



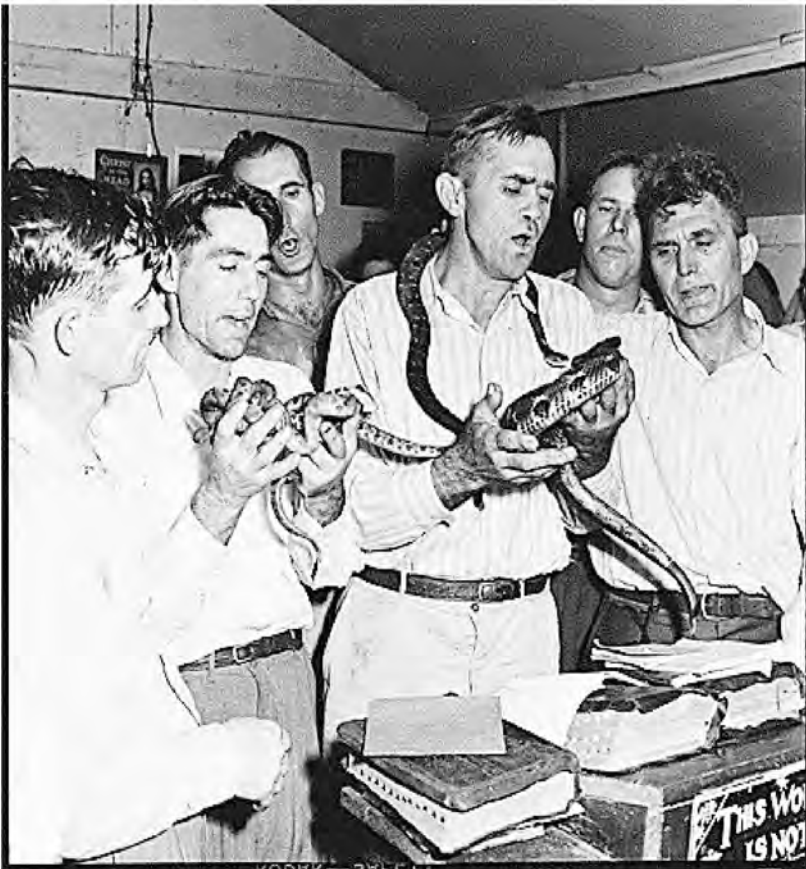
No. 301
March 2018



Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

A TEST OF FAITH



There is no written history of the “Snake Handlers” in Madison County but by most accounts the first local “handling” took place near Maysville, around 1917, when George Went Hensley, a traveling Evangelist, held a brush arbor revival.

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Also in this issue: **Mill Village Baseball**

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**A Hardware Store....
The Way You Remember Them**

Domie Lewter
Mae Lewter

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A Test of Faith

by Tom Carney

(This is a true story, but family names have been changed.)

The first thing that most people noticed when they pulled into the crushed gravel parking lot of the church was the variety of car tags. One car was from Georgia, another from Tennessee and two from Madison County. The car from Georgia boasted a bumper sticker that read "My Child is an Honor Student."

The building had not originally been built as a church. A faded metal RC Cola sign near the door gave the impression it had been a country store years earlier. Nearby, a 1974 Chevrolet, minus its motor and left front fender, was perched precariously on concrete blocks. Kudzu vines, the scourge of the rural south, had almost completely covered a large mound of unidentifiable trash near the back fence row.

Inside the building one had the eerie feeling of being transported into a time warp where

different cultures had collided and created a new one, where neither the past nor the present was reality. The women, all of whom wore their hair in tightly wrapped buns and were dressed in long dresses extending almost to their ankles, sat in a small group clapping their hands in time with music coming from an electric guitar in front of the pulpit. One woman was furiously shaking a tambourine in an effort to keep up with an electronic version of "I'll Fly Away." The guitar player's belt buckle was an advertisement for John Deere tractors.

The men, all dressed in long-sleeve shirts despite the heat, stood in a tight bunch off to the side of the pulpit, some of them tapping a foot to the music and occasionally raising their arms as if beseeching an unknown power to acknowledge their presence. Even before the last chords of the guitar had faded away one man, the preacher, stepped forward and began his testimony.

He told of a life caught up in sin, wracked by drugs and alcohol, that finally led him to jail where he met his Lord. He told of how he wasn't long for this earthly world and how he was going to a better place. He said sinners who did not repent would burn in an everlasting hell. The congregation was standing now, swaying

There is so much good in the worst of us, and so much bad in the best of us, that it doesn't behoove any of us to talk about the rest of us.



