciate what it was like to live in the Depression of the 1930s. For that matter I'm not sure that I can. But my dad Gordon McKinley Scott tried to help me understand. It was his stories, both humorous and sobering, that illustrated the hard times for most folks of that era.

My dad was born in little Fransisco, Alabama. That hamlet lies in Jackson County near the Tennessee line and Possum Hollow. Not a lot reached there, even by 1939, when the Depression was being turned around with programs like FDR's Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) that dad joined at the age of sixteen. Nowadays, that may seem too young to be away from home, working for a living. And today we tend to lump many in that age group as not just teenagers, but dependent and immature. But for a desperately poor family, a young "man" of sixteen could make a difference.

My dad could and did send his salary of a dollar a day to the rest of his family back in Fransisco. Not only that, but he managed to make money on the side for them, doing chores that others did not wish to do for themselves. He

could make 25 cents shining boots and belt buckles, as the culture of the CCC required an almost military maintenance of your uniform you wore to work. He also ironed shirts and made beds for a little change. The CCC "Sarge" expected a quarter to bounce off of a tightly made bed, just like a soldier's bunk.

Gordon's first CCC assignment was Monte Sano, what now is Monte Sano State Park. If you go to the park today, much of what

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he and other men did still remains. It's beautiful work, that remaining being made of the stone from the mountain, solid buildings and walls withstanding the rain, wind and time. Many of the roads on top of the mountain and in the park owe their foundations to the men of the CCC, and it was hard work consisting of long days. Despite inflation, they earned that dollar a day and then some.

Dad worked for awhile at Monte Sano before being transferred out to California just before the war broke out. There he fought forest fires along with doing the usual work of busting and laying rock and stone. Six day work weeks were the norm for the CCC, but on Sunday they had time to themselves.

On one occasion, dad and a group of friends managed to pool their money to rent a truck so they could drive to the ocean, something none of the men had ever seen. Just as they pulled out, they were flagged down as a forest fire was breaking out in a nearby location again.

They never made it out to the Pacific, something he always regretted, but dad did finally make it to the ocean,



decades later with his kids, grandkids, and even great grandkids.

Gordon made it back to Alabama where in 1944 he married his sweetheart, Glennis Bostick. At that time people were encouraged to come to Huntsville and work at the newly formed Redstone Arsenal. Both mom and dad recognized opportunity. They left Possum Hollow and

Fransisco for the big city, a move that stayed permanent. Dad worked there until the war ended but mom stayed until retirement in 1987.

And the life lessons of Gordon McKinley Scott were handed down to the generations that followed, certainly to Gordon Junior and all of us who benefited from the love and dedication of this remarkable man.

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It is sad to know that the people that let our mommy have us took us to a landfill, dumped us and just drove away exposing us to starvation and other dangers. Know what? We are waiting for a loving family that will adopt each of us. Do you think that family could be yours?

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# More on Hilding Holmberg

by Charlie Lyle

This is more on the life of Hilding Holmberg. The two articles on him are diverse, in that the first article had to do with Hilding's early adult life; however, this article is about his college days playing with the Auburn Knights.

The Auburn Knights was a collegiate dance band, made up of seventeen pieces plus one or two vocalists. Hilding was the front man (leader) of the band, because of his outgoing nature and terrific personality.

An extremely exciting time for the band was when they

were asked to play an all summer job, at Virginia Beach. It was said by some name band leaders at the time that the three top collegiate bands were at Michigan, Duke and Auburn. The band traveled by their bus to Virginia Beach. As it was, the orchestra had late hours to perform, from ten to two. The other band members would come and sit in after their job was over and would want to sit in with the Knights.

This got to be a regular event. One night in particular the band members from the other bands came over to sit in. One of the band leaders, Tommy Dorsey who was there, had a theme song called "I'm Getting Sentimental Over You".

Most bands have their own arrangers. The Knight's Band had their arranger who had just copied Mr. Dorsey's theme song. Tommy Dorsey came

into the dance hall, just as the Knights were playing his theme song. Well, Dorsey was known to be a real strict disciplinarian, but much to the relief of the Knights, Dorsey thought it was funny.

Many well known musicians who played with the Dorsey Band later on had their own bands, like drummer, Buddy Rich, Ziggy Elman, Harry James and others as told by Hilding.

One night a skinny kid came up to Hilding and asked to sit in as a vocalist. Usually that sort of thing is a disaster waiting to happen. The kid knew what he wanted to sing, what key it was in and he turned out to be Tommy Dorsey's new singer.

Hilding asked him to what his name was, in order to announce him, and he replied that his name was Frank Sinatra.

Hilding was glad to give the kid a break.



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# Tweetie's Pet Tips

## Cold Weather Cat Tips

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But I guess cats need  
to be warm too."  
Tweetie



With temperatures dipping, your cat will need a little special attention to stay warm, happy, healthy and safe in winter. Follow these helpful tips to keep your cat at her best during the cold months ahead.

