



No. 268

June 2015



Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

SEARCHING FOR NANNI B.



THIS WAS A JOURNEY THAT STARTED IN 2011 ON ONE COLD NOVEMBER NIGHT IN MICHIGAN WHEN I SEARCHED THE INTERNET AND FOUND A COPY OF MY GRANDPARENT'S WEDDING LICENSE.

WHEN I SAW BOTH SIGNATURES ON THE DOCUMENT, I KNEW I HAD TO DISCOVER WHO MY GRANDMOTHER WAS AND AS IMPORTANT, HOW HER DEATH AT CHILDBIRTH AFFECTED MY MOTHER, AND BY INHERITANCE, ME.

MY MOTHER TOLD ME OFTEN OF AN EXPERIENCE SHE HAD WHEN, AT ABOUT AGE TEN, SHE VISITED HER MOTHER'S GRAVE.

SHE OVERHEARD TWO WOMEN WALKING NEARBY SAY, "IT'S TOO BAD NANNIE B. DIED AND THE BABY LIVED."

Also in this issue:

The Ghost of the Golden Ghetto

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A Hardware Store....

The Way You Remember Them

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Domie Lewter
Mac Lewter



Searching for Nannie B.: A Headless Lamb on Top of a Gravestone

by Nancy Owen Nelson

When you drive out of New Hope, Alabama on Cedar Point Road, your car curves back and forth until you reach Poplar Ridge Road. You turn left and drive straight north until you reach Cherry Tree Road. Then you turn left again onto Keel Hollow Road. Here you will find Bethel Cemetery, where my mysterious grandmother, Nannie B. Russell Chandler, is

buried.

On July 12, 1905, in Poplar Ridge, Alabama, Nannie B. Russell Chandler went into labor with her only child. One hour after the birth, the mother died. She was buried here in the Old Bethel Primitive Baptist Church graveyard. I'm sure, because her family attended the church and her father, John R. Russell, served as Church Clerk for many years.

Nannie B.'s husband, Robert E. Chandler, must have buried her hastily because her stone, aged with moss, says only "Nannie B, Wife of R. E. Chandler." There are no words of endearment. There is only

**I've learned that
sometimes all a person
needs is a hand to hold
and a heart to understand.**



L. Thomas Ryan, Jr.
Attorney At Law

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a lamb on top of the stone, its head gone, lost over all of the years before my visit.

Her little girl, also Nannie B., was named in memory of her lost mother, but that memory was buried along with her mother's body. For the rest of her life my mother, Nannie B. Chandler Nelson, who died in 2001, knew almost nothing about this good woman who gave her life so her daughter could begin hers.

This was a journey that started in 2011 on one cold November night in Michigan when I searched the internet and found a copy of my grandparent's wedding license. When I saw both signatures on the document, I knew I had to discover who my grandmother was and as important, how her death at childbirth affected my mother, and by inheritance, me. My mother told me often of an experience she had when, at about age ten, she visited her mother's grave. She overheard two women walking nearby say, "It's too bad Nannie B. died and the baby lived."

What greater guilt or pain

could be laid on the shoulders of a child? What must have been the lifelong feeling of loss, of alienation, of unworthiness that this child would carry through her life?

Somehow on that night, I knew I had to go forward with understanding not only the woman who birthed my mother, but the legacy she left behind. I had to know the story.

My memoir, "Searching for Nannie B.", is that story.

Soon I was spending hours on Ancestry.com looking for any details about my grandparents. I knew from the 1900 U.S. Census that my ancestors lived in Poplar Ridge, Alabama. Where was it? Did the community still exist? Where was my grandmother's grave, the spot where my mother had stood over 100 years ago and heard her life reduced to "too bad the baby lived"?

Continuous Ancestry.com searches brought up many Nannies—apparently a popular name for southern women at that time. I also searched findagrave.com with no results. Then I decided to search

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for the Poplar Ridge community. I was able to locate a road by the name of Poplar Ridge, but not a town.

One evening I put in another search for "Nannie B. Chandler" and gravesites in the early part of the 1900s. One small scanned document came up with the name "Nannie B." highlighted. It was in the Bethel Churchyard on Keel Hollow Road. I was sure I had found her. I focused on this graveyard on Keel Hollow. Wasn't it important that one of the roads to the cemetery was called "Poplar Ridge"? There must be a connection, I thought.

I scanned online maps of the area near where I had seen Poplar Ridge Road. I found a tiny demarcation of a church off Cherry Tree Road. However, there was no information, no phone number or website for the church.

As a leap of faith, I contacted the New Hope Library. "Indeed," the person on the other end of the phone said, "Priscilla Scott can help you. She's our local genealogist."

Priscilla was able to help. Within a day, she sent me a map of the graveyard at the Old Bethel P B Church, along with a photo of my grandmother's gravestone with the simple lettering and the headless lamb.

When I drove into the cemetery yard for the first time in June, 2012 I felt the energy of sacred land beneath my feet. I had arrived at a destination I never imagined I would see, and I knew that my mother, Nannie B's daughter, was with me.

I unlatched and went through the iron gate, follow-

ing the cemetery map given me by Priscilla Scott, genealogist of the Elizabeth Carpenter Library in New Hope. In Yard 10 my ancestors from the Russell family rest—my great-great uncle Calvin Russell, who died in the Civil War; my great aunt Mary Russell, and my great grandparents, John Riley and Delilah Jane Chapman Russell. Only a foot or two of earth separates my grandmother, Nannie B., from her parents.

That week I attended a service at the Old Bethel Primitive Baptist Church. On this rainy Sunday night, I was welcomed by Elder Ricky Siniard, his wife Syrethia and Deacon Everitt Blackwood. I was also welcomed by all of the people who came to sing and pray. After talks by two elders, we sang my mother's, Nannie B. Chandler Nelson's, favorite hymn, "Amazing Grace."

I offered a prayer for my grandmother, Nannie B. Rus-



Robert Chandler with baby Nannie B. in 1906

sell Chandler, who had been "lost but now was found."

My father was career Army, and we rarely lived in one place for more than a year or two until we returned to Alabama when he retired. So until I took



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you read the newspapers
just to see if the gossip
was really true?

this journey, I never really understood my Alabama roots.

Through all my research, I would find out that Robert Chandler remarried three years after his first wife's death to a woman who was also named "Nannie." Yes, a third Nannie. Coincidence or residual loss? That she raised my mother as her own, along with the other six children she had with Robert. That Robert Chandler would become a prominent businessman in Decatur, Alabama, with his dry goods store on Moulton Street and 2nd Avenue.

I would come to realize, too, that that ten-year-old girl in the Bethel Cemetery who heard the harsh comments about her survival would live with that burden for her entire life. That I inherited the burden of her angst, though I did not realize it until I was writing this book. I would also realize that in this writing, I have lifted the burden from all of us — my grandmother, my mother and myself.

But that grave and church service was not the end of my journey. I was driven to know

more about why my grandmother was never spoken of or acknowledged. I continued looking for the missing pieces that had separated my mother first, and then me, from Nannie B. Russell.

I found a a third cousin, Helen Robinson Paschal, now deceased. Helen's grandmother, Mary had taken my mother in as an infant after Grandmother Chandler died. Remarkably, Helen remembered that she had two buttons from my grandmother's clothing in her sewing box. Helen's granddaughter Dixie sent me those chipped but valuable buttons in 2012. The day they arrived, I wound my mother's hair around her mother's buttons which I had collected from one of her hair brushes.

Now mother and daughter were together, not only symbolically, but physically, the oil from my grandmother's fingers pressed into the beautiful pearl buttons, her DNA mingling now with her daughter's DNA embedded in her hair.

The Nannie B's were together for the first time in 107 years.

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History They Never Taught You in School

- The 1900 Olympic Games, held in Paris, were a fiasco from start to finish. In fact, the French government even refused to call them the Olympics, fearing they would draw attention from an industrial exhibition held at the same time.

The foot races and field events took place in the middle of a Parisian park, the Bois de Boulogne, and the French refused to damage it. Thus the foot races were run on grass, while the hammer and discus throwers invariably saw their best tosses disappear into the trees.

The marathon was staged through the middle of downtown Paris and all but the French runners got lost. To make matters worse, the French runners blatantly cheated, taking shortcuts to finish first, second and third. American Arthur Newton, who took the lead early and was never passed, was told he had placed fifth. Equally bizarre were some of the "sports" included by the French: croquet, billiards, checkers and fishing.

- Dr. William West Grant (1846-1934), a native of Russell County, Alabama, set a record that will be hard to beat. As a teenager, Grant joined Clanton's Battery in 1863 and spent 16 months as a Confederate artillery man. Later moving to Davenport, Iowa, he became a distinguished physician, studying in London, Vienna and Berlin. Grant was a doctor in the Colorado National Guard during the Spanish-American War of 1898, and became Surgeon General of Colorado the following year.

Unbelievably, he returned to uniform for the third time in September 1917—52 years after Lee's surrender. The 71 year old ex-Confederate spent all of World War I on active duty.

- American Linda Siegal stole the crowd at the 1979 Wimbledon Championships, but not for her skill with a tennis racquet. For her match against top rated Billie Jean King, the 18 year old Californian wore a fashionable backless outfit. However, the strenuous activity soon took its toll on the seams. When Linda bent over at one point, she noticed her dress was becoming a bit revealing. "But when I got back on the court," she said, "everything just fell out!"

A British spectator shouted, "Now that's what I call a deuce," and the crowd exploded in laughter. The red faced Miss Siegal

stuffed herself back into her dress and continued playing, losing the match to King.

Nevertheless, Linda had won a unique place in sports history as the only woman ever to play topless at Wimbledon.

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Weird News from 1875 Newspapers

- A man was found dead on a country road in Kentucky, with fourteen bullet holes in him and the coroner's jury rendered a verdict of "death by undue excitement."

- In a started manner a man woke up the other night, crying to his wife, "My dear, I have swallowed a dose of strychnine."

"Well, then, for goodness sake," she replied, "be still, or it might come up!"

- The maddest man in Georgia is James Leigh. He was a candidate for member of the Legislature and being a conscientious man voted for his opponent, who was elected by just one vote majority.

- A lazy man fell a distance of fifty feet the other day, escap-

ing with only a few scratches. A bystander remarked that he was too slow to fall fast enough to hurt himself.

- An Arkansas sheriff carried a bullet in his head for thirteen years and when they removed it the other day he became foolish. They are looking for someone else to shoot him again.

- A Tennessee farmer tied one end of a rope around his waist and lassoed a bull with the other. He thought he had the bull, but at the end of the first half mile he began to suspect that the bull had him.

- Chasing after a man in Huntsville, a young woman caught up to him, clinging to him until a policeman came. A year previously he had ended a friendly acquaintance by stealing her jewelry and she had never ceased looking for him. He is currently serving a long term in the county calaboose.



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• Here's a good way to save time and prevent a mess when making meatballs: use your ice cream scoop to shape them. You can also make hamburger patties this way – scoop out the meat, then flatten with a spatula.

• Ever have trouble keeping the hard-boiled eggs in the icebox separated from the uncooked eggs? Here's an easy solution:

When boiling eggs, either add a little food coloring to the water or put a drop of it on each egg. Now you have color-coded eggs!