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back and forth as the preacher continued his message in a singsong cadence. Every few seconds he would be interrupted by someone shouting an "Amen," or "Praise Jesus." One woman constantly repeated the refrain "Sweet Jesus."

A woman moved into the middle of the aisle. Her body was stiff, yet shaking all over; her eyes glazed as if in a hypnotic trance. She seemed to be talking yet the sounds coming from her lips were unidentifiable, an unknown tongue that others in the congregation found familiar. Another woman, the "Sweet Jesus woman," joined her in the aisle and a few moments later also began shaking and twitching and speaking in the unknown tongue.

The preacher was really sweating now. He had moved near the pulpit and every few seconds, as if to emphasize his message, would slap it loudly before hopping across the room on one foot while waving his arms wildly in the air. The guitar player tried to keep

up, trying to hit a chord every time the preacher slapped the pulpit, but finally gave up and contented himself by attempting to adjust the various knobs on his amplifier.

Another man, dressed in blue polyester slacks and a cowboy shirt with a buffalo head above the left pocket, joined the preacher and began shouting his testimony as he stomped loudly from one side of the building to the other while holding a Bible in the air. An envelope bearing a home insurance return address stuck out of his back pocket. The building reverberated with Amens, Sweet Jesus's and stories of sin. All the other people, except for two small girls sitting in the back playing with a doll, added to the frenzy. Some were clapping, some were shouting and some were doing both.

The man who had joined the preacher near the pulpit suddenly reached down into a wooden box that had been placed there earlier. Without missing a beat in his praise for

the Holy Ghost he raised his arms revealing a four foot long Timber-back rattlesnake coiled around his right arm, its head darting back and forth as if trying to find the source of its anger.

A strange dance began as the man moved the snake from arm to arm, placing it around his neck and draping it over his shoulder, all the while keeping a running commentary on his faith in his religion. Another man took the snake from him and the same strange ritual was performed again as the congregation urged them on with more cries of Amen. The Sweet Jesus woman joined

"I haven't spoken to my wife in 6 months - I hate to interrupt her."

Andy Carver, Gurley

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the men, passing the serpent back and forth and letting its body slither across her chest and around her shoulders. The next snake, another Diamond back rattler, was taken from the box and passed from hand to hand, often with one person handling both snakes at the same time.

The guitar player had left his amplifier and stood near the side of the room watching. Nearby a woman was rolling on the floor as she talked in the unknown tongue.

Almost as suddenly as it had begun, it was over. The snakes were back in their box. The woman who had been shaking uncontrollably minutes before was now complaining about the food in a restaurant where she and her husband had eaten earlier that day. The men were talking about the war. "God's Will will be done," noted the preacher in a somber tone. The other men nodded their heads in an understanding way. Someone, a newcomer, asked him if he had ever been bitten by a snake. "Everyone's faith," he said, "will be tested someday."

He later admitted to having been bitten nineteen times.

There is no written history of the "Snake Handlers" in Madison County but by most accounts the first local "handling" took place near Maysville, around 1917, when George Went Hensley, a traveling evangelist, held a brush arbor revival. Local youths who had heard of the new religion caught three large and vicious rattlesnakes, placed

them in a box and carried them to the service. Undoubtedly they thought Hensley's snakes were "fixed" in some way and wanted him to try his faith on the real thing.

Hensley was reported to have ignored the youth's taunts at first. Halfway through the service, however, Hensley who was already holding a snake he had brought with him, reached down and took up the other ones, holding them high in the air, caressing them and at times even seeming to talk to them. People in the congregation, who had never witnessed anything like it, were deeply divided in their beliefs. Was it a miracle? - Was it the Devil's work or was there another explanation?

George Went Hensley was a bootlegger and moonshin-

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"Make sure the end justifies the jeans."

Sign seen in Huntsville clothing shop

er turned preacher who, in 1909, was sitting on the side of a mountain in Grasshopper Valley, Tennessee meditating about a passage from the Bible. The passage was Mark XVI: 17-8.

“And these signs will accompany those who believe; by using my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes in their hands, and if they drink any deadly thing, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover.”

According to one story, Hensley then saw a rattlesnake lying on a nearby rock and picked it up. When he was not bitten, this served as a sign to him that he was anointed by God. At his next church service he preached about the Bible passage, explaining it was God’s will and the true believers would not be bitten. Toward the end of the sermon he opened a wooden box and pulled out a large snake, holding it in the air and letting it curl around his arms while daring the congregation to come

forward and take the snake as a sign of their own faith. “Non-believers,” he warned, “would burn in an eternal Hell!”