\* If your cat goes outdoors during the colder months, make sure he or she is acclimated and doesn't stay out too long, especially when the temperatures are below freezing.

\* Watch for signs of frostbite. It's seen most often on ears, the tail and footpads; and look for pale, glossy or white skin. Better yet, prevent frostbite all together by limiting your cat's time outside.

\* Feed your cat a nutritionally-complete food like a Hill's® Science Diet® cat food variety. And always keep plenty of fresh water available at all times. Nutrition and water are important because a well-nourished pet is better equipped to cope with harsh weather.

\* Cats love curling up in a warm place for a nap. Prevent potential burns and fires by protecting your cat from open fireplaces, wood stoves and space heaters. Warm engines are also a favorite place for outdoor cats, so honk the horn or bang on the hood before starting your car in the morning.

\* Antifreeze has a sweet taste cats like but it's toxic enough to cause serious illness and even death. Make sure your car isn't leaking any fluids and keep containers safely locked away.

\* Give your cat a cozy place to sleep by offering some bedding in a warm place, free from drafts. Raise the bed off the floor, too, cats love that jungle lair feeling.

\* Contact your veterinarian immediately if you notice changes in your cat's behavior, such as energy-level or appetite-decrease.

\* Take special care of your cat if he has arthritis, as the cold can severely affect inflamed joints. Provide additional warm and comfortable places for your cat to rest or sleep. If your cat is finding it hard to reach his favorite resting places then look at ways of making it easier for him to reach his preferred places. Also ensure he can easily access his chosen toileting site.

\* If your cat uses an outdoor water source to drink, make sure it doesn't freeze. Always have clean, fresh water available inside in case the outdoor source is inaccessible.

\* If your cat is seeing snow for the first time, then consider letting him wander in a safe and enclosed area such as a garden, and accompany him as well.

\* If you should let your cat wander further, then let him outside when temperatures are highest and traffic levels are lowest. Also, check your cat flap regularly to ensure it hasn't frozen over or become blocked by snow.

\* Keep your cat in during the hours of darkness when there is a greater risk of cats being involved in road traffic accidents, theft and physical attacks.

\* If you haven't done so already, consider taking out pet insurance for your cat, in view of the risk to him/her posed by the winter weather.

\* Keep your cats inside. Outdoor cats can freeze, or become lost or stolen, injured or killed.

\* Never leave your pet alone in a car during the cold weather. A car can act as a refrigerator in the winter, holding in the cold. Your companion animal could freeze to death.

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# From the Desk of Tom Carney

## A History of Monte Sano

Descendants of Thomas Fearn were told by their parents that this ancestor gave Monte Sano Mountain its name. He had a sick child whom he was convinced the mountain air would help cure. After doctoring the child for a long time without success, he built a cabin on the mountain and carried the child and its nurse up there on horseback. In a few weeks the child was cured, so he called the plateau, "Monte Sano."

This is likely true as Thomas Fearn was a physician and familiar with the Latin language in which Monte Sano means "mountain of health."

The mountain must have received its name in the mid 1820s as the first printed reference to Monte Sano was in an advertisement relating to the Monte Sano Female Academy, which was founded in 1829.

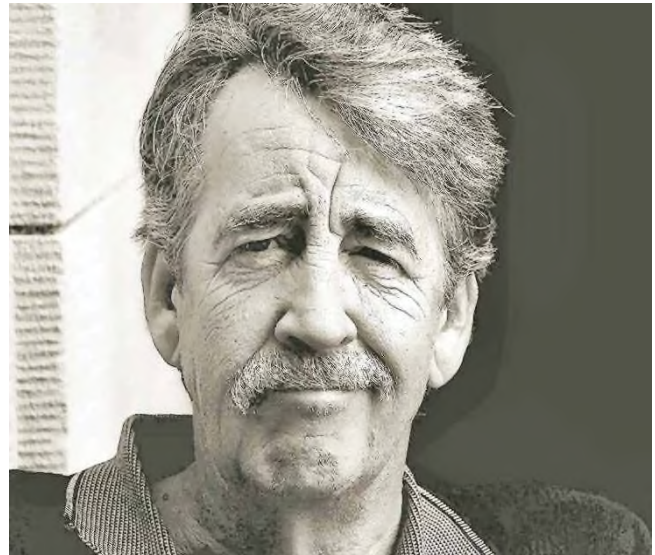
The first recorded purchase of land on the mountain was by Charles Cabaniss, on Sept. 18, 1809. Two years later William Patton acquired forty acres, and shortly afterwards Judge William Smith, a U.S. Senator from North Carolina, purchased another 160 acres.

Though a few families had already settled on the mountain, it was the purchase of 80 acres in 1814 by John Martin that started the development of the mountain. Lots were laid out and roads were built for the community that would soon become known as Viduta.