• Chilled cookie dough often crumbles when you slice it. But if you first warm the blade of your knife in hot

water and then wipe it dry, you can avoid the crumbling. When the blade cools, warm it again the same way.

• Cooking hamburgers on a very hot fire? Poke a hole in the center of each one while shaping it. That will help the center cook faster...and the hole will be gone when the hamburger is cooked.

• One way to keep from spilling ingredients on the pages of your cookbook: cover the open pages with plastic wrap before you begin the recipe.

• You can store opened but unused whipping cream in the freezer by simply putting the leftovers in 1-oz. paper cups. Cover the cups and place them in transparent freezer bags. Then thaw and use as needed.



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"Horse sense is what keeps horses from betting on people."

Ron Eyestone

- When making a juicy berry pie, sprinkle the bottom crust lightly with sugar and flour mixed in equal proportions. This keeps the bottom crust from becoming soggy before the pie can be completely eaten.

- Bury avocados in flour to hasten their ripening.

- One way to keep hamburgers from falling apart is to add a little flour to the meat when you shape the patties.

- Some foods not only leave an odor in your refrigerator... they can add an unwanted "taste" to the other food. To guard against this, I've learned that a small charcoal briquette placed in the refrigerator quickly eliminates the odor of items like onions and cantaloupe.

- If you don't have enough cooling racks try using inverted muffin tins instead. Just place pies and cakes on the upside-down tins. Works great!


- Before chopping raw meat, cut it into small pieces and freeze slightly. This will help the meat go through the chopper without clogging, and the loss of juice will be minimal.

- To store leftover tomato paste, spoon tablespoon-size dollops onto a small cookie sheet and freeze until firm. Transfer to a plastic bag, seal and freeze. Remove as needed and add to sauces, vegetables, soups or stews.

- Basil plants will repel mosquitoes and flies; just keep a plant or two around the house and in your garden.

- Cutting or chopping any food high in Vit C releases an enzyme that can destroy the vitamin. Leave all fruits and veges whole or in large pieces til ready to eat when possible.

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BAXTER'S BOTTOMS AND MY PAPER ROUTE

by Johnny Johnston

Some say the community was named after the grocery store sitting by the creek which ran through its center. Others told me the name was not official and did not appear on maps or records. I just know that now, over 60 years later, I seem to be the only person who remembers the name Baxter's Bottoms.

The creek ran from somewhere on Monte Sano into Pinhook Creek just down by the Naval Reserve Building. Baxter's Bottom covered an area from about Lowe Mill to the branch and to the south by Governors Drive and Madison to the east... A new road, the extension of Harvard, is being built across the creek connecting with Lowe Mill and would have bisected the Bottoms area...

At any rate, Baxter wasn't a name well known in Huntsville circles especially when referring to this section called "Baxter's Bottoms" by some downtown residents. The neighborhood seemed to degenerate just after passing the well kept and managed "Royal Funeral Home", which sat on the edge of the hill on Oak St.

The Royal Funeral Home catered to the Black citizens of Huntsville and was owned and managed by a kind gentleman named Mr. Lawrence Hundley. I can close my eyes now and almost see Mr. Hundley reach into his pocket to retrieve a twenty five cent piece to pay

for the week's paper delivery. Royal is still known for its extremely elegant funerals where Limos, Hearses, Flower Cars and all Royal equipment are all white. Not the typical black vehicles expected in most funerals.

Directors and employees are always dressed in impeccable clean black attire with shoes shined to the limit. They have pride in their service and operate with extreme precision their jobs to perform. Even today, Tony Pickens cleans the rolling equipment on an almost daily basis.

From 1950 until September 1953 I was the paper carrier in Baxter's Bottoms for the Huntsville Times which included all the streets north and west of the current Huntsville Hospital and over to Madison St. I was the carrier when most of the area was taken over by Government Authorities for the purpose of building Council Courts.

My brother Lloyd and I took over Huntsville Times paper route #1 in 1950 from an

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SEARCHING FOR NANNIE B.

BY NANCY OWEN NELSON

EVENTS

- 1. Friday, June 26, 2015:** Book signing, New Hope Public Library New Hope Al, 7:00 p.m.
- 2. Sunday, June 28, 2015:** "Searching for Nannie B." Talk at Auburn Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship, Auburn, Al, 10:00 a.m.
- 3. Monday, June 29, 2015:** Talk and book signing, Hartselle Historical Society, Old Burlison School, Hartselle, Al, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
- 4. Tuesday, June 30, 2015:** Book signing, Little Professor Book Center, Homewood, Al, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

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old school acquaintance who worked the route with us for two days. Lloyd was about 14 and I was 13 when we decided we were old enough to perform this duty. Lloyd only stayed with it for a while so I did the job alone. When the homes were being torn down I got the adjacent route #27 and when Lloyd left I continued both routes even after Council Courts was built and the number of customers soared. Most days I had two bags on the back fender, one on my back and pulled a trailer with a stack on it.

Breaking the bike was almost a weekly occurrence due to the load. We delivered papers Monday through Friday and again on Sunday. Thursday and Sunday papers were the largest of the week. We collected our twenty five cents per week for the paper delivery on Saturday. Of the 25 cents we kept 11 cents. Any failure to collect came out of our 11 cents.

Our normal routine was to ride bicycles from school in the afternoon to the Huntsville Times Building on the corner of Holmes and Green where most paper boys gathered to get their papers. The schedule said you pick up the papers around 4 pm, fold them and start delivering on your route. Often the old Times press broke down and we were lucky to get papers by dark. Many times we rode home on bicycles after dark with no lights. Streets were not as dangerous then although my route required riding 15 miles per day. Batteries were too expensive back then to power lights.

I proceeded to the First National Bank where the route began, then Spring St., Fountain Row, Oak St., Pelham, Pump

and many others now changed, renamed, replaced. Big Spring was very different then as now. Where we see the Colonial Bank Building, the back of city hall, and many other buildings were shacks where people lived. Behind these shacks were other shacks with a path to ride and deliver your paper. Our swimming pool was where the Art Center is now. Only the lakes and the lagoon, between Church and Jefferson, have not changed. Even Big Spring Park itself has been changed.

The route started near the Courthouse then down the hill toward Big Spring Park. The first block was elite with citizen names like Mahoney from the clothing store Johnson and Mahoney, as well as Hutchens who owned the city's largest hardware store. Dr. Cashin was just around the corner. He was a well known black Dentist who had more white customers than Black.

My favorite place to stop es-

pecially on a hot day was Mrs. Lucy Hice at 508 Oak St. who had a small grocery. (Note: most grocery stores of this type are now called convenience stores). After a couple of blocks on Oak St. the large houses began to make way for smaller homes most of which were in bad need of repair. The sparkling bright Royal Funeral Home was on the right just before going down hill past the creek and into the heart of Baxter's Bottoms. Homes began to degenerate into not so well kept places with additions, lean-to

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and other types of temporary buildings for housing friends, family and renters. Most all the residents were friendly, hard working people who were schooled just down the road at Council High School. Many of the children became friends to me helping deliver or just to say hello. Then there was the other element.

On one corner near Fackler St. was constructed a building which looked very much like a motel with rooms accessible by outside doors and a porch roof which connected each room. Being a very young person and not street smart, it was some time before someone told me what all those girls were doing on that porch, especially why they were waving to me and all other males. I just didn't know about such things.

And then, the bootleggers, there were several, trying to sell me hard liquor, beer and such. I never fell for it thanks to teaching by my parents. I won't

mention the education I got on women's attire!

I was threatened with knives, sticks, rocks, everything except guns, all for the little money I had collected that day. Black or white, I managed to outrun all of them on my bicycle and was never hurt by these "would be robbers".

On Pelham St. was a Cafe, or Club I remember as the Royal Palm Cafe. Research tells me that was not the name. I can't find the real name. It was an all black establishment which had a few rooms upstairs. I remember this establishment because it was one of the few places in Huntsville where out-of-town blacks stayed overnight.

On many occasions I came by early on Sunday morning to see a bus with large lettering - "Birmingham Black Barons" -written on the side. When that famous baseball team was in town overnight the upstairs is where they stayed. Great players for BBS were Willie Mays,

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Bill Greason, Jay Heard and Artie Wilson. All four of these men went on to play major league baseball. *Birmingham Black Barons* was a team in the Southern Negro League and was in business from 1920 to 1960. I believe the father of Willie Mays also played for the BBS.

This was early in the growth of Huntsville Hospital. I remember a small building only three floors with very few beds, a wide driveway out front with parking and one entrance. Half St. ran from Oak St. (now Gallatin) to Madison just about where the enclosed parking lot is now. I remember 3 or 4 houses facing Half St. that were in disrepair with broken windows and no screens. People lived in these houses and usually left their doors wide open.

I excelled in sailing the paper thru the door into the house until I one day broke a kerosene lamp on the mantel and had to pay for it. True, these houses had no electric power and few had water even though they were only a few hundred feet from City Hall.

Recently I visited the area of Twickenham Tower which has replaced a portion of the Bottoms along with Publix and other beautiful buildings which look nothing like they did back in the 50s. Publix, as a matter of fact, sits almost exactly where the original Baxter's grocery store sat when I first saw it as a child.

Baxter's Bottoms is just one

of the not so pleasant neighborhoods replaced since my youth. I remember other neglected parts of town which are now places to be proud of.

Our city leaders are doing a great job changing the face of Huntsville. As a child I saw the city when it was one mile square and full of places like Baxter's Bottoms. Now you can drive about 14 miles from one side to the other and see nothing but nice places...

When certain areas of our town were beginning to be changed many people said, "It's like putting lipstick on a pig: you can't change the fact that it is still a pig." In my opinion our lovely town has become a new animal. We started with the lipstick and have,

after 60 years, replaced the pig.

I am ever so proud of the work that has been done by our city leaders and is still being done by people like our Mayor Tommy Battle. Thanks Guys!



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1. Pick your cat up and cradle it gently in your arm as if holding a little baby. Position your right forefinger and thumb on either side of cat's mouth and softly apply pressure to its cute cheeks while holding pill in right hand. As cat opens mouth, pop pill right in there. Allow cat to close mouth and quickly swallow.

2. Retrieve pill from floor and cat from behind bed. Cradle cat gently but firmly in left arm and repeat process.

3. Retrieve cat from under sofa, and throw soggy pill away.

4. Take new pill from wrap, cradle cat in left arm holding rear paws tightly with your left hand. Force jaws open firmly and push pill to back of mouth with right forefinger. Hold mouth shut for count of ten and gently stroke neck to push pill down, speaking reassuringly to your mischievous darling.

5. Retrieve pill from goldfish bowl and cat from top of wardrobe. Call spouse from Alabama football game he's watching.

6. Kneel on floor with cat wedged firmly between knees, holding front and rear paws. Ignore low growls emitted by cat. Get your spouse to hold the cat's head firmly with one hand while forcing popsicle stick into mouth. Drop pill down stick and rub cat's throat vigorously.

7. Retrieve cat from curtain rail, get another pill from foil wrap. Make note to buy more pills and to get curtain repaired.

8. Wrap cat in large towel and get spouse to lie on cat with its head just visible from below spouse's armpit. Put pill in at end of drinking straw and with cat's mouth open, blow pill into mouth with a small puff of air.

9. Call the fire department to get cat out of tree across the street. Apologize to neighbor who crashed into the fence while trying to avoid hitting the cat. Take last pill from foil wrap.