Members of the congregation joined him at the front of the church, and when they were not bitten, a new religious movement was born.

Hensley traveled throughout the Southeast with his message, winning many converts among the hill people who desperately wanted to believe they were the chosen ones. His personal life, however, continued to be a problem. At one point he returned from a preaching tour and caught his wife having an affair with a neighbor. Infuriated, Hensley attacked the man with a knife and was sentenced to a term on the road gang. He returned to making whiskey but

“If at first you don’t succeed, try again. Then quit. No sense in being a fool about it.”

Bill Kruse, Huntsville

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after several years trying to eke out a living decided to repent and become an Evangelist again. Strangely, although he was a leader of a religion that believed a divorced person could never enter Heaven, he had married and divorced four times. He died in 1955 after being bitten by a Diamondback rattlesnake during a church service. In the preceding forty-six years Hensley had been bitten over four hundred times.

As the movement began spreading, its beliefs began to change. At first it was believed that if a person was "anointed" he would not be bitten. After many people began suffering snake bites it was decided the bite was merely a test of faith, that their belief would make them immune to the poison. Then when people began dropping dead, it was taken as a sign that God was calling the "true believers home to a better place." This actually served as an impetus for more people to handle snakes.

Other members of the group began the practice of drinking poison as a test of their faith. In many of the churches the preacher would dissolve powdered strychnine into a jug of water and invite the believers to join them in a poisonous communion. Producers of the television show "Dateline" tested the poison used in a service in Jackson County and found it was diluted to a point where it was not harmful. Another test, however, at another church, showed the members drinking one hundred per cent pure strychnine, potent

enough to kill anyone.

Many of the members also believed in handling fire; a practice which is believed to have begun on Sand Mountain in the 1920s. A preacher at a revival, perhaps sensing that the congregation was getting tired of the same old snake handling, thrust his hand into a pot bellied coal stove and grabbed a handful of red hot coals, declaring that his faith in God would protect him. When the members saw that his hands were not burned, they too went forward for a handful of hot coals, proving, at least to themselves, that they were the chosen ones. As coal stoves became obsolete the practice has largely died out, although members still occasionally use kerosene heaters or candles; holding their hands, or bare arms, over the open flames for long periods of time.

In Madison County the sect saw its heyday between 1920 and 1950. A church was started near Gurley and drew a fair number of members until its minister picked up the wrong snake during a meeting and was killed. Other churches were started near Woodville and New Market and although they initially drew large crowds they too died out, mostly as a result of local prejudice. When Lewis Ford died from snake handling in

1945, in Grasshopper Valley, it led to the official banning of snake handling in Tennessee. In the next few years, after a spate of deaths by snakebite and strychnine poisoning, Alabama and Georgia followed by passing their own laws.

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Hope, took up serpents during a service that was being held at her home with the warning, "I'm going to handle this snake and anyone who doesn't believe had better leave." She was bitten four times and died shortly afterwards. A few years later a sawmill worker, Jim Thomas, died during services in Fort Payne. When Lloyd Hill of Birmingham was killed by a twenty-four pound rattlesnake at his church, over a thousand people filed by his open casket to pay respects.

With all the resulting publicity the religion went underground, confining its presence mostly to small rural churches in the mountains of Tennessee, Kentucky and Alabama where the authorities would turn a blind eye. Occasionally, as late as the 1980s, one could hear advertisements on the radio on Sand Mountain inviting people to a revival and telling them to

"bring their boxes." Locally, members met in private homes or garages, often with dire consequences. One member, who lived on 9th Avenue, got in his car to go to work one morning and discovered a large and very angry copperhead snake coiled on the floor. On the steering wheel was a note: "If you want to handle snakes ... handle this one."

With its members scattered far and wide, and with few churches to attend, the movement took on a nomadic nature. Members would drive hundreds of miles to attend services and handle snakes in some hidden cove in the mountains, and then drive back home the same night. Oddly, the geographical distance between them served to draw the members into an even tighter knit group where the men would greet one another with a kiss on the lips and everyone was

known as Brother and Sister.

Snake handling in North Alabama began a resurgence in the early 1990s when Jerry M. rented a converted service station near Scottsboro and started his own church. Jerry, a small time hood who had been convicted of grand larceny and burglary, proved to be a highly charismatic and flamboyant leader who drank poison, handled snakes and red hot coals and often, if the spirit moved him, would stick his fingers into live electrical sockets.