Huntsville was taken over by Federal troops in 1862 and maintained as their headquarters until the close of the war. With this situation, many Confederates traveled to a vantage point on the mountain to get a view of conditions in the city.

During the war things were rather quiet on the mountain. Occasionally, some roving band of Yankees scoured the top in search of food or Rebel sympathizers, but, on the whole, it was no place for fighting. Not even a skirmish occurred there.

The Yankees, however, destroyed many of the homes on Monte Sano, especially those in Viduta. These went at different times, depending on the mood of the particular band making the



visit.

A Federal hospital was erected during the war in the upper end of Fagan's Hollow, then called Hospital Hollow. This building was located near the spring and was one of the few structures built in this section by the invaders.

In May of 1862, before the war had actually been felt in this part of the country, Jonathan Broad, an Englishman, was hired by Messrs. Baker and Conway to mine coal on the mountain.

When the Yankees located their camps around Huntsville they found they needed coal for their tents and barracks, so they commandeered the mine Broad had started. Thirty soldiers were detailed to work there.

Despite the fact that Broad had only been in this country a short while and still had not obtained his citizenship papers, the Yankees still called him "a damn old secesh," and put



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him to work hauling the coal as it was excavated.

As the war came to an end, recalled W.T. Bennett, a Confederate veteran, his company was ordered to surrender to a Federal force at the spring on the mountain. On May 11, 1865 they marched to the spring and stacked arms. Five gallons of brandy and honey, brought from Huntsville by the Yankees, awaited them there. They drank greedily in the heavy rain he remembered was falling that day.

Then they marched to the present day site of Huntsville Hospital where they were assigned to different homes to be fed and housed for the night.

Monte Sano had no reconstruction period. Buildings burned during the war were left a mass of ruins. After all, the mountain was considered a resort and people had no time for "resorting."

Jonathan Broad, left with his wagons and team when the Yankees departed, resumed his coal mining operations. This industry became a lucrative business. Much of the coal was sold right at the mouth of the mine, while orders soon increased to the point where as many as thirty wagons a day were employed in hauling the fuel to Huntsville.

Laborers flocked to the mines where the high wages of \$1.00 per hundred pounds was paid for digging. Some workmen earned as much as \$33.00 a day in this manner.

With coal mining such a lucrative business, others came to share the profits. John Sullivan opened up several mines, one of which extended through the plateau. Another mine, though much smaller, was operated by Tommy Mennard.

As the mines were started, they were named after the man who first opened them. Some of the mine's names were the "Dick Rice," "Valentine Wool" and the "Matt Blanford."

The vein of coal, never very large, had become unprofitable to mine by the 1890s. In 1899, Jonathan Broad closed his operation and coal mining on Monte Sano came to an end.

In 1878, there began a continuous train of publicity which was to lead in a few years to the erection of an immense hotel. Two wealthy New Yorkers, James and M. J. O'Shaughnessy, supplied the capital. As a sign of their faith in the community, they also built their homes here. James remodeled the Fearn cottage on the mountain while O'Shaughnessy erected the residence on Meridian Pike known as "Kildare."

On Feb. 16th a group of men visited the mountain and selected a spot for the hotel. One week later, 16 teams were busy hauling lumber, lime, cement and other building materials to the site. Over 60 men were employed continuously in the construction.

Anticipating trouble supplying the hotel with water, the improvement company installed a pump at the Big Spring. Water was then pumped up the side of the mountain to a reservoir in front of the hotel. By means of another steam pump, water for drinking purposes was obtained from Cold Spring and distributed to all parts of the hotel.

A laundry and servants quarters were placed some distance to the rear of the hotel, but close enough to enable the help to be summoned with little trouble. Other amenities included landscaping done by a landscape artist imported from New York and twenty miles of bridle paths with numerous places for viewing the spectacular scenery from atop the mountain.

An event widely applauded, judging by the amount of press in the local papers, was the hiring of S. E. Bates as manager of the hotel. He had


just closed the Continental Hotel in Pensacola, Fla., a resort where he had attracted over 2,500 guests during the winter season. His motto was, "The kitchen is the foundation of every good hotel."

Finally after a year and half of construction, the hotel was opened. It fast became a mecca for the elite, with its guest register reading like a Who's Who of wealthy and prominent names. Some of the guests who stayed at the hotel were the Vanderbilts, William Waldorf Astor and J. Gould.

In 1889 a dummy line for a railroad was built up the side of the mountain for the convenience of tourists and sightseers. The railroad, due to a series of accidents, never completely won the public's approval.

Spanish American War soldiers who camped on the moun-

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tain during 1898 were largely responsible for activities that year. One military ball that season attracted 1,250 persons, among them 32 officers. Another outstanding event that year was the introduction of electricity to the mountain.