10. Tie cat's front paws to rear paws with panty hose and bind tightly to leg of dining room

table. Find heavy-duty pruning gloves in shed. Force cat's mouth open with small tool, push pill into mouth followed by large piece of filet steak. Hold head vertically and pour 1/2 pint of water down throat to wash pill down.

11. Get spouse to drive you to the emergency room; sit quietly while the doctor stitches fingers and forearms and removes pill remnants from right eye. Stop by furniture store on way home to order new table. Place order for curtain repair.

12. Call vet to schedule a house call.

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Heard On the Street

by **Cathey Carney**



We had Sooo many answers to the question we ran in last month's column: what was the name of the motel and club that was located on the land where the north Kmart was built. It was first the Sharon Motel but then it was the famous Diplomat Inn! Many of us remember the bands & parties of those days. Thanks to all who called including **Rosemary Webb, Lance George and Eddie Wilson** (who got the info from **Jeriel Stephens** who started several nightclubs and businesses in Huntsville over the years).

Spencer Thompson was the sharp-eyed gent who was the first caller to identify the little girl in the May photo of the month. She was **Joy McKee**, who heads up the Green Team and does an amazing job. Spencer is a retired Chaplain and Huntsville Fire Department admin supervisor.

An out of town lady found the hidden rose in the May issue and it was on p. 24 in the Woody Anderson ad. I think I hid it pretty well but still had tons of phone calls. **Rita Evans** lives in Simpsonville, SC and loves to visit with her daughter **Sharon** who still lives in Huntsville with her family.

I got a fortune cookie after eating out recently and the advice in that cookie was right on: "The

wise thing to do is to always prepare for the unexpected." Good advice for everyone.

Rebekkah Keith McKinney, divorce attorney who works at Watson McKinney LLP, was recently named one of the Top Twenty-Five Women Lawyers in Alabama and one to watch. Congratulations and well-deserved.

Dink Taylor, owner of Fleet Street with wife **Suzanne**, turns 50 on June 12. Many know him from the work he does with Huntsville track events and Cotton Row Run through downtown. 50 is so young these days! Happy Birthday Dink! And thanks to **John Bzdell Sr.** for letting us know.

Jane Eller can't wait to meet her new grandson! He's due to arrive the first of September and her daughter **Susan Davis** will be treated to a baby shower by her Mom. Jane works at BB&T Bank as the Branch Banker and is always great to work with. Both Jane's family and Susan's family live in Hazel Green.

A lady whom many people loved dearly passed away in mid-May. **Lynne Swanson** was a member of an old and presti-

gious Alabama family and was totally involved in helping others through civic groups. She loved Huntsville and was a long time member of The Church of the Nativity downtown. There were so many groups she devoted her time to. Lynne is survived by her daughter **Susan Fortner (Mark)**, grandchildren **Frederick Fortner** and **Frances Fortner** and her former husband, **Charles P. Swanson**. This kind, funny and loving lady will be remembered always.

John D. Brown worked with hundreds of Thiokol Corp. employees others over the years here in Huntsville over 40 years ago. My dad worked with him too - he was **Chuck Owens**. John lives in Madison now and is retired, but his son **Mike Brown** and Mike's wife **Kay** want to send special love to their Dad - he's the best!

Charlie Swanson wrote us with a correction. He said that in a recent story we stated that Henry Ford's first production car was the Model A in 1903. Charlie said Ford's first was the Model T, built in 1908 to 1927 with a total of over 15 million cars. The Model A was built from 1927 to 1931 for a total of over 4 million cars. And Charlie owns a 1931 Ford Model

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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A roadster. Thanks for setting us straight!

Bill and Rosemary Leatherwood are celebrating their 38th wedding anniversary June 1. They also want to wish their son-in-law **Allen Woods** a Happy Birthday on June 6. Rosemary's sister **Lynn Green** aka Mrs. Sunshine has a June 14 birthday, and her sister **Dorothy Branche** will be celebrating her big day June 8.

Sherri Williams (past owner of Pleasures) has a new baby - a 2011 Maserati! You go girl!

Remember we recently had the request for the original **Thomas BBQ** spicy BBQ sauce that everyone loved til they went out of business? Well I heard from **Donnie Morton** who got it from one of the cooks there and here it is: (Measurements depend on how much you want to make): 1 lb. butter, salt, lots of black and red pepper. Put this in a pot filled half with water and bring to a boil. Then fill the rest of the pot with dark distilled vinegar. Continue cooking til it gets to the consistency you want (the more you cook it down the thicker it'll get.)

Glenn Ross was a faithful Golden K Kiwanian for many years. He was a military vet, then worked for the government for 33 years. He was a dedicated husband and dad, and passed away in early May. He leaves daughter **Glenda Kilgore (Rev. Daniel Kilgore); Candace Wingo (Larry) and Melany Guzzo (Mark)**. He was precious to his grand and great-grand kids, as well as the

many family & friends he leaves.

When **Jay Leno** was here for his visit to Huntsville, people who went to his show said it was great. But when he donated \$10,000 to **Huntsville Hospital** and then visited with several patients, he took everyone by surprise. It was totally unexpected and so appreciated. I personally miss him on the NBC Tonight show because I thought he was the best. Thank you, Jay!

Alexis Heflin, who co-wrote the book "Mississippi Whispers" in April 2014 about her husband **Buddy Heflin** who just disappeared mysteriously in 1968 in Jackson, TN., has sold over 3,000 copies to friends and neighbors in Huntsville. Her book has now been picked up by a division of Simon & Schuster. Alexis wants to express her gratitude for the support she has received from our community and for the never-ending generosity of **Darden Heritage of Star Market** in Five Points, where she works. He allows the sale of the book at Star Market.

Many were very sorry to say good-bye to **Betty Dunn Soule**, who passed away at the end of April. She was 87 years old and leaves husband **Levin C. Soule**; children **Linda Soule, Elizabeth Larose (Michael) and Susan Cagna (Thomas)** as well as grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Don't forget the **Hidden Gardens Tour** in Old Town on

June 7, Sunday. You'll LOVE the unique ideas you'll get.

Have a wonderful June and **Happy Father's Day** to all the Dads whom we love so much, even those who are no longer with us. They will always be in our hearts!

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Chicken Parisian

- 6 chicken breasts, boneless and skinless
- 3 t. paprika
- Salt and Pepper
- 1 t. garlic powder
- 1/2 c. dry white wine or Vermouth
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 4-oz. jar mushrooms
- 1 c. sour cream
- 1/4 c. flour

Coat the chicken breasts heavily with a mixture of the paprika, garlic & salt/pepper. Place in crock pot.

Mix remaining ingredients and pour over the chicken. Sprinkle paprika on top. Cook on medium crock pot heat for about 6 hours. This is good with a big salad and leftovers are good too.

Chuck's Baked Chicken

- Chicken breasts
 - Melted butter or margarine
 - Onion powder
 - Garlic powder
 - Salt and pepper to taste
- Wash chicken well, dry with paper towels. Mix spices in with the melted butter and coat the chicken using a basting brush. Bake in pre-heated oven at 325 degrees for an hour and skin is browned.

Zesty Cole Slaw

- 1 c. vegetable oil
- 1 T. chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 T. roasted sesame oil
- 2 T. chopped garlic
- 1-2 t. crushed red pepper
- 1 bag shredded cole slaw
- Chopped cucumber
- Grated carrots

Chopped red pepper

Mix first 5 ingredients well in a covered bowl - give it a few hard shakes to make sure it's mixed well. In a large bowl pour the cole slaw, then add carrots, cucumber and red pepper chopped to taste. Mix dressing into the cole slaw mix, refrigerate for an hour before serving.

Low-Carb Fudge

- 16 oz. cream cheese
- 2 oz. unsweetened chocolate, melted and cooled
- 1/2 c. Splenda sweetener
- 1 t. vanilla
- 1 t. instant coffee
- 1/2 c. chopped pecans or walnuts

Line an 8-inch square baking pan with waxed or parchment paper. In a small mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese,

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the melted and cooled chocolate, sweetener and vanilla til smooth. Stir in the nuts and pour into pan. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

Strawberry Delight

- Washed fresh strawberries
- Heavy cream
- Splenda sugar substitute
- Toasted, slivered almonds

Slice strawberries into a small serving bowl. Pour in whipping cream to taste. Top with sprinkling of Splenda and toasted almonds. Blueberries are good too but the strawberries are best.

Warning - You WILL become addicted to this.

Summer Lemonade

Small container Crystal Light lemonade mix

- 1/2 c. real lemon juice

In a 2-quart container mix the water, Crystal Light and lemon juice. Serve cold with lemon or lime slices. It's also good with some fresh mint sprigs added.

Baked Almond Custard

- 1/2 c. heavy cream
- 2 eggs
- 1 T. Splenda sweetener
- 1/2 t. almond extract
- Pinch nutmeg

In a small bowl beat the eggs til light yellow in color, pour in the Splenda and cream and mix well. Sprinkle on nutmeg and place in microwave.

Cook on 50% power for about 6-7 minutes. A knife should come out clean when inserted near center of custard. Serve chilled with sliced strawberries or cantaloupe on the side if desired.

Jello-Nut Bon-Bons

- 2 c. heavy cream
- 2 small pkg. sugar-free Jello powder, any flavor
- Chopped toasted almonds

Combine all ingredients with electric mixer on low speed til blended. Beat til stiff. Drop in tablespoon-sized mounds on wax paper covered cookie sheet. Freeze til firm. Store lightly covered in the freezer.

Mashed Cauliflower

- 1 head cauliflower, cooked
- 1/2 stick butter
- 4 oz. cream cheese
- Garlic powder, salt & pepper

Mix hot cauliflower with the butter, cream cheese & spices, til of a mashed consistency. This has a really good taste and you can use it in place of carb-filled mashed potatoes. A healthy choice with more fiber!



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Miss Betty and Miss Jenny Brazelton - Saints of Big Cove

by William Sibley

Mary Virginia "Miss Jenny" Brazelton (1874-1960) and Tuletha Elizabeth "Miss Betty" Brazelton (1880-1956) were the daughters of Silas Larkin Anderson Brazelton and Mollie (Schrimsher) Brazelton. The Brazeltons were a pioneering family of Big Cove. The first Brazeltons to arrive in Big Cove were Henry Brazelton (1777-1851) and his wife, Lydia (Ledbetter) Brazelton, the great-grandparents of Miss Betty and Miss Jenny. Henry and Lydia settled in Big Cove in 1808 when that community was a part of the Mississippi Territory. In 1807, a government survey team headed by Thomas Freeman and his assistant, John Clan Grayson, started and completed a survey of Big Cove, which was named by John Grayson, who moved his family to that area in 1808. Mr. Grayson became a settler in 1807 and nobody knows of any settler who lived in Big Cove any earlier than 1807. The Graysons moved into the bunkhouse that had been home to the survey team. That bunkhouse was located on the east side of Old Big Cove Road a few hundred yards north of Terry-Drake Road.

In 1808, several families settled in Big Cove, including the Wrights, Childresses (family lines of this writer), Brazeltons, DeBows, and Peevys.