Hundreds of people flocked to the church three times a week to listen to Brother Jerry and other traveling snake-handling evangelists. Jeb Brown, who had began handling ser-

"I don't know what makes you so dumb, but it works."

One "friend" to another

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pents at the age of seventeen, and his wife Meg, were regular attendees. David C., who had been bitten over one hundred times, brought snakes from Tennessee and took his turn at the pulpit. When his sister Carry suffered a fatal bite, David had the snake stuffed and kept it as an eerie souvenir.

Unfortunately, while the church itself was moving forward, Jerry's life was beginning a downward spiral of backsliding fueled by prodigious amounts of vodka and orange juice. When his wife began to suspect he was having an affair with another women in the church she had good reason to fear him; he had already broken her mother's jaw in a fit of anger during a family dinner.

It was later alleged that he had promised to marry his mistress on a certain date, which was probably the reason he decided his wife had to go. He attempted to accomplish this by grabbing her by the hair and forcing her to stick her hand in one of the cages holding his seventeen snakes. When she survived the first bite he repeated the same procedure the next day. That evening after Jerry had passed out in an alcoholic stupor his wife made her escape. A few days later the errant preacher was arrested and charged with attempted murder.

Jerry M. was convicted and sentenced to ninety-nine years in the penitentiary. Several weeks later Charlie Black was bitten at the church and had to be flown by helicopter to Chattanooga. He survived the bite but many of the members believed he would not have been bitten at all if Jerry had been there to pray over the snake.

With Jerry in prison, attendance at the new church began

to die out. Jeb Brown died in a nearby church while handling a four-foot timber rattlesnake. His wife had died three years earlier after being bitten. David C., who had stuffed the snake that killed his sister, also handled the wrong serpent and met his maker.

Today it is estimated that there are approximately 1,500 people in this country who practice snake handling as part of their religion. Many of them live only a short drive from Huntsville.

"Every once in a while I like to go outside, look up and smile for a Google Earth picture."

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REMEMBERING MOM'S CLOTHESLINE

by Edna Ables



THE BASIC RULES FOR CLOTHESLINES: (If you don't even know what clotheslines are, better skip this.)

1. You had to hang the socks by the toes... NOT the top.
2. You hung pants by the BOTTOM/cuffs... NOT the waistbands.
3. You had to WASH the clothesline(s) before hanging any clothes - walk the entire length of each line with a damp cloth around the lines.
4. You had to hang the clothes in a certain order, and always hang "whites" with "whites," and hang them first.
5. You NEVER hung a shirt by the shoulders - always by the tail! What would the neighbors think?
6. Wash day on a Monday! NEVER hang clothes on the weekend, or on Sunday, for Heaven's sake!
7. Hang the sheets and towels on the OUTSIDE lines so you could hide your "unmentionables" in the middle (busybodies, y'know!).
8. It didn't matter if it was freezing cold weather. Clothes would "freeze-dry." I remember my Grandfather's union suits standing by themselves frozen. How many remember union suits?



9. ALWAYS gather the clothes pins when taking down dry clothes! Pins left on the lines were "tacky"!

10. If you were efficient, you would line the clothes up so that each item did not need two clothes pins, but shared one of the clothes pins with the next washed item.

11. Clothes off of the line before dinner time, neatly folded in the clothes basket, and ready to be ironed. (IRONED? Well, that's a whole OTHER subject!)

There is one thing that's left out. We had a long wooden pole (clothes pole) that was used to push the clotheslines up so that longer items (sheets/pants/etc.) didn't brush the ground and get dirty. I can hear my mother now...

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Life is a Changing Canvas

by Janet Martin

It does not seem to matter
How young or old I am,
One thing I must acknowledge
Is that nothing stays the same,
So, lest I stand too long and pine
For joys of yesterday,
This present treasure I must find
Before it slips away....

...For life is a changing canvas,
Life is a flowing stream,
Some days are sparkling diamonds
And some are broken dreams
But the God who expels the thunder
Cradles the earth in His hand,
He fills each day with wonder
And blessings rich and grand

So, when I cling to the present
Because I'm afraid to let go,
May His sweet love incessant
Remind me of what I know,
My unchanging God is forever,
The God of my present and past,
And as I gaze into the future
I know He'll hold me fast

So I'll cherish every hour,
For tomorrow, its change will bring,
Without it a bud would not flower,
A butterfly could never grow wings,
And we would not grow in our wisdom
If it weren't for the changes we face,
Our failures would be our prison
Instead of a door to His grace



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Growing Up Memories

by Carolyn Gallardo



I remember always wearing a dress. I was a girl, and girls wore dresses, or skirts. Even my outerwear was a full length coat. When it was cold, my legs froze! I only had socks. We didn't have tights in Huntsville, Alabama! My first pair of hose were worn for Easter of my sixth grade year, along with my sweetheart pink lipstick. As a girl, in summer, I wore short shorts; and later bermudas, when they came into fashion. When I was in college, living on campus, girls were allowed to wear bermudas or pants on Saturdays until twelve noon.