The hotel opened for its last full season in 1900. Transportation and other problems combined to account for its drop in popularity. Though a large number of guests had registered that year, the hotel's death knell had sounded.

During the year 1909 the hotel was sold to Mrs. Lena Garth who turned it into her summer home - a rather large one!

The next twenty years saw the small community atop the mountain began to decline. Many of the people who lived there moved to town and houses began to fall into disrepair. Casual sightseers found it increasingly difficult to enjoy the spectacular view after the railroad was aban-

doned. The wagon road, leading from Huntsville to the mountain, became rutted and overgrown.

Ironically, the Great Depression, which devastated much of the country, proved to be Monte Sano's salvation. The government, in an effort to create employment, declared much of the mountain to be a state park and established a CCC camp there.

Years later, one member of the CCC would remember that the roads were so bad they actually followed the telephone lines up the mountain.

Over the next several years the park began to take on a different appearance. Members of the CCC rebuilt many of the roads on the

mountain and constructed guest lodgings that are still in existence today.

In 1938, the largest outdoor pageant ever held in North Alabama was held on Monte Sano. The pageant, entitled "Huntsville Moves On," drew a crowd estimated at over fifteen thousand people. Opening with the Indian legend of Monte Sano, the pageant lasted more than three

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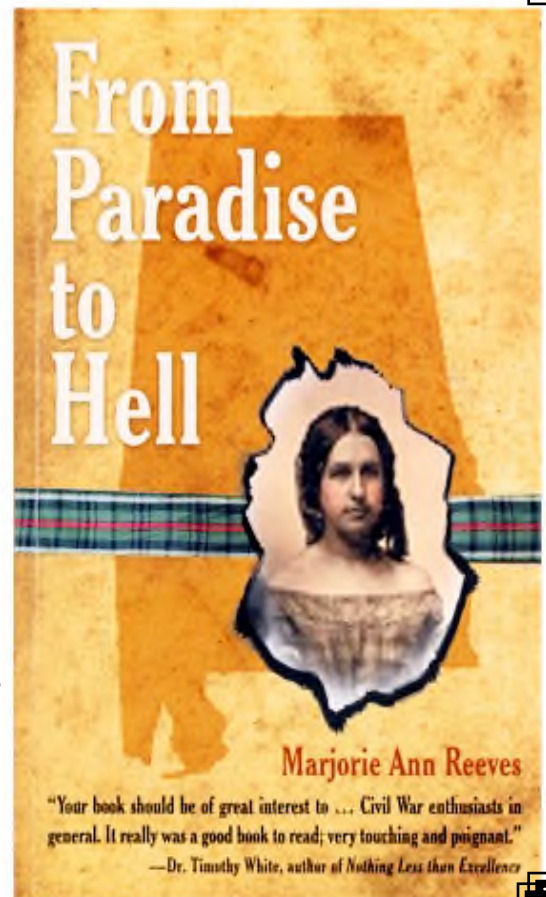
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hours, with some 600 characters being enacted.

High spots of the pageant included the Big Spring scene of 1805 when John Hunt first settled in Huntsville, arrival of the settlers, the land sales of 1809 and 1819 and the visit of President James Monroe. The Civil War scene, during which Confederate soldiers returned to their homes, drew special interest.

In this episode, the speaker for the returning soldiers, Douglas Taylor, dressed in a gray uniform, wore the sword used by his father, Captain Thomas J. Taylor and carried a canteen his wife's father had used during the Civil War.

A "Gay Nineties" scene taken from the old Monte Sano Hotel drew loud applause when the dancers presented a colorful performance in their exquisite costumes.

Episode 111, in which the CCC camp on the mountain was the whole show, gave the spectators a brief idea of the life of a CCC worker and the responsibilities placed upon the shoulders of those in charge of the camp. One hundred CCC boys, dressed in brown uniforms, made their appearance on the stage during this scene, receiving orders from their superiors.

Throughout the entire performance the audience was entertained by soloists, including Miss Frances Roberts, Miss Nell Esslinger and Miss Estelle Cicero.

All in all, it was a performance worthy of the grand mountain on which it was performed.

With the renewed interest, people once again began building homes and the mountain be-

gan to take on the look and feel of a small community. Bankhead Parkway made it possible to travel to Huntsville in a few minutes and the mountain slowly became a desirable place to live.

The next chapter in the history of Monte Sano Mountain would not be written until the early 1950s, when many of the German rocket scientists made their homes there.

But as one historian has said, that is a chapter for another book.

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**"When in doubt, make a fool of yourself. There is a microscopically thin line between being brilliantly creative and acting like the most gigantic idiot on earth."**

*Cynthia Heimel*

# Time to Say Good Bye

by Judith C. Smith

My childhood friend, Anna Gene Cliff Chesnut, has called and asked me what I was going to be doing in three weeks. I said I don't know, what do you want me to do? She said meet me in Jacksonville, Florida and we will get a rent-a-car and drive to Gainesville for ten days. Bill and J.D. are going to Spain and we will have their house, chauffeur and cook.