My mother told me several times that Mrs. Mollie Brazelton died in 1924 and that the entire student body and teachers of Camp Ground School walked to the funeral, which was held at the Brazelton home. Interment was in the King Cemetery, located on Highway 241 (currently



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Only a few residents of Big Cove did not know the Brazeltons and those people were transients and a few sharecroppers. If the residents of Big Cove could have bestowed sainthood on the Brazelton sisters, the vote would have been unanimous. Nobody can recall any negative words about those sisters. All people, young and old, enjoyed visiting Miss Betty and Miss Jenny and hearing them tell about early happenings in Big Cove. They had many visitors, including their cousin, Dr. John Houston Brazelton and his family. Dr. Brazelton was married to Jane Jenkins Sibley, sister of this writer's grandfather. Dr. Brazelton grew up in Berkley on Big Cove's east side, and he practiced medicine in Big Cove and Huntsville. Each trip to Huntsville or Berkley took him past the Brazelton home, so naturally, he stopped to visit his cousins.

The Brazelton sisters told stories about their ancestors and especially about Henry Brazelton, their great-grandfather. When Alabama became a state in 1819, one of the first six voting precincts in Madison County was at the home of Henry Brazelton. About the same time that those voting precincts were started, the Brazelton home also hosted the muster ground rallies and only two such places in Madison County held those events. People from near and far attended these muster day activities where "the justices, constables, and militia groups were elected." Those rallies were held for "the brave boys of New Madison" of which Big Cove was a part.

After Henry Brazelton's home was chosen as a voting precinct, voting results had to be taken to Huntsville, and roads on the south side and east side of Monte Sano Mountain were in bad shape and at times impassable. A committee composed of Henry Brazelton, John Grayson, John Webster and John Fortner was appointed in 1823 to mark out a road by way of Webster's Gap from Big Cove to Huntsville. Those stories written above are some of the things that the Brazelton sisters passed on to the younger generations of people who visited them.

This writer's first recollection of the Brazelton sisters was seeing them at church and Sunday school at Mt. Pleasant (Big Cove) Cumberland Presbyterian Church that was located on Camp Ground Road. I was a pre-schooler at the time, but I remember very well those things that happened when I was a child. Miss Betty was a Sunday school teacher, and my older sister, Ann, was one of her pupils. We had no Sunday school rooms, so the

sanctuary was used by the teachers and when those classes got underway, there seemed to be a constant buzz. Miss Betty had the names of her students tacked to the wall and she used different colored stars to indicate present or absent, always encouraging her pupils to earn

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“present” stars.

At the end of each fiscal year of Sunday school, those people with good attendance were recognized. Always, Miss Betty and Miss Jenny were recognized and so was their brother, Lawrence, and his wife, James Jackson “Miss Jimmie” (Grayson) Brazelton, who also was a Sunday school teacher for many years.

During the time that Miss Betty was Ann’s teacher, the Brazelton sisters invited Ann and Aunt Stella Sibley to spend the night with them, and they accepted the invitation. On a very cold wintry day, Mr. Charlie Taylor (husband of Miss Millie Brazelton, a sister of Miss Betty and Miss Jenny) drove to our house in a large blue car and carried Ann and Aunt Stella to the Brazeltons’ home.

Ann and Aunt Stella reported that they had a feast that night for supper, including iced tea, a rare delicacy in Big Cove at the time. The Brazeltons had no electricity, so they froze ice in pans on their back porch. After stuffing on popcorn, popped in a long-handled popper which had a wire covering, and playing several games, they went to bed. The mattresses and pillows were stuffed with chicken feathers and goose feathers, which came from chickens and geese raised on the Brazelton farm.

During the night, a very heavy snow had fallen, which caused Sunday school and church to cancel services. Ann reported that they had ham and sausages and all kinds of jams and jellies and hot biscuits for breakfast. The ham and sausages were made from farm animals raised on the Brazelton farm and the jams and jellies were made from the fruit orchards on the Brazelton farm. It was a sad time when Ann and Aunt Stella said good-bye to Miss Betty and Miss Jenny.

This writer interviewed several people for this story and each person had some interesting recollections about Miss Betty and Miss Jenny. Dorothy Ann (Cowley) Broad tells about walking up Old Big Cove Road when she was a child and seeing Miss Betty sweeping the church porch and steps and stirring up a cloud of red clay dust. Others who had stories to tell were Betty Jane (Ikard) Finley, Lenora Ann (Miller) Sublett, their great-niece and Bobby Brazelton, their great-nephew.

Betty Jane was a very good friend of Shirley Glynn Miller

and Emily Nell Miller, sisters of Lenora Ann. Betty Jane, Bobby, and Lenora Ann tell about spending the night at the Brazelton home and hearing stories and playing games and eating tea cakes. These people report that the Brazelton sisters always kept tea cakes to serve their visitors. Bobby reports that he could hear noises

Only a true Southerner knows how many turnip greens, fish, collard greens and beans make up a “mess.”



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in the upstairs and attic after he went to bed and that he thought the house was haunted, but he now realizes that he probably was hearing mice.

The Brazelton home was heated by a fireplace and Bobby reports that the house was always warm, but he remembers snow coming through the cracks before melting. Betty Jane, Bobby and Lenora Ann report that two games they always played with the Brazelton sisters were Dominoes and Old Maids. Miss Jenny would say, "How would you like to play Old Maids with two old maids?"

My older brother, James, (also known as Buddy and Sib), has always been a friend of Bobby Brazelton. Buddy recalls that he and Bobby would get a paddle boat when heavy rains caused Big Cove Creek to get out of banks. They would paddle about in the fields, but they were not allowed to paddle in the swift waters of the creek. Buddy says that he and Bobby always ate cookies at the Brazeltons' home.

Children's Day at our church

was an event that we always looked forward to attending each year. The children would present little plays, give recitations, etc. and go outside where lots of food could be found on the tables. Miss Betty and Miss Jenny were always helping the children fill their plates and assuring them, "This is your day."

Lenora Ann and her siblings, Rodney, Gwendolyn, Kenneth, Sophie, Shirley Glynn and Emily Nell, and Bobby Brazelton would make an annual trip to the King burying ground where many of the Brazeltons are buried, and would carry chrysanthemums to decorate the graves. They would carry rakes, shovels and other tools to clean the graves. On their trip, they would pass a hickory grove and fill several sacks and buckets with hickory nuts.

Lenora Ann reports that as a very small child, she would sit in the porch swing with Miss Betty and she would help Lenora Ann with her arithmetic. Lenora Ann reports that she and her siblings always liked to sing at the conclusion of these arith-

metic lessons and Miss Betty would join them. Lenora Ann reports that her Aunt Betty enjoyed that singing, "but the poor thing could never carry a tune."

Although Miss Betty and Miss Jenny raised cotton, corn, chickens, geese, guineas, vegetable gardens and fruit orchards, they were mainly turkey farmers. Each year well-to-do people from Huntsville would come to the Brazelton farm to buy turkeys "on the foot." Miss Betty once showed me a very large scar where she was attacked by a mean turkey.

Bobby Brazelton was always fond of Charlie Taylor, who was married to Bobby's great-aunt, Miss Millie Brazelton. Bobby and Charlie would go through fields and mountains and enjoy seeing lots of wildlife. Bobby

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reports that his Uncle Charlie had been attacked and bitten by a vicious rabid dog and had never had any treatment for that attack. Bobby reports that his father, Wilson, his mother Memory and the Brazelton sisters were always afraid that Charlie might get sick on one of their trips and that none of his kin ever saw any peace until Bobby and Charlie got home. Bobby reports that Charlie did have some spells of sickness and some of his kin thought that those sicknesses might have been related to rabies.

The Brazelton home was "the old home place" and had been a very fine home in earlier years. This writer was in that home many times and always hated to leave when it was time to go home. I recall that a beautiful staircase had a large gourd dipper hanging from the bottom step and that a pump organ was located nearby. In their senior years, the Brazelton sisters were unable to attend church service and my Sunday school teacher, Mrs. Novia Broad, drove us to the Brazeltons' home and conducted class there. One of our class members, Margaret Earle (Buford) Mann, sang "Silent Night" before we left. Some of our class members had not been to the Brazeltons' home before that trip and they were amazed at the antiques that were in the house, especially the spinning wheel.

The Lyle property line joined the Brazelton property line and Lenora Ann said that after each visit to the Brazeltons, when going home, Miss Betty or Miss Jenny would accompany them to the Lyle property and watch them until they turned into their driveway. The Lyles are related to me and we chopped and picked cotton many times on the Lyle property.

One day, Edsel Lyle had taken a load of cotton to the gin and the gin had a "breakdown", causing several farmers to wait a long time before they could get their cotton ginned. We were without water and did not know why Ed had taken so long. My younger sister Sherry and I walked down to the Brazelton home and they drew fresh water from their well and sent a gallon of water to the others in the field. While we were talking to the Brazelton sisters, Miss Betty said, "We had company from Texas Sunday, if you don't believe it." She told us that Rex Walls had been with their company. We knew that Rex was related to the Brazeltons by way of the Schrimshers.

Big Cove's population has always been good people, although occasionally we get some undesirables, but I can never recall hearing unkind words about the Brazelton sisters from anyone. When

I was a student at Big Cove School, we would sing a song that said, "Everybody talking about heaven ain't going there." Those words were not meant to be serious, but everybody in Big Cove agrees unanimously that if anybody ever had gone to heaven, Miss Betty and Miss Jenny are there.







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from 1908 Newspaper

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By and by a peculiar smell greeted his olfactories - a smell of burning woolen cloth - and, as it increased, he began to look about to see if his garments were on fire. He found out that the whole pocket had burned out of his coat and that the fire was spreading.

He grabbed at the burning material hastily, but was so nervous about it that he frightened the horse and the animal bolted. To make matters worse, the lines were not buckled together and one slipped out of his grasp while he was endeavoring to smother the fire with his other hand.

Still worse, the increased speed increased the breeze, which fanned the fire and portions of it dropped down upon his pants, burning through them, and causing him to bounce up and down on the seat as though he were trying to settle down an unusually hearty meal. And there he was, horse running away, line dragging and fire rapidly making the color of his leg rival the hue of his red flannel underclothing.

At last, by dexterous clawing, he managed to smother the fire, then stepped onto the shafts, recovered the line and subdued the horse.

Exceedingly thankful to get out of his trouble with no broken bones, he rode on to the city in a subdued state of mind, and never thought of being profane until, just as he was quietly slipping into a clothing store, with the buffalo robe gathered round him to conceal the deficiency of his wardrobe, he met full in the face two lady friends, who insisted upon his escorting them home.



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A Trip to Pell City

by Gale Nichols

A long time ago Pell City, AL was a place you could go and have dentures made in one day's time.

I was not aware of this until my Mom called me early one Monday morning. She was very upset and sounded strange. She asked me to come over because she needed to go to Pell City to get new dentures.

My three year old son, my Mom and I headed to Pell City. I noticed that my Mom didn't have her teeth in, which was very unusual for her.

We were now at the dental clinic and it was packed with patients waiting for dental work or dentures. We sat down, with my son on one side and my Mom on the other. An elderly gentleman turned to my son and said, "Well, young fellow, are you here to get you some teeth?"

My child was not the bashful type and I saw a look of strong apprehension on my Mom's face.

My three year old said, "My Ninny (my Mom) went out Saturday night and she got real sick. Her teeth fell out and she flushed them down the 'mode. And we looked but we couldn't find them!"