Around 1974, women on my teaching staff in New York were allowed to wear pants to work as long as they were worn with a suitable jacket that made it a pantsuit. Can you imagine that?

I remember riding in a car without it having seatbelts. As kids we stood up, sat in the floor, hung out the window, and even rode in the back of trucks without being secured. My first two children had car seats, but they hooked over the back of the seat and did not have seat belts.

Since cars didn't have air conditioning, we rode with the windows down in the summer.

I remember when we didn't have air-conditioning in our homes. In the summer, in Alabama, this was dreadful! Windows were always opened. The house was constantly dusty, because the road behind was not paved. When a car passed, dust went everywhere. (This created what we called grandma's beads, a string of dirty sweat around your neck.) We had one oscillating fan that we sat near to enjoy the breeze when it turned your way. We also had a window fan that my father let blow out of a window, so a breeze would enter other windows. I remember dampening my face and hair with cold water before trying to go to sleep.

On weekends, you tried to go to the movies, the Lyric or Grand, to see whatever was playing because a dime paid for an air conditioned place.

I remember not having television, only radio. I was thoroughly entertained by the radio. It was a small brown Philco that I placed on the dining room table on Sunday afternoons. I waited for, Only The Shadow Knows. I sat spell-bound by the stories accompanied with fantastic sound affects. Amos and Andy was a favorite also.

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family would bring one dish to be shared. After dinner the adults would play horseshoes.

I remember feet pajamas and going to the drive-in movie theater and eating goobers. We had Whitesburg and Woody's in Huntsville.

I remember the Halloween Carnival at Fifth Avenue School, with all parents helping, and all families attending. My favorite attractions were the haunted house and the cake walk.

I remember when most mothers stayed at home and did not work outside the home.

I remember when homes had one bathroom. I also remember using Aunt Birdie's outhouse. That was scary since it was dark inside and I was afraid of spiders or snakes. I got my business over with quickly and got out of there! At night or when it was cold outside, you used a bucket under your bed.

I remember catching lightning bugs and keeping them in glass mayonnaise jars that had ice picked holes in the tin screw-on tops for breathing. Man, did those bugs make your hands smell terrible.

I remember my mother using a scrub board in the kitchen sink to do the family wash. We had a clothes line in the back yard for drying. If it rained you were out of luck. If it was cold, your clothes would leave the clothes line stiff. I received my first tube of lipstick "sweet heart pink" for Easter, along with my first pair of hosiery.

My first official kiss from a boy came while I sat with Gary Sutton on the back porch steps of my house. It was only one kiss, but the pleasure lasted for days.

Junior high was riding to the other side of town on a school bus. More socializing went on, on that bus than you can believe. We exchanged all kinds of news as well as homework.

We wore loafers, called "Weeguns" made by Bass. We had to order them from a sporting goods store, Fred Singtons. They cost seventeen dollars and would last a little longer than a semester of school. My mom complained of their expense. I wore Weeguns until I graduated from college. We wore them

with hose everyday, all day long.

Our teen years still found us wearing dresses or skirts. We wore full skirts with several crinolines, to make them stand out. Often we used thick belts tightly buckled at the waist. I don't know what we were thinking; those crinolines got so dirty. They were also tough to cram into a gym locker.

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Alabama News from 1911

Police Superintendent Hyland Tells Women to Shoot Purse Snatcher

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

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

Arab Husband Shoots Self - Fired at Wife

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

Runaway this Morning Could have been Serious

About 11 am today the delivery wagon belonging to E.L. Green, grocery man on East Side Square became frightened and ran away, dashing north on Washington Street and turning east at the intersection with Clinton at Ezell's Corner. Miss Ellen Weaver and Miss Georgia May Harris were in the act of crossing at this point and came near being run over and perhaps killed. They escaped with a fall and slight bruising, being assisted to their home on East Clinton Street by Officers Whitener and Pamplin.

Farm of 296 Acres is Bought by the Rountree Brothers - Decatur

Rountree Bros. of Decatur, Hartselle and Birmingham have just bought 296 acres of fine land in a sale for a division of the lands by the heirs of the estate of Miss Martha Thompson who died a few years ago. The land is among the best and desirable in the county. It is situated close to Priceville almost ten miles south-east of Decatur.