My reply was my suitcase is already packed. Anna and I have taken many trips up the East and West Coast and have had many wonderful holidays together knowing each other over sixty years. We were in each other's weddings and although she lives in Seattle, Washington, we manage to see each other twice a year and talk on the phone at least once or twice a week.

She meets me at the airport in Jacksonville and we are off to Gainesville. Next is an adventure in nearby Micanopy, Florida where I met America Gordon and we began talking. I told her when our children were in school we had raised chickens, turkeys, ducks and quail from fertilized eggs in the incubator.

America told us to come back the day before I was to fly home and she would have some fertilized eggs for me to see if I could hatch them. As I am always up for trying something new, I thought why not? The day before we were leaving to fly home we head back to Micanopy where America Gordon has a bowl containing twelve

eggs waiting for us. Now we head for the airport in Jacksonville. Anna asked how are you going to get on the plane with a bowl full of eggs? My remark was I haven't gotten that far yet. I'm working on it.

Since Anna wouldn't stop I crawl over the seat, take my dress out of the box from Talbots, that is wrapped in tissue paper. I then very carefully take off a piece of tissue paper and wrap each egg in it. Now these are designer eggs, not just plain old chicken eggs.

There is an attendant waiting for me at the gate with a wheel chair. I tell her that the blue bowl in my lap has twelve fertilized chicken eggs in it and that I'm taking them to Huntsville to see if I can hatch them. She gets me through security with no problem and we head for the gate. That's when a slight problem occurs. I encounter another attendant who said to us "They ain't gonna let that woman get on that plane with them eggs." The first attendant says "I bet she do," then I heard the second attendant say "I bet you \$20.00 she don't get on that plane."

I was left in the wheel chair with the box holding the bowl containing the twelve eggs. I couldn't think fast enough at that point, all I could think about was how far I had come with the eggs and I wasn't going to meet defeat now.

I had already called and told husband M.D.

to find the incubator and get it ready for the eggs. Being over 21 and having gone to the University of Alabama, I'm sure I can come up with something. I had a black hat, a straw hat, a pink hat and a gray hat, stacked all together. Then I remembered I had a sweater in a plastic sack in my carry on. I put the sweater on, the bowl of eggs in the sack, twisted it shut, put in on my head and topped the sack of eggs off with the four hats. I walked right on the plane.

The next day we placed all twelve eggs in the incubator on the kitchen counter. It is the size of a cake box, rotates the eggs twice a day, has a heater and fan and a bottle of water for moisture. It takes 21 days to hatch chicken eggs, so when the kids and grandkids would come over every one was taking bets as to how many would hatch.

I said I'll hatch all 12, no way says M.D., who knows all about hatching eggs, informs me that I'll be lucky to get 4 or 5 to hatch. Put your money where your mouth is, is my remark.

So every day I keep watch over the eggs. Finally on day 19,



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I see a small crack starting on one egg. It takes about an hour after the chick starts to peck out of its shell. I call the kids and grandchildren and they bring their friends and we get all set for a hatching party. If hens are called hens and roosters, surely embryos in the eggs are called chicklets. Anyway that's what I named them.

That night, five hatched and everyone was excited and waiting around. In the laundry, we had set up a nursery, consisting of a large box and a dowel holding an electric light on a cord to help keep the chicklets warm. We also cut several slits on the sides of the box so our three cats could inspect without hurting them. M.D. put them in the box.

The next day my roommate from North Carolina was in town, we go out to lunch. When she brings me home I'm ecstatic, six more have hatched and fluffed out. Mary Alice has to leave so no help from her. I call Scott and he is busy. My friends from the neighborhood can't help. At last, I call M.D. and he is busy. He says "Honey you're over 21 and went to Alabama and they won't bite. I'm in a meeting and I'll be late getting home tonight and by the way, are we having fried chicken for supper tonight?"

I thought for a minute or two, rounded up the three cats, put them on the sun porch, unplugged the incubator and put it on the floor by the box. Since I don't like things with feathers, I put on my surgical gloves and one by one picked up each chicklet and put them in the nursery box.

Still one egg didn't hatch, I carefully put the incubator on the counter, plugging it back into the socket and placing the last unhatched egg in it.

Martin and Dylan, his son, came over later that evening saying I'm going to throw that last egg in the woods next door. I say "Don't you dare touch my chicklet, just give it a couple more days". Then M.D. said that tomorrow he would throw it in the woods. "No, you won't," was my remark.

Well, just as I was going to bed I took one last look at the incubator and it sure looked as if I was seeing a little crack, but M.D. said no I was just seeing things. Then around midnight, I took another look, still no chicklet having hatched.