Well as you could imagine all eyes were on my Mom and if there was a hole in the middle of that waiting room she would have jumped right in. However my son was very proud, as he had just told the truth.

People were trying their best not to burst out laughing. But my son thought he had made a new elderly friend and was having fun.

Everyone should laugh at least once a day!



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FROM THE GRAVE

by Don Broome

I can't tell you what a surprise it was to find it. My mother asked me to settle her estate and about a year after her passing, her house finally sold and closed. The new owner asked me if I had the owner's manuals for the appliances and such and I went to my garage where I kept my mother's old file cabinet. Flipping through the papers and 'Junk' I moved an old yellow legal pad. Everyone has one laying around. It's what you use if you want to jot something down that will be thrown away soon.

For some reason I looked a little closer and saw the title of a story.

It said "What I remember about my Early Childhood, by Florence Margret Holiday Broome. I was born April 16, 1916, a Monday....."

I sat there stunned as I read the 11 pages written by my mother. She had talked often about her being raised in abandoned houses in Mississippi but in little bits and pieces, not as a narrative.

I learned that day that my mother was born on a raft on the White River, 18 miles down river from Clarendon, Ark. My Grandfather was a fisherman and he had made a raft out of logs. At 6 weeks old, they drifted down to the Mississippi River and tied up at the mouth of the Big Black River between Vicksburg and Port Gibson, Mississippi.

I cried that day, her story putting together a lifetime of hearing little pieces of it. I typed it up and sent a copy to all of my relatives and it meant a lot to all of us.

I write this to urge all of you reading this to consider writing your story. Don't worry that it's not perfect, it will mean the same, believe me. If it would be easier, you could tape or film it, nowadays that is pretty easy.

"Just think, if it weren't for marriage, men would grow up thinking they had no faults at all."

Mike Self, Huntsville

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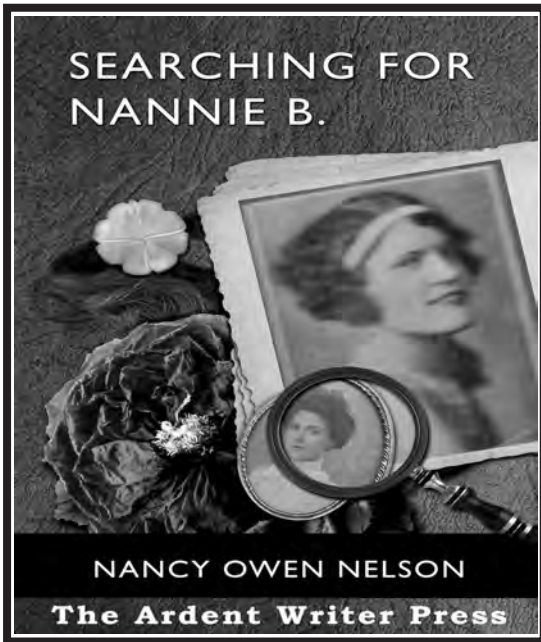
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**Excerpt from
"Searching for Nannie B."
by Nancy Owen Nelson**

I was twelve years old when I found out that my maternal grandmother died in childbirth.

"Nancy." We are alone in the living room of our apartment in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, in mid-afternoon. My mother's voice is subdued, as if she's afraid to speak, or as if she can't breathe. She draws my name out, both syllables. She has not lost her southern accent, despite our many moves outside the South.

"My mother died when I was born. Big Mama is not your real grandmother."

I don't understand this at all. I think about how Big Mama always hugs me to her fulsome chest, pounds me between my skinny shoulder blades when we arrive from our latest Army assignment. She leaves me almost gasping for breath afterward.

How could she not be my grandmother? My mother speaks again.

"I have my mother's name, Nannie B. I never knew her. She died an hour after I was born. I heard only stories from some of her kin. I can

tell you stories about her." My attention shifts. I'm anxious to leave this sad room, where my mother is telling me these sad things.

I don't want to know more right now. I just want things to be like they were before this afternoon, when Big Mama was my grandmother, when Mom wasn't

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telling me sad things.

I will not think very much about Nannie B. Russell until over fifty years later, after my mother has been dead for ten years.

The mystery of my grandmother has haunted me since my mother's death in 2001. I want to know about Nannie B. Russell. I want to know why no one would speak of her, why no one helped the little Nannie B. Chandler understand that she was not responsible for her mother's death. I want to know why the only record I can find is the certificate issued by the State of Alabama, Madison County, for the marriage of R. E. Chandler to Nannie B. Russell, July 26, 1904. And why the State of Alabama agencies can find nothing else: no death certificate, no obituary and no burial site.

Where is the cemetery where my mother stood more than 100 years ago? Is the gravestone covered with grass and weeds, dirt washed over it by heavy rains?

I want to find the grave, but I think that everyone who might know where it is must be dead.

Most of all, I want to understand what this legacy of silence and guilt has meant for my mother, and for me.

For as long as I can remember, I've wanted to rescue my mother from invisibility, from having only the roots of her father's line, the Chandlers, which she will share with six siblings. I've wanted to rescue her from a feeling that she belonged nowhere.

I didn't realize that I also felt as if I belonged nowhere.

In my own life as a military child, I always looked to the Alabama of my grandparents as my home. Papa and Mama Steve Nelson lived their whole lives there until their deaths in the early 1960s. Big Mama (Nannie Dixie) Chandler, my step-grandmother,

died in the 1970s. Robert Chandler died before I was born.

I seem to have inherited my mother's sense of not belonging. Maybe finding Nannie B. Russell's grave will answer some of my questions about belonging.

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MY FRIEND JACK

by Jerry Keel

My story begins at my place of employment many, many years ago. I looked up from the typesetting machine I was operating at the Huntsville Times to see my boss approaching with a man I had never seen before. The stranger was a tall, slim, nice-looking man. He was introduced to me and several of my co-workers as a new hire who would also be running a typesetting machine. As you know any new person really gets checked out by the people who will be working with him.

I could tell at first glance that this man probably came from a background similar to mine. He had the calloused hands of someone used to hard work. His eyes seemed to penetrate my mind and left the impression that he somehow knew we were kindred spirits and that we would be able to get along and be friends.

I didn't realize it at the time but that was the beginning of a long friendship that would last for 50+ years. We never know when God will step in and start one of His magical, wonderful works.

Jack, he was called. After the round of introductions was over the boss asked me to show Jack around and tell him how we went about doing our jobs. Jack had a ready smile with a hint of mischief hidden in his eyes. That mischief soon made its way into our everyday lives at work. He became a favorite of most all the Times employees. His quick laughter, sometimes at his own expense, endeared him to all who came to know him.

Jack was a character. That's the only way you could describe him. He would tell stuff on himself that would have the whole bunch roaring with laughter. Our afternoon break in the coffee shop at the Times soon became a gathering spot



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Mahatma Gandhi

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for people from all departments. From top executives to the lowest employee, everyone enjoyed a few minutes with Jack and some of his tall tales. The remarkable thing was that almost all of his tales were true.

Gibson's Barbecue on South Parkway was our favorite place to eat. When we got our food the first thing Jack would do was grab the Tabasco Sauce bottle and drench his barbecue or stew or whatever he had for lunch. As he ate, drops of perspiration would form on his top lip. He sure did enjoy eating. He would smack his lips and comment on how good the food was. I always told him that after two or three bites he was unable to taste anything because of the hot, hot sauce he put on his food.

Our two families soon became close friends. We would take turns going to each other's house to visit and play cards. The Rook game was our choice of games to play. Jack and I would always win and the women would become furious. After the wives bad-mouthed us a little everything was alright and we would call it a night and return to our respective homes. We always looked forward to the camaraderie we shared.


After a few years the pressures of trying to raise our families soon cut into our visiting times. Jack became involved in truck-farming. He grew a variety of produce items and began selling them on his off-days and in the afternoons after work. He also sold many items to the employees at the Times.

As our lives began to slow down we re-established some of the visiting we had enjoyed before but not to the same extent. By this time all the children were grown and it just didn't seem the same anymore. Jack and his wife had become kind of worn out from all the years of hard work. My wife also began to feel the effects of the years. She developed Parkinson's Disease which robbed her of the ability to do just about anything.


I am the only one left of our little bunch. I miss the old times we all shared but the memories will never be gone. Sometimes I wonder why I was left. Often things happen that are difficult to understand but we just have to keep on keeping on until the end. Friendship is so important in this

life. There is nothing more special than a good, true friend.

I would like to encourage all who happen to read this to let your friends know just how important they are and how much you appreciate them. It will bring joy to them and to you as well.



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Resuscitate “Lucky Charm”? Doggone Right!

Huntsville firefighter Bob Rouse had no experience in mouth-to-snout resuscitation before that Sunday in January, 1990 but he thought it was worth a try. The fire that brought Rouse and Engine Company 8 to Bide-a-Wee Drive was out. Glenda Barnett and her 10 year-old son, Brandon, had escaped the flames without injury. Everyone was safe - or so they thought.

"I was just going through and opening up windows, and there he was, lying in the middle of the kitchen," said firefighter Sterling Parsons. "He" was Lucky Charm, the Barnett's 7 year-old Chihuahua. The dog had left the burning building, but the cold-natured, short-haired pooch found the early afternoon air too chilly and went back inside. He had passed out from inhaling the smoke.

Parsons rescued Lucky Charm from the building and brought him outside. "He didn't have too much time left in there," said Rouse, who spent about five minutes breathing for Lucky before the dog came to. "You've got to do something. I couldn't just let him die," said Rouse. "You just hold the mouth shut and breathe through its nose - pretty much like you do for a baby." "This is my baby," said Glenda Barnett, who wrapped the front of her flannel shirt around Lucky Charm as he shivered pitifully and nestled close to her.

Perhaps most upset by Lucky Charm's brush with death and the blaze that displaced the family was young Brandon. He said he accidentally started the

fire while playing with a lighter. "I've given spankings for it before," said Glenda Barnett, shaking her head. "He seems to have to learn the hard way."

Brandon stood tearfully in front of his mother, Assistant Fire Marshal M. L. Jones and the charred home where his dog almost died. "I want you to know how serious it is what you did today," admonished Jones, the son of a local preacher and someone who knows how to give a good talking-to. "You're in trouble. I'm not through with you yet."

Since the fire, Brandon has met and talked with Jones at the fire station, and gone through a two-month campaign to convince Jones that he has learned his lesson. Brandon was required to write weekly letters to Jones and also to watch videos, narrated by a cartoon character, that show fire damage. "That way, he'll have to think about what he did for a couple of months," Jones said, explaining the fire department's program for educating children who play with fire.

Incidentally, the fire had destroyed just about everything, but fortunately the Barnetts had insurance.

"I'm just so glad we're all alive," said Glenda Barnett.

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EFFECTIVE TREATMENT FOR VARICOSE VEINS

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

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

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

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

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

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SHORT & SWEET

MEMORIES FROM OUR READERS

My Great-Great-Grandfather Occupied North Alabama

by Kelsey Jordan

I come from a long line of Northern roots, but one of my ancestors came to North Alabama during the 1860s. My great-great-grandfather Elias McKinney was born in 1842 in Ohio to Henry McKinney and Sarah Lewis. He enlisted in the Union Army at the age of 28 on October 14, 1861 for a period of 3 years. He was assigned to the Ohio Infantry, 46th Regiment Company B as Private.