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Heard On the Street

by *Cathey Carney*



Our winner for the February Photo of the Month was **Gina Gann** of Meridianville, Al. Gina guessed that the sweet boy pictured was **Jerry Hayes** of Channel 19, and she was right. That curly hair gave it away! Gina worked for Huntsville Hospital for many years as secretary and in the Admin side of the hospital. She doesn't know Jerry but took a guess and won a year of "Old Huntsville"!

Then, I did the best job ever in hiding the tiny heart in the February issue. The first person to call after 8am on the 15th was **JoAnne Wilson** and where was it? Look carefully at the recipe page 20, right under the "P" on the word Recipes. See it? I'm just really good. Many got out flashlights and magnifying glasses but had no luck. JoAnne is retired but loves taking care of grand children Gabriel Hataway, 5 and Erin Hataway who is 13. Her oldest grandchild is Andrew Hataway, 18, and she loves them all DEARLY!

The Kiwanis Pancake Breakfasts are getting ready to start and the

first one is the **Kiwanis West Club's** event on March 17, Saturday, from 7:30am -11am. It will be held as usual at the Mayfair Church of Christ at the corner of Garth and Carl T. Jones. Something about those pancakes with hot sausage and fruit and orange juice just hits the spot. Mark your calendars - there's always a huge crowd.

So many local people have traveled to Fayetteville, TN over the years to buy fabric at **Sirs** on the square. It was there for so many years and some of the employees had worked there the whole time and knew shoppers by name. They had a terrible fire in mid February that rendered it a total loss. We wanted to let the owners and employees there know how very sorry we are to hear that. Sirs was a fun destination and many have such good memories of going there.

Neighbors in the downtown area and Five Points were happy to see **Sunoco Fuel Mart** open up at the old BP location on Holmes and Andrew Jackson Way. What you may not know is they carry a huge selection of wines and craft beers, including the beer from Rocket Republic, Straight To Ale and Yellow Hammer (local breweries for you folks new to Huntsville).

One thing I learned the hard way - when we have a little snow and you're trying to sprinkle something on it to melt the snow - DON'T use cat litter. I made that mistake and (1) it does nothing to melt the snow and (2) it stays on your driveway/sidewalks forever until you track it into your house. I thought I was on to something but NO.

As you know, Free2Teach is the organization that provides teachers with free school supplies of ev-

ery kind, and **Eula Battle** is the Executive Director. She has a host of volunteers who help stock and she couldn't do it without them. Well this year alone they hosted a record of 1,991 teacher visits. If you haven't been there, at 3054 Leeman Ferry Rd. in Huntsville, it is a huge warehouse where the teachers grab a shopping cart at the front and just shop for their classes. Nearly 20% of our community's school age children live in poverty, and this is just one thing that ensures all kids have the tools they need to be successful. Congratulations to Eula and her hardworking team!

Many people have moved to other cities after living in Huntsville, two of those folks are **Steve and Ibis East** who are now in Florida. It was so good to hear from Ibis recently who told me that her husband Steve loves all the interesting history that has taken place around North Alabama. Some other HP friends that are still here are **Don and Connie Miller, Linda Young and Cathy Worthy**.

Rosemary Leatherwood and her sisters want to wish their sweet Dad **Billy Richardson** a Happy Birthday in Heaven on March 10th. He's been gone for 4 years but to them it seems like yesterday. A lot of love in their family and he's always remembered.

Photo of The Month

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

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We have a new Old Huntsville machine in New Hope! It is at **Dot's Dairy Den** and Dot says to come see her - you'll love the food and pick up the latest magazine too!

Tom and Jane Barr are the historians who live on Monte Sano and know so much of the history up on the mountain. We were so sorry to hear that Tom had passed away on Feb. 7, at the age of 88. Tom and Jane traveled extensively and were married 67 years. Tom worked for NASA as contractor for the Wernher von Braun team, and was a member of the Telemetry Group of the NASA Astronomic Lab. In addition, he and two partners brought the first television station to Huntsville - Channel 31, as well as the Huntsville News, a daily newspaper here. One of his favorite hobbies was riding through the woods on motorcycles with his kids and grandkids. His survivors include wife Jane; sons **David Barr** and **Gary Barr (Debbie)**; daughter **Suzanna Barr Moody (Darryl)**; brother-in-law **Ron Jones**; five grand children; 9 great grandchildren and nephew **Todd Jones (Kelley)**. Tom was an amazing, brilliant and loving man who will never be forgotten.