M.D. gets up at 6:00am and is getting ready for work and I run into the kitchen to have a look and there was a pecker already out of his shell and fluffed up. I guess one might say that I beat all odds and hatched all twelve eggs that I brought home on my head.

Now they have all thrived well, but it's time to say "Good Bye" and

on to another project. If anyone wants to see any of my designer chicklets, they will be at the 1818 Farm in Mooresville, Alabama.

Just look for the 2 necked chickens, they love to strut around, or the Silver Phoenix or the New Zealand reds - you won't find Ringo the big Black Rooster - Martin has him at our storage business on Highway 72. He loves chasing the dog.

So until next month, just eat turkey not chicken.

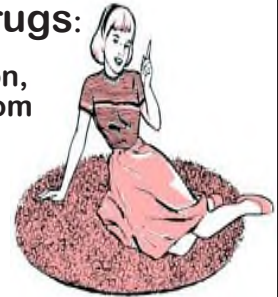
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# The Monte Sano Female Seminary

*Submitted by Jane Barr*

Malinda Poff married Reverend James Rowe in Cincinnati, Ohio and moved to Huntsville, Alabama. While James preached, for the Huntsville Methodist Church, Malinda taught in their home. Malinda had rheumatism and was advised to move to Monte Sano, a healthier climate.

In February 1830 Malinda and Reverend Rowe opened the Monte Sano Female Seminary. Their funds were low so the bulk of the work fell on Malinda. They had one handyman and one female assistant for Malinda. Their son, Andrew Jackson Rowe, was born March of 1830. Two years later, in March, their son J. H. Bascom Rowe was born.

While the school grew, Malinda's health deteriorated. Malinda Rowe died November 18, 1833. She is buried west of the school site, in the Rowe Cemetery, on the northern plateau of Monte Sano overlooking Cold Spring.

Reverend Rowe closed the school, took their two sons to rela-

tives in Ohio and continued as a circuit preacher.

*Monte Sano Female Seminary (excerpt from brochure distributed by Reverend James Rowe, June 19, 1832).*

"This Institution, under the superintendence of Mrs. Rowe and her assistant, being now considered by the proprietor as permanently established, he asks leave to call public attention to its claims, under a belief that it possesses advantages seldom equaled, and not surpassed by any Academy in this section of country.

In point of local situation, being about 3-1/2 miles northeast of Huntsville, this Academy is unrivaled. Occupying one of the summits of a range of mountains, the elevation of which is 1100 feet above the plane beneath, a prospect, the most beautiful, variegated and extensive, forever charms the eye. Fanned by the mountain breeze, roseate Health seems here to have made her favorite residence; this Retirement with her handmaids, Contentment and Happiness, follow in her train."

"The experience of nearly three years has conclusively proved that Monte Sano is entirely free from the noxious diseases of this climate; not a single case of fever having occurred, either in the school or family within that time. Its elevated situation, pure and

constant breezes, and an abundant supply of cool and limpid water, present any claims to an exemption from disease, then is Monte Sano thrice blessed. In addition to the now ample buildings of the Academy, the proprietor is erecting a spacious and commodious two-story stone building, which will be finished early in the fall. With this addition, a still larger number of pupils can be furnished with suitable and comfortable accommodations."

"The scholastic year invariably commences on the 2nd Monday in February, and terminates on the Friday preceding the second Monday in December in each year; at the last mentioned period the anniversary of the Institution will be held and diplomas conferred upon such of the young ladies as have completed the prescribed course of studies."

"This course of instruction pursued in this Academy is extensive, embracing a judicious selection of all the English, Classical, Scientific and Ornamental branches of Education usually bestowed upon young ladies in such institutions. The superintendents will also give their most earnest and unwearied attention to the proper formation and preservation of the morals and manners of the young ladies committed to their care."

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# Thieves Oil

Cold and flu season is upon us. Runny noses, germs, viruses... It's not enough to pull out the bleach, but a little extra protection can't hurt.

Have you heard of Thieves Oil? Legend has it that back in the 15th century, 4 thieves used a secret formula to protect themselves from the plague so they could rob the dying and dead.

And of course, you can make this yourself with simple, inexpensive, easy to find ingredients. Recipes vary, but the common mixture is cinnamon, cloves, lemon, eucalyptus and rosemary. We can't be sure that thieves actually used this mixture to protect themselves from the plague, but these ingredients are antiseptic, antiviral, antibacterial and anti-infectious. So give it a go! It smells great.

### Ingredients you'll need:

- 1 large lemon, peeled and peeling chopped (save juice for another project)
- 4 sprigs fresh rosemary
- 4 cinnamon sticks (buy in bulk at natural food stores)
- 1/2 cup whole cloves (buy in bulk at natural food stores)
- 5 drops eucalyptus essential oil (Pearly Gates or Garden Cove)

### Instructions:

1. Fill a pot with a quart of water and add the first four ingredients.
2. Heat on the stove top to boiling, then reduce the heat and simmer for 30 minutes. Or, once the mixture has boiled, turn off the heat and let it sit for 2 hours.
3. Strain the mixture and pour the remaining liquid into a glass jar. Glass is better than plastic because the essential oils can react with plastic.