During his service to the Union Army, Elias spent most of his time on the Franklin-Nashville Railroad Campaign. Elias fought and was wounded on April 6, 1862 at the Battle of Shiloh, he recovered and returned to duty in time to take part in the Siege of Corinth, Mississippi on April 30th of the same year. From Mississippi his regiment traveled into North Alabama, they passed through Florence, spent some time in Decatur and they traveled through Huntsville. They finally settled in Paint Rock, Alabama in October of 1862.

In Paint Rock a group of Confederate guerrilla fighters attacked the Union troops and ended with 9 of their own dead and others wounded. From December 1862 until May 1863 it is believed Elias was stationed in Scottsboro, Alabama along a main railroad and trade route. Next, they headed up and through southern Tennessee.

May through July 1863 Elias was stationed in Knoxville, Tennessee. From Knoxville they traveled towards Georgia to seize Atlanta. On their way to capture Atlanta they passed through Mis-

sion Ridge, Dallas, Kennesaw Mountain, Noonday Creek and finally arrived in Atlanta in July 1864.

On May 29th, 1864 on their way to Atlanta they fought in Dallas, Georgia where Elias was wounded in the back. What type of wound it was is unknown. Elias stayed in the Georgia/Tennessee area until his enlistment period was terminated in Chattanooga, Tennessee on October 26, 1864. During his service he was wounded twice; once at Shiloh and another time at an unknown

battle in Georgia.

After he was mustered out of the Union Army he returned to Ohio, he married Miss Rachel McCandless in 1865 but by 1872 he was remarried, it is unknown what happened with his first marriage. On June 12th, 1872 Elias married Miss Matilda Ann Johnson. In October 1877 my great grandfather, Francis Marion McKinney was born; he was followed by siblings Minnie Ann (1878), Myrtle G. (1882), and Alice whose birth year is unknown. Elias McKinney passed on April 28th, 1915 in Ohio.

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When I Met Tom Carney

by Ricky Saint

About 15 years ago my father was in Huntsville Hospital waiting to have open heart surgery and was wanting something to do to keep his mind off of the impending surgery so I thought I would get him something to read.

I found a copy of Old Huntsville in the waiting room and carried it and some regular magazines back to his room. He really enjoyed it so much that I tried to find more copies for him but they only had that one.

I found the publishers address and decided to locate them for back copies. I drove to the address in the Old Town area and came to this historical house and knocked on the door. A man came to the door and asked if he could help me so I told him about my father and why I was there.

He took me around the house to a two-story garage and into the office upstairs which was the Old Huntsville headquarters. He not only gave me a large stack of old copies but a copy of a book he had written and he signed it to my father free. Dad enjoyed every one of them so I got him a subscription.

Dad's been gone a long time now but every time I see a copy of Old Huntsville I think about my father and the kind man who helped make his days in the hospital a little better. Thank you Old Huntsville.

Charlie Cowart, my Dad

by Donna Schrader

Thank you for giving me the chance to write just a bit about my Dad, Charlie Cowart. He was the oldest used car salesman in Huntsville (Charlie's Used Cars on Governors Drive).

But what I remember about him was told to me when my sisters were born - the first triplets in Huntsville Hospital.

The nurses told Daddy to go have breakfast, that it would be a while. So he came back there was

so much excitement about some triplets being born and he found out they were his!

I was 22 months old when they arrived: Lana, Dana and Nana Cowart - 11/15/49.

In Remembrance: You were our first Grandchild. We were so proud and happy to be Grandparents. But, you left us too soon. We will always remember and love you and be thankful for the few years we had with you.

Anon.



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According to the doggie doctor, I just had my 4th birthday in April. I weigh 16 lbs. My family did not look for me but the Ark looked for my family. No one claimed me so I am looking for a loving new family. Could you find room in your heart and home for me? Will you come to the Ark and ask to see Simon? That's me.

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CITY NEWS IN 1923

- An old gentleman by the name of Johnson was run over by his own wagon out on Meridian Pike Thursday afternoon. It seems from reports that Mr. Johnson was walking beside his wagon when an automobile passed and frightened the team of mules causing them to take a dash, knocking the old man down and the wagon running over him. He was considerably bruised and was picked up by a passing automobile and brought to the city hospital where his wounds were dressed and he went on home.

- The Cantrell-Lewter Drug Co. is now giving with each cash purchase at their drug store a coupon which entitles the holder to a chance on five

dollars and a box of Whitney's candy. The drawing is held every Saturday night at 9 o'clock. The money was drawn by J. M. Bradford and the candy by Harry Hammons of the Grand Theatre last night.

- A large barn belonging to W. M. Jordan at Jordan's Park was totally destroyed by fire yesterday together with a large amount of hay and other food stuff and two large fine hogs. The barn was a large and costly one and the loss is very large. The fire occurred between 7 and 8 o'clock and the origin is not known.

- A very perplexing problem faced Mayor Adams this morning in city court when a little 15 year old Negro girl by the name of Louise Henley was arraigned before him on a charge of stealing some clothing from Mrs. Wilson on Adams Avenue. The girl admitted taking the clothing and said that she

was living with Rose Edwards. It seems that her mother, who lives on Cruse Alley, has cast the girl aside and does not take any interest in her whatsoever. The mayor fined the girl \$10 and stated that he was sorry there was no place provided to send Negro girls to and that he regretted that he had to put children in the prison.

The goods were valued at something near \$100 according to Mrs. Wilson, who appeared in court and said that she felt that she should be paid something as the clothing could only now be sold as second hand stuff. The mayor agreed but said that he could not do anything for her along this line and that she would have to take that matter up with the girl.

This is the fifth young Negro arrested this year with no home or family to help them. It is hard to blame a child who simply needs clothing.



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Tweetie's Pet Trivia Cat Tales



"Not sure I believe all this good stuff about cats, but whatever."

Tweetie

- A pet cat in China adopted a rat which she nursed alongside her four kittens. Sun Shujun, of Yantai City, said the rat had been living with her cat since the kittens were born.

- Cats and dogs did the digging at a ground breaking ceremony to start improvements at the Humane Society's Boulder, Colorado animal shelter.

- An intruder was forced to flee a house in Malaysia after the owner was alerted to his presence by her cat. The cat had seen the man crouching on wooden roof beams and raised the alarm by staring at her owner, then the roof, three times.

- A starving cat in Savannah survived on water for a month after being locked in an empty house. It had survived by drinking water from a leaking tap. He was rescued by an RSPCA inspector who broke into the boarded-up house.

- A Canadian cat which hitched a lift on a truck ended up 600 miles from home. The driver turned Petey over to Humane Society members who managed to track down his owners and later flew him home.

- A motorist found a cat frozen inside a block of ice. Roberta Johnson was driving by a large ice chunk on a road in Minnesota when she spotted a feline face inside. Thinking it was dead, she was startled to hear a meow. She apparently took the cat to a vet and the only damage the cat suffered was frostbitten ears. She named him Car Cat and took him home with her to live.

- Simba, seven months old, went out as usual one night, but didn't return. A month later, his owners received a phone call from a pub 200 miles away - Simba had just walked in. It was believed he had climbed into the engine of a car and got out when the car stopped.

- A cat in Germany survived for 26 days trapped between two walls without food or water. Anthony lost five and a half pounds but apart from the weight loss is only suffering from dehydration. How he was trapped and why it took so long for him to be rescued is unknown.

- A cat saved her owners from an arsonist-set blaze at their home in Rochdale, Greater Manchester. Jessie jumped up and down on owner Margaret Hayward's bed to wake her. A spokesman said: "There is no doubt they were saved by the cat because there was no smoke alarm and they were all sleeping."

- A UK kitten survived a 300-mile journey stuck under the hood of a car. The driver of the car heard the the 10 week-old grey tabby meowing after he had driven from York to Carlisle and back, via Manchester.

- A 60 foot hydraulic crane had to be called in to rescue a cat in California which had spent 11 days at the top of a tree, ignoring all efforts to lure her down to earth. A three-man crew used the crane's bucket to pluck the black and white cat from the top of the 70 foot tree.

- A kitten had the drive of her life when a nap in the warmth of a car engine landed her 400 miles from home. The six-month-old black and white cat, who has been named Megan, was found curled up next to the engine of the Peugeot 406 by its new owner. Apart from being slightly shocked, the kitten did not seem harmed by the journey.

- A Chinese man says his cat can clearly pronounce his own name. Mr. Sun, from Beijing, says two-year-old Agui says his name when he gets frightened. The Fangzhuang Pet Hospital has filmed Agui saying his name when Mr. Sun pretended to give him a bath. A hospital spokesman said repeatedly hearing his own name would have made an impression on Agui which comes out under stress.

- A cat and a mouse have become unlikely best friends in China. The City Evening News said the mouse played with the cat continually, climbing onto its back and sitting on its head, while owner Chen was being interviewed.

- Edith Schonberg, 77, from Rosdorf in Schleswig Holstein, Germany, mailed a birthday parcel without noticing her Felix had crawled inside for a catnap. The mistake was spotted when a postman at the central sorting office realized there was an animal inside the parcel and called police.

- A cat set up home in a bird's nest in Atlanta. The cat only leaves the cherry tree to ask for food at Wendy Hobbs' backdoor, then climbs back up the tree to tend to her offspring.

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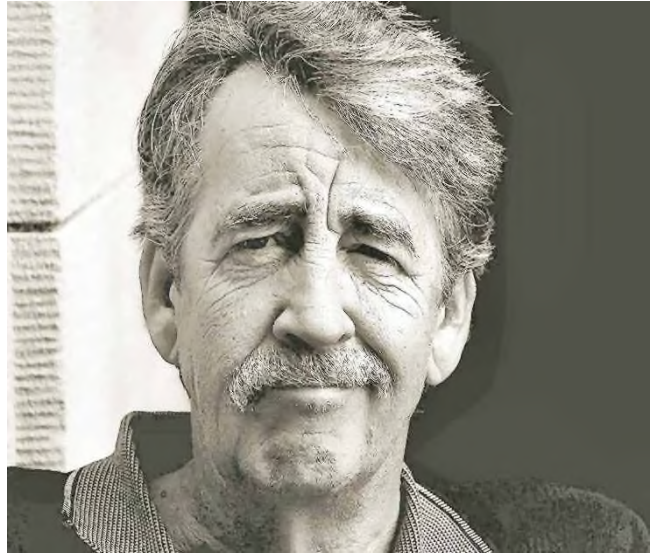
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From the Desk of Tom Carney

THE GHOST OF THE GOLDEN GHETTO

by Tom Carney (1993, republished 2015)



Drive down Whitesburg until you come to Drake Avenue. Look over at the corner of the intersection and you will see a brick wall surrounding a group of homes. This development, with its stately antebellum home as a centerpiece, would be just another group of homes to the average passerby if it were not for the ghostly legend lurking within its walls.