Jane Eller is Branch Banker at BB&T Bank on Church Street, able to answer any questions you have and always brightens your day - she has such a positive attitude. She wants to wish her daughter **Amanda Acklin** a Happy Birthday on March 4. Amanda is a mom of two and works at Lowes. Jane wants to tell her that she is SO proud of her. Also Jane wants to wish her granddaughter **Callie Davis** a wonderful and fun FIRST birthday on March 3rd - "Grandma LOVES you Callie!"

I know we're all ready for warm

weather and I even have two tiny purple flowers that are trying to bloom now, even tho it's still cold out. Earth Touch on Whitesburg Drive will be having their Open House on March 24 from 9am to 4pm with garden societies, planting experts and even a class on azaleas. Check them out!

So happy to wish **Dr. Sam Citrano** a Roll Tide-themed Birthday on Feb. 14. He turned 92 on Valentines Day and his daughter **Lisa** surprised him with a yard full of Alabama elephants and footballs and all things Alabama football! I hope it was a wonderful day, Dr. Sam!

I was SO honored recently to be invited to attend the **Junior League of Huntsville's** Lunch with Leaders. It's hard to believe but this is the 68th year of Junior League in Huntsville, and since that time they have donated over \$2 million to various organizations and initiatives throughout our community. They have donated \$117,000 for community grant funds in support of over 10 literacy initiatives in Huntsville and Madison County. I was the guest of **Nancy Washington Vaughn** who is the President of the Junior League, and loved sitting at the table with Nancy and her family. Huntsville **Mayor Tommy Battle** and Madison **Mayor Paul Finley** spoke about the futures of our cities and the growth expected. The panel leaders were **Ranae Bartlett**, Madison City Board of Education President; **Kim Lewis**, CEO of Project XYZ; and **Beth Richardson**, Madison Market President of Progress Bank. Moderator was **Liz Hurley**, and **Shelley Delay** (Sustainer Director and Past President of Junior League Huntsville) made the panel introductions. Many great

ideas were presented and it was a very inspiring event.

Honey's Restaurant has been on the South square in Fayetteville since 1923! It was a pool hall at one time but now has the best slawburgers and fries and wings and many in Huntsville like to make the short trip to eat lunch there. Also they are now a location for an honor box for Old Huntsville magazine.

It hard to believe that handsome **Sam Zeman** is anywhere over 80 let alone 90 - Sam just celebrated his birthday Feb. 24 with friends and family and is a member of Golden K Kiwanis. **Liz Hall Zeman** is his feisty wife and makes sure they keep traveling!

Dama Gerald of Charleston SC wrote to tell us that her aunt in High Point NC just turned 90 and all the kids, spouses, cousins came from all over the US to help her celebrate. They all live from Texas to Virginia and all began with the aunt and her four siblings. They subscribe to Old Huntsville and love talking about the stories of this area!

One of my older friends mentioned the other day that he's the age now where his clothes will probably outlast him. It IS amazing to go to thrift markets and see how long clothing lasts - unless you're a kid or work in hard labor - how many clothes do you actually throw away?

So proud of **Liz Hurley Hargrove** and her husband **Dave Hargrove** for their recent award by the Chamber of Commerce! They received the Distinguished Service Award which is such a well-deserved honor. The first recipient of this award many years ago was **Wernher von Braun**. Dave and Liz have done so much for our community.

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- 1 c. pecans or walnuts, finely chopped

Blend the cream cheese with the deviled ham, refrigerate til easy to handle. Shape into 30 small balls. Roll in the chopped nuts, refrigerate just long enough to firm up again. Serve with toothpicks, alone or with olives or crackers.

Cream of Onion Soup

- 4 medium sweet onions, sliced
- 2 T. butter
- 1 T. flour
- 2 c. heavy cream
- 2 c. milk
- Parmesan cheese, grated

Saute onions in butter. First, blend flour in a little warm milk. Heat remaining milk and pour over the onion, then add the flour paste, blending well. Add the cream, salt & pepper and sprinkle Parmesan cheese over mixture. Serve with croutons.