**"If this resume doesn't just blow your head off, then please return it in the enclosed stamped envelope."**

**Recent resume received by a local business**

4. Add the five drops of eucalyptus oil.

You can re-use the ingredients for another 2-3 batches. You can store them in the freezer for later use.

This concentrate can be mixed with equal parts of water and kept in a spray bottle. Use it as a quick disinfectant for the bathroom. It smells really good.

Make sure to cut your lemon peel and don't zest (grate it). It's really difficult to get the zest back after straining to use again.

### How To Use Your Thieves Oil Concentrate

Fill a spray bottle with equal amounts of Thieves Oil Concentrate and water. Spray on surfaces or in the air as a disinfectant. You can simmer it on the stove but keep an eye on it so it doesn't dry & burn.

This quart of concentrate will cost you about \$1.25. From this you can make 2 quarts or 2 full sized bottles of disinfectant. Really saves you money. And these are all natural ingredients.

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You looked so very tired, and sank into a chair. I tried so hard to let you know, that I was standing there. That it's possible for me to be so near you everyday. To say to you with certainty, "I never went away."

You sat there very quietly, then smiled, I think you knew... in the stillness of that evening, I was very close to you.

The day is over... I smile and watch you yawning and say "Good-night, God bless, I'll see you in the morning."

And when the time is right for you to cross the brief divide, I'll rush across to greet you and we'll stand, side by side. I have so many things to show you, there is so much for you to see. Be patient, live your journey out..... then come home to me.

# Then Come Home To Me

*Anon.*

To my dearest friend:  
I stood by your bed last night, I came to have a peep. I could see that you were crying, you found it hard to sleep. I spoke to you softly as you brushed away a tear, "It's me, I haven't left you, I'm well, I'm fine, I'm here."

I was close to you at breakfast, I watched you pour the tea, You were thinking of the many times, your hands reached down to me. I was with you at the shops today; your arms were getting sore. I longed to take your parcels, I wish I could do more.

I was with you at my grave today; you tend it with such care. I want to re-assure you, that I'm not lying there. I walked with you towards the house, as you fumbled for your key. I gently put my paw on you; I smiled and said, "It's me."

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"I've never had to evict a dog in the middle of the night for being drunk and disorderly. And I've never had a dog run out on a hotel bill."

"Yes, indeed, your dog is welcome at my hotel. And, if your dog will vouch for you, you're welcome to stay here, too."

A man wrote a letter to a small hotel in a southern town he planned to visit on his vacation.

He wrote: "I would very much like to bring my dog with me. He is well-groomed and very well behaved. He is friendly with people and other pets and

is a good traveler. Would you be willing to permit me to keep him in my room with me at night?"

An immediate reply came from the hotel owner, who wrote:

SIR: "I've been the sole operator of this hotel for many years. In all that time,



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# The Copper Box

by Sherrill "Buddy" Esslinger

The year was the summer of 1959. Members of the Gurley United Methodist Church voted to make their church a station, so Chestnut Grove, Beach Grove and Paint Rock United Methodists were left without a minister. Gurley Church paid us a generous sum for our interest of the parsonage there, and we were able to build a very modest four room parsonage on our church property. Two additional rooms were later added.

At the time we were fortunate to have as our pastor,

**"Please excuse Mary for being absent yesterday. We forgot to get the Sunday paper off the porch and when we found it Monday, we thought it was Sunday."**

**Student's absence excuse**

Rev. Charles McCay, a very fine and able young minister. He and his wife Sandra and their three young boys - Vann, Tim and Terry - were loved by everyone in the community.

We had two services (1st and 3rd Sundays) each month and are proud of the fact that 90 percent were present at every service throughout the year.

On Monday, March 5, 1962, Louis Sanford, Chairman of the Building Committee, with Glenn Williams and Orien Sublett; and members of the Finance Committee; James Norment Esslinger and Mildred Brawley; began a \$14,000 new sanctuary, which drew the whole community closer together.

Letters were sent to over 100 friends and relatives whom were thought would give a token amount to help and many responded nicely. Marvin Kelly was selected to build the sanctuary.

The Corner Stone and 9"x 12"x 1/2" copper box was purchased by James Norment Esslinger and was placed in its position on April 17, 1962. This Corner Stone included "The Copper Box" with items that were put in by some members, not to be opened for fifty years.

Several years later the west wing was added to the



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church with a kitchen/classroom and restroom.