Cedarhurst was built in 1825 by Stephen S. Ewing, who had become wealthy by speculating in land in the early days of Huntsville. The home became noted for its architectural beauty and the numerous social affairs held by Stephen and his wife, Mary. In 1837, Sally Carter, the sister of Mary, visited Cedarhurst with the intention of spending the summer. Within days she became sick and a short while later died. She was buried in a cemetery located only a few steps from the home. According to legend, Mary was stricken with grief over her sister's death and sent to Nashville for an appropriate marker to place at the head of the grave. The inscription on the tombstone read:

"My flesh shall slumber in the ground, Till the last trumpet's joyful sound.

Then burst the chains with sweet surprise,

And in my savior's image rise."

Two years later, in 1839, the household slaves told of hearing an eerie sound

late in the night.

"The sound was almost musical," they said, "almost like a trumpet."

The slaves were frightened and locked themselves in their cabins, anxiously waiting for daylight to come.

The next morning, the slaves told Ewing of the strange, frightening sounds they had heard during the night. Ewing, being a practical man, quickly dismissed the slaves and sent them about their chores. Later that morning, as he was walking by Sally's grave, he stopped and idly picked a few stray weeds that were growing around the tombstone. As he bent over to grasp the weeds, he froze, his attention riveted to a set of small, ladylike footprints in the heavy morning dew. There were only two footprints, not going

anywhere and not coming from anywhere. Just two footprints in the middle of the grave...

Ewing sold the house in 1865 and moved to Mississippi. By then, there were few people left who could remember Sally Carter, but almost everyone could tell stories of her ghost. Tales were told of people walking past her grave on a dark moonlit night and hearing the sounds of chains rattling and trumpets sounding. But, of course, any educated person in town could tell you that it was ... just tales.

In 1919, J. D. Thornton bought the house. That same year, in the fall, Mr. Thornton's nephew was

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visiting when a terrible storm took place one night. The next morning, when the family came down to breakfast, they discovered the nephew sitting on the front porch, pale and trembling.

"Sally appeared to me last night," he said in a quivering voice. "She said her tombstone had fallen over and asked me to put it back up."

The other members of the family tried hard to control their laughter, and, in an effort to humor him, followed him to the graveyard.

Sally's tombstone had fallen over. The nephew, with a look of horror on his face, turned and ran back to the house. The same morning, he packed his clothes and made arrangements to return to Dothan, his home. He never visited Huntsville again.

The rest of the family, out of shock and fear, left the tombstone where it had fallen.

About this time other strange and unexplained things began to happen in the house. Ashtrays would rise from a table and fly across the room. Overnight guests would hear the sound of footsteps in their room but upon investigating, the room would be found empty.

In the late 1970s, Cedarhurst was sold to a company that had plans to develop it as an exclusive complex. Brick walls began going up and security guards manned the gates. Lavish new homes were built and the old home was converted to a club house for the residents.

It seemed as if, finally, Sally was at rest in a home as magnificent as the one she had once known.

There was just one small problem. No development company wants to buy a piece of valuable property with a grave right in the middle of it. The grave had to go.

A plot in another cemetery was bought, disinterment permits were acquired; men and machinery were hired. The first grave, that of Sally's sister, Mary, was uncov-

ered and her remains moved with no trouble. What they discovered when Sally's grave was opened would leave everyone speechless, with no explanation.

The grave was opened and the vault was found to be intact, with no sign of damage. But when the vault was opened, Sally's body was not there. It had disappeared.

Workmen later said they dug an area of thirty to forty feet around the grave and it would have been impossible not to have found any signs of the body if it was there.

In 1985, the home was selected to be used as a Decorators Show House. Every year in Huntsville, decorators would select a home to showcase their talents, and Cedarhurst, with its prime location and rich history, seemed a logical choice.

A local interior decorating firm was selected to decorate Sally's bedroom. A color scheme of teal blue and peach was used with bright fabrics for wall coverings. Crocheted bed coverings and period antiques helped to give the room a personal touch.

It was a room that anyone would have been happy with.

Well, almost anyone.

Several weeks after the Decorators Show opened, strange, mysterious things began to happen. A vase of flowers would be overturned, a picture on the wall would be crooked. Small things, just enough to make the ladies laugh and tease one another about the ghost.

What happened next can best be described by an article that appeared in the

Huntsville Times newspaper on May 19, 1985. "One night, the house was inspected before closing and all was found to be in order for the next morning's visitors. The door was locked and a security guard was on duty. No one entered Cedarhurst that night."

"The next morning, when the house was opened, Sally Carter's bedroom looked like it had been the scene of a teenager's tantrum. The antique diary was found pitched on the floor and artificial flowers strewn about. Most apparent of the disturbances was the disarray of the bed coverings."

No explanation has ever been found.

Talk of Sally's ghost has died down in the past few years. What was once her grave is now hidden from public view and strangers are discouraged from entering the gated complex.

So now, a hundred and seventy-eight years after her death, Sally Carter, her ghost hemmed in by tall brick walls, has entered Huntsville's folklore as, "The Ghost of the Golden Ghetto."

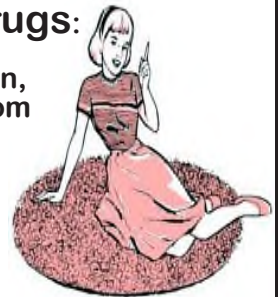
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Jimmy O'Rear, a Friend from Long Ago

by Malcolm W. Miller

Back during the late thirties and early forties when I was a young man, all across the country small local radio stations began springing on the scene and Huntsville, Alabama was no exception. One of the very first stations in Huntsville was WBHP. This was something new for most of the station owners and managers and most were new on the job. They did not have network ties and they had to rely heavily on local programming. This was very difficult back then because they did not have modern taping equipment that the stations rely so heavily on today. Actually there has been so much improvement in the radio stations since that time that you can hardly compare the two.

One of the most popular programs to come out of this era was the live local radio show. Most of these programs were what everyone then called "hill billy" music. As I look back on those times today I realize this was the real beginning of what is now called modern country and blue grass music. The good ole country boys who had never played for anything bigger than a community square dance or a school program suddenly were before a live "mike" singing and

playing their hearts' out for thousands of listeners.

For many years as a young boy, from the time we got our first battery powered Philco radio, I was one of their biggest fans. I would rush from the cotton field as fast as I could at dinner time on Saturdays; because that was the day most of these shows were broadcast.

I remember one of my very favorite entertainers of that era was Jimmy O'Rear. He had a show known as "Jimmy O'Rear and His Radio Gang".

This program inspired me as much as anything to try to be an entertainer myself. It was many, many

years after I heard the show for the first time that I actually stood before a live "mike" and sang for the first time on Jimmy's program.

Friends, you just cannot imagine the thrill that I experienced standing there singing "Many Tears Ago." I thought I had died and gone to heaven that day and I will never forget the experience as long as I live. Later on I sang on other live radio shows in Huntsville; however the first time was the most exciting for a young man.

I need to mention a few things about the dedication



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Groucho Marx

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of Jimmy O'Rear to his radio program. He played for approximately eighteen years. Also during this time he worked full time in the old Lincoln Cotton Mill, played for school programs in North Alabama and Tennessee and played on other radio stations as well. He was as dedicated to making all his personal appearances at the various school programs and barbecues as he was to his radio show. Basically he was one hundred percent dedicated to his music and his many fans. They were well aware of that dedication and loved him and his entertainment.

After I played on his radio show I began to travel with Jimmy and his band to his various performances. One time I was playing with his show and we were going to play at Skyline School in Jackson County. The car broke down, and not to be stopped, Jimmy hired a cab to take us there. This cab cost him much more than we had ever gotten for playing any show; however he was determined to not let his public down.

Another time we went to play a show at Estill Fork School. According to the old saying back then, this school was about as far back in the mountains as you could drive a nail. When we arrived we found a two room school house with a very small stage in the corner. There were no electric outlets to plug in the equipment; however Jimmy went ahead with the show by light of a coal oil lamp. There were around twenty people in the two room school, however outside was another seventy-five or so clamoring just to hear the music and many taking turns looking in the windows.

I cannot count the times I performed with Jimmy and his band, but they all very exciting and memorable.

People would probably say Jimmy O'Rear never really made the "big time". However I know this much, he brought joy to the hearts of many, many folks during some hard years when there just wasn't a whole lot to cheer about.

"I'm just afraid the Volkswagen car is going to open the door to a whole lot of foreign business."

Heard in 1957

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Golden K Kiwanis of Huntsville, Alabama

MR. GUY MILFORD

by *Charlie Lyle*

The time was about September, 1946. The war had ended over a year ago. People in the Armed Services were coming home. Some had been high school students and some were former teachers. Two of these teachers were Huntsville High School teachers, Guy Milford and Joe Davis.

Most people knew who Joe Davis was. He of course was our mayor and before that a senior high home-room teacher. Joe and Guy were good friends.

Well it was my very first day of high school as

a freshman and I was some what apprehensive. Here I was in economic class under Mr. Guy Milford. All I knew about him was that he was back home from the military and his father, Guy Milford Sr. was a staunch Baptist Minister. He stood just outside the door with an angry look on his face.

Finally he came into the room and slammed a book on his desk and exclaimed, "I hate freshmen!" Mr. Milford looked a lot like Dick Tracey but no one told him that to his face, of course. That would be very unwise.

He next said this, "Now down in headquarters (main office) they have their own rules and regulations but they are not mine. They don't know what my rules

and regulations are and won't know what they are when I take a guilty party to the gym and back."

"My next rule or regulation is that I will assign page numbers in your book to read and study. The assignment today is pages eight through ten. What is the assignment, Walker?"

Each and every day he assigned a lesson. He always said "What is the lesson, Walker?" (Elick Walker). The last I heard about Walker, he was a M.D. in Scottsboro.

At the beginning of the year, students dreaded going to Mr. Milford's class, but the very next year, my sophomore year, he was voted the favorite high school teacher, and Joe Davis won it the next year.

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THE WATERCRESS CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

Almost lost and forgotten in our city's history is the fact that Huntsville at one time claimed the crown as "The Watercress Capital of the World."

Watercress cultivation began in New Market in 1907 when Foster DeWitt visited the area and became intrigued by the "wild" watercress growing along the banks of streams and creeks. This was one of the few places in the country where an abundance of fresh spring-water and limestone, combined with moderate winter temperatures, caused watercress to grow wild.

DeWitt had spent much of his early life in Great Britain and while there was exposed to the plant.

Greenstuff in Great Brit-

ain was hard to come by in the winter months and watercress was one of the few plants available year-round. According to legend, an English officer started the custom of having watercress served in salads and within a few years it became a staple in every household.

New York and Baltimore restaurants began serving watercress in salads in the early 1800s, but the cost of importing it from Great Britain was too prohibitive for it to become a widely used commodity in this country.

Foster hired local labor to dam a small stream on the land he had rented, creating a series of shallow ponds, much like rice paddies. By experimenting with water levels he found that a level

of six inches was the most favorable for cultivation. In cold weather the water would be raised, with the constant temperature of the water protecting the plants from damage.

Where at first the local populace had been skeptical about the whole idea, they soon became enthusiastic supporters as orders for the watercress began pouring in from Northern restaurants. Within a few short years Madison County became the major supplier to the world's markets.

Colder winters and the expense of shipping were cited as the two primary reasons the business declined here in Huntsville.

With the advent of air freight the railroads discontinued most of their express freight trains. Watercress became too expensive to ship by air and too perishable to ship by regular freight train.