In August, 2014, plans were put into motion to have a big celebration to open the Corner Stone Time Capsule. Meetings were held to discuss the best way we could go about having this historic event even though we were two years late. October 12, 2014 was agreed upon as the date to have the celebration.

Invitations were drawn up and printed, thanks to Sandra Esslinger, and some 100 invitations were mailed to all members, former members, friends and former pastors. Meetings were held to discuss what else was to be included. The menu was planned and the church would furnish the food and drinks. As usual, there was more food than was needed, just like Jesus did with the five fish.

Special thanks go to all the members involved in sprucing up the Family Life Center and getting everything ready. Large mums were placed around the sanctuary's altar "In Memory" and "In Honor"

of families, past and present.

Sunday, October 12, 2014 was an exciting day with music and more. The choir opened with "Family of God" followed with the entire congregation joining in the second time. Special music was provided by Oliver Marvin "Bobby" Esslinger, Jr. singing "I Won't Have To Cross Jordan Alone" and "His Eye Is On The Sparrow", a favorite of our father.

It was fitting to have Rev. Charles McCay, who was our pastor in 1962, conducting the services. Former pastors: William "Bill" Saxon and wife, Sue; Alma Kingsbury and Margorie Palmer were in attendance.

Immediately following the service, all gathered outside for the opening of the Corner Stone Time Capsule. Steve Van Allen played an important part in preparing the removal of the Corner Stone.

Then all were led by Sherrill Esslinger over to the Lillian & Jimmy Power Family Life Center for a fabulous noon day buffet lunch and

fellowship.

Shortly thereafter, "The Copper Box" was opened and shared by all. There were several artifacts including a copy of the 1961 Journal of North Alabama Conference of The Methodist Church; a letter signed by Louis Sanford, Chairman of The Building Committee; copy of the Huntsville Times dated Friday, April 20, 1962 (Good Friday); copy of The Methodist Christian Advocate dated April 10, 1962 from Rev. Charles McCay; copy of "Two Hundred Years of The Esslinger Family contributed by James Norment Esslinger; and a letter addressed to the "Heirs of Oliver Marvin Esslinger, Sr." which was very interesting including a Silver Dollar, with instructions to earn 10% compounded to be given to the Chestnut Grove United Methodist Church.

The "Copper Box" with mementos from church members was placed back in the Corner Stone in November, 2014 to be reopened in the year 2064.



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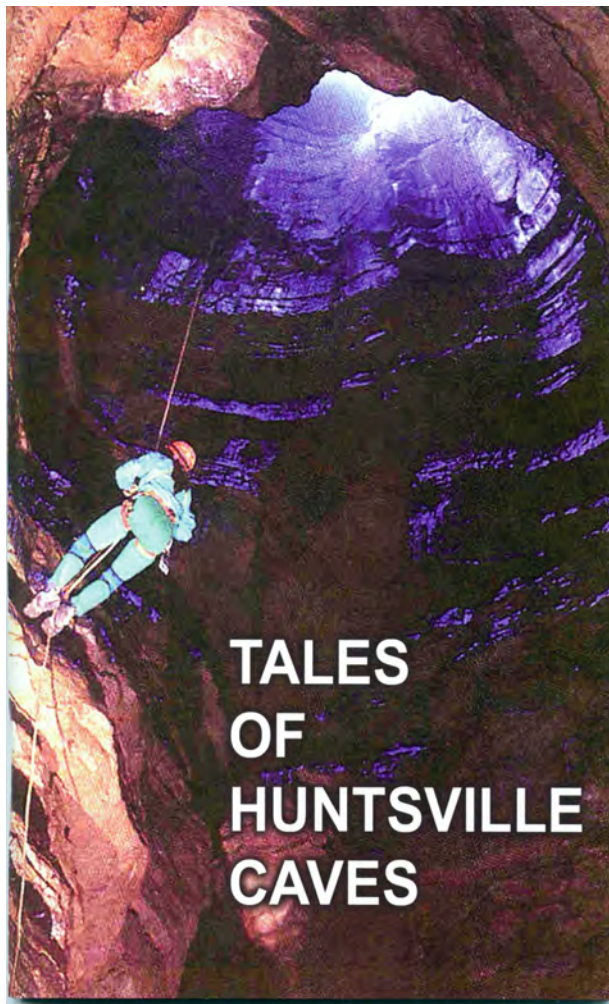
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3. *King Cotton to Space Capital: The Huntsville-Madison County Story-* by Jacquelyn Proctor Reeves \$39.95
4. *When Spirits Walk: Ghost Stories of Madison County (back in stock)* by Jacque Reeves \$15.95
5. *Tales of Huntsville Caves -* by William Varnedoe, Jr. and Charles A. Lundquist \$12
6. *Baby Boomer's Guide to Growing Up in "The Rocket City"* by Tommy Towery (Back in Stock!) 17.95
7. *Madison (Historic City Photos)* by John Rankin \$19.99
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