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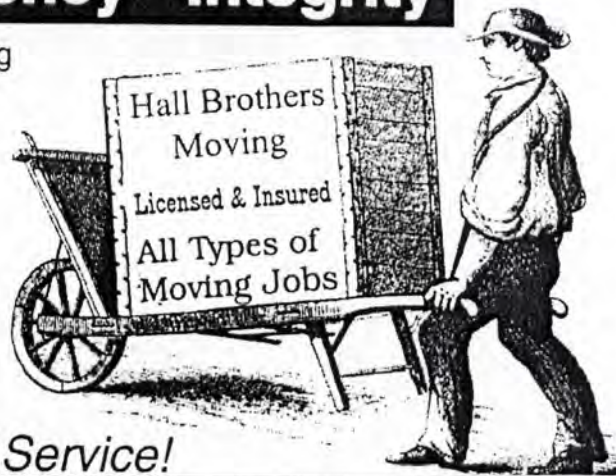
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The Day I Turned Sixteen

by Tommy Towerly

I turned 16 on June 21, the first day of summer in the year of our Lord 1962. I always bragged about my birthday being longer than my friends, since it occurred on the summer solstice, which is officially the longest day of the year in the northern hemisphere. In reality, the day was just as long as the other days, but it is the day with the most hours of daylight of the year.

At the time I was living in Lincoln Park at 904-C Webster Drive, along with my mother, my maternal grandmother and my brother Don, who was three years older than me. We had just moved there from McCullough Avenue, where I lived when I entered the ninth grade at Lee Junior High School. In the fall I would start the 10th grade and officially be a high school student. I was happy to be in the new place and was unaware that I was actually living in the projects as people call such neighborhoods today. It was actually the newest home I had ever lived in. I knew it was government subsidized housing for lower income families, but was blissfully unaware of the real status of such a tag applied to my social status. I always felt I was just like the other people in school and only a few times in my whole life's existence was I conscious of how little income my family brought in or ever felt restricted by my economic status in life.

My parents were divorced when I was eight, and my father did not play much of a role in my everyday life at the time. He worked on Redstone Arsenal and I rarely saw him. My mother worked as a dental assistant for Dr. England, a job she learned with only on-the-job training and no formal school education. Back then he said he would rather hire someone who knew nothing and train them to do things his way rather than have to alter the way

others had learned working for a different dentist.

As for me, I considered myself shy and always overshadowed by my very athletic and handsome brother. To compensate for the lack of athletic abilities, I devoted myself to becoming the best Boy Scout possible, with my eyes on becoming an Eagle Scout and a goal which I eventually reached. I also did better academically than my brother, but he had a way with the girls that I would have killed to possess. I was much shorter than my contemporaries and was self-conscious of being so.

Although I had made some good friends at Lee, at this time in my life my best friends were still some of the boys in my Boy Scout troop and my church friends. Probably my best friend at the time was Pete Goodwin, but I did have several others who I knew from some other activities like Johnny Carter and Mack Yates. Previously, I always considered Buddy Crabtree, Mickey Drake and Bob Davis friends since we all lived close to each other. In reality, I had recently had a falling out with Mike Thompson, someone who had been my closest friend since the third grade at East Clinton.

Those were my best male friends, but I also had some very good female friends, notably Dianne Hughey and Carolyn McCutcheon. Selected to have my way paid by

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"Why is it that when you tell yourself, 'Don't hit it in the water', your body only seems to hear the word 'water.'"

Butch Adcock, Golfer

them, I was never sure why they picked me to honor, but it made an impact in my life I would never forget. Again, it never occurred to me that I was so poor others felt sorry for me. A memorable decor item in my room was a set of pictures of the National Jamboree encampments hanging on my walls.

I guess I was lucky in a way to live in the era and location in which I lived. It was cheap to ride the bus and it was cheap to buy a hamburger at my favorite cafe. It was even cheaper for me, because my grandmother was a short-order cook at the Rebel Inn in West Huntsville. Many a night I would call her and she would bring me home a hamburger or a chili dog when she got off work at 10 pm.

I don't know how many of those things I consumed right before bedtime when I was in school. Of course I also loved to go to Krystal's when I was downtown and enjoy a couple of their 10-cent hamburgers. Later they went to 12 cents and then 15, but I still loved eating there. Still do today, as a matter of fact. My favorite drink was a Coke, but at home I mostly drank Grape Kool-Aid, made from the nickel packs of brightly colored powder and a lot of sugar.

Krystal's was also one of the stops I normally made after going to a movie downtown at the Lyric or Grand Theatres. Later, of course, the Grand closed and the Tony (later renamed the Martin) opened up across the street from the Lyric. My favorite movies were the monster movies, especially the ones with giant creatures like ants, spiders, Gila monsters and anything else that could be mutatanly affected by atomic radiation and grow to enormous size.

I liked the movies back then because at the end of the show, the good guys always won and the beasts were always eliminated. It was not like today when they kill a creature and it just

keeps coming back or their fate is left in doubt when the ending credits start to roll.

Sometimes I rode the bus to the Center Theater where they showed second run movies for a dime. I would ride over there and see them, then walk across the street to the Rebel Inn and ride home with my grandmother when she got off work.

Since I started this to write about the day I turned 16, I suppose I should note a thing or two about doing so. I really do not have any great memories about anything I did socially for the big event. Research shows me June 21, 1962 was on a Thursday, so it was not even a day I normally went to the skating rink. Though

I did not have a "sweet sixteen" party, and since it was during summer vacation, my one plan was to go downtown and get my driver's license.

Since Lee High School was still in the transition stage from being a junior high to a full-fledged high school, I cannot remember if driver's education was offered as a subject or not. It really didn't matter since it was summer and I didn't want to wait until school started back to get my driver's license. Don had spent many afternoons teaching me to drive and I had diligently studied the driver's manual to pass my written test.

I learned to drive the straight stick Ford, but on the day I went

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to get my license, my brother talked Gene Bailes into loaning me his automatic transmission 1959 Chevy to use for the driving portion of the examination, since learning to ease off the clutch as you pressed on the gas pedal took a lot of practice. I had not driven an automatic before I took my road test, which today seems like a recipe for failure.

I showed up at the old Elk's Theatre building and soon was joined by the policeman administering the road portion of the test. After I followed his verbal commands on where to go, where to turn and where to park, I finally drove up to let him out.

His final words to me were "You passed; now be careful."

Like many in my crowd, the license was my ticket to dating. I had a crush on a girl named Ginger, and it was her house to which I made my earlier illegal outing without the license I then possessed. Though I first kissed a girl I cannot recall if it had been during a kissing game at a boy-girl party. Ginger was the first girl I kissed without the aid of a game like "spin-the-bottle" or "seven minutes in heaven" or "how deep is the well". I had yet to fall into the trap of worrying about my wardrobe and always trying to look good.

My first venture into really trying to dress for attention was when the matching shirt and socks fad hit. I felt way cool in my matching pink shirt and socks, especially when I dashed myself with my English Leather aftershave.

The following fall, when school started back, I would drive "The Bomb" on the days it would start. My favorite subject in school was journalism, but I made my best grades in geometry. I thought I wanted to be an astronaut when I graduated from high school, and though I failed to reach that goal, I made a noble effort.

With the skills I developed being the editor of the Lee High

School paper, I was able to earn a college degree in Journalism along with a commission as a Second Lieutenant in the Air Force. I was thrilled to finally succeed in completing a 20-year career as an Air Force aviator and logging over 5,000 flight hours, even if it was accomplished as a glorified navigator instead of a pilot.

It was only after my retirement from the Air Force and a 20-year second career as a computer support specialist at the same university from which I first earned my degree that I was

able to devote myself once again to my love of writing. I found my niche in archiving my life and the historical events through which I have lived. To date I have published 14 books primarily dealing with the events of my Air Force career and of growing up in my hometown, Huntsville, Alabama, "The Rocket City."

On the day I turned 16, my only real goal in life was to get my driver's license. Once that was accomplished I had to set my goals higher. It has been a good ride.



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Photo Courtesy Milford Samples

Dallas Mill's 1930 baseball team featured many of the players from the 1931 exhibition game with the St. Louis Cardinals.

Pictured are, left to right, **Top row:** Charlie England; J.J. Chisam, Haskell "Red" Blount, Alfred "Cowboy" Fitch, Ed Her- rin, Dick Prentice, (first name unavailable) Stewart, and "Hub" Myhand. **Bottom row:** O.H. "Happy" Coonce, Houston Payne, Gene Williams, Thearon "Fatty" Fisher, Jim Tom Gentry, Perry Chisam and Elgie Webb.

Odd News

- When Jefferson Davis was captured by Federal troops in 1865, he was wearing his wife's raglan and shawl, that he had put on by accident in the dark of his tent just as he was about to make an escape. The cartoonists and illustrators in the North mercilessly pictured Davis fleeing in woman's garb.

- Why did early farmers start painting their barns red? It is said that the color red absorbed sunlight extremely well and kept the barns warm during winter. The farmers mixed skim milk with rust shavings of metal fences and nails to get the red color.

- A Chinese theory states that "tiredness" gathers around the insides of one's elbows and the backs of the knees. You should wake up the body by slapping both those areas when tiredness occurs.

- In "The Invisible Man", the title character is supposed to be naked, but the footprints he leaves have shoe soles on them rather than naked feet.

- When "El Cid" was filmed in 1961, about an 11th century Spanish hero, a costly crowd scene had to be reshot because one of the extras was filmed wearing sunglasses.

- In 1940 a Tennessee paper boy was delivering papers when he was attacked and bitten by a

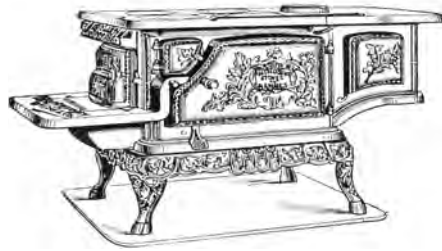
neighborhood dog. The boy had the dog taken to the pound, and it was released to its owner a few days later. But the owner of the dog was so upset at this that she began harassing the paper boy with obscene phone calls several times every day. She kept it up for 43 years. Finally, at the age of 85, she stopped calling him (he was now 59) only because she had suffered a minor stroke and was confined to a hospital room with no telephone.

- It has been proven that during an average kiss, more than 250 colonies of bacteria are transmitted from one person to another. Good news is, most of them are harmless. Best not to remember this next time you're kissing someone.

HOW TO REALLY CLEAN YOUR OVEN

Here's what you need:

- Water Spray bottle
- Baking soda
- A rag
- Vinegar
- A small bowl



And here's what you do:

1. First, remove the oven racks.
2. Mix a couple of spoonfuls of baking soda with some water in the bowl. Create a paste that will be easily spread on oven surfaces.
3. Spread the paste on the inside of the oven (baking soda will turn brown). Let it sit overnight (at least 12 hours).
4. The next day, take a wet rag and wipe out as much of the baking soda paste as you can.
5. Put some vinegar in a spray bottle and spritz on surfaces where you still see baking soda residue. Then wipe with a wet rag.
6. Put the racks back in the oven and turn the oven onto a very low temperature for 15-20 minutes to let dry.

To clean the oven window:

1. Make another paste out of baking soda and water.
2. Apply the paste directly to the window and let it sit for 30 minutes.
3. Use a clean rag to wipe the window clean.

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