Barbequed Ribs

- 5 lbs. spareribs
 - 1 t. salt
 - 1 t. pepper
 - 1 lemon, sliced thin
 - 1 large onion, chopped fine
 - 1 c. ketchup
 - 1 t. chili powder
 - 1 t. celery seed
 - 1/4 c. each brown sugar, vinegar, Worcestershire sauce
 - 1/2 t. mixed herb seasoning
 - 2 c. water
- Cut the spareribs into serving

size pieces. Spread, meaty side up, in a large shallow pan. Sprinkle with salt and pepper, put a slice of lemon onto each rib, and sprinkle the chopped onion over all. Brown 30-45 minutes in a 450 degree oven. Mix the remaining ingredients and bring to a boil for barbeque sauce. After 45 minutes pour off the grease, add the sauce to the ribs and roast uncovered for 1 to 1-1/2 hours more. Baste, turn occasionally. Add water if sauce gets too thick.

Artichoke Hearts with Roquefort Dressing

- 1 can Artichoke hearts
 - 1 wedge Roquefort cheese
 - 1/2 lb. butter
 - Lemon juice to taste
- In a double boiler melt butter, add the Roquefort and lemon

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- 8 buns.

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2-lb. Pack (for 8 People)

- Two Pounds of BBQ Pork,
- Two Pints Potato Salad,
- One Pint Cole Slaw
- Hot or Mild Sauce.
- 16 buns.

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3 lb. Pack (for 12 People)

- Three Pounds of BBQ Pork
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- One Quart Cole Slaw
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juice. Drain the hearts, add to the butter sauce and serve hot with toothpicks. It's a romantic and supposedly, aphrodisiac snack.

Southern Fried Okra

2 c. sliced fresh okra, sliced crosswise

1 c. corn meal or flour

Salt and pepper

Dredge the okra with the corn meal or flour, that has been seasoned with the salt and pepper. Drop in deep hot fat, drain. Serves 4-6.

Hawaiian Delight

2 pkg. lemon Jell-O

2 c. hot water

2 c. ice water

1 large can crushed pineapple, drained

1/2 pt. sour cream

Dissolve Jell-O in hot water, add the ice water. When Jell-O begins to thicken, whip with an egg beater til fluffy. Mix the pineapple with the sour cream and fold into whipped Jell-O. Pour into pretty mold and chill til firm. Before serving, garnish with fresh fruits.

Chocolate Sauce

2 cakes bitter chocolate

1/2 c. sugar

1/2 pt. heavy cream

Melt the chocolate over low fire, add sugar (you could use less sugar if you prefer) and cream. Heat and stir til sugar is dissolved and sauce is smooth. Serve hot or cold over cake or ice cream.

Caramel Sauce

1 c. sugar

3/4 c. heavy cream

1 heaping T. butter

1 t. vanilla

Caramelize 1/2 cup of the sugar by heating it in a heavy saucepan over very low heat and stirring constantly as it melts and browns. Place the other 1/4 cup sugar and all the cream in the top of a double boiler over boiling water, heat til very hot. Add the caramelized sugar and stir til all the caramel is melted. Remove from heat and add butter and vanilla. Beat well, keep in jar in refrigerator. Can be heated over hot water.

Spiced Peaches

1/2 c. white corn syrup

1/2 c. vinegar

1 T. pickling spice

1 large can peaches

Add the spice and vinegar to the white corn syrup. Boil 10 minutes. Add peaches and simmer 5 more minutes. Chill and serve.



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Mama and Papa Key - My Grandparents

by Barry Key

Mama and Papa Key lived on Grassy Mountain and had a small farm at the head of Ledbetter Hollow. My dad was the oldest of fourteen children. Their house was the typical farm house, steep roof and a large front porch that ran the full width of the house. They had no running water or inside bathroom. There was a water well integrated into the back porch with a windless for raising and lowering a metal tube about 6 inches in diameter and four feet long. The tube had a valve in the bottom that opened when it entered the water. When the tube filled with water and you started to raise the tube, the water inside would close the valve. In lieu of an inside bathroom, there was an outhouse at the back of the house near the barn.

Under the house was a root cellar hand dug into the ground. The cellar had a lot of shelves that my grandmother kept stocked with all kinds of canned vegetables and fruits. The cellar was always damp and cool. Whenever I went into the cellar I pictured the dungeons of the English castles.

For their livelihood, and in addition to their field crops, my grandparents raised cows, hogs and chickens. Some to sell and some for slaughter. My grandmother sold milk, butter and eggs. Speaking of eggs, an old converted school bus they called the "Rolling Store" would stop at their house periodically and my grandmother would barter food staples they had raised for condiments such as salt, pepper, flour, sugar, etc. But an egg... if I happened to be there when the rolling store came by, the egg my grandmother would give me was worth its weight in hard candy.

My grandfather had two large gray mules, Joe and Bill. In the winter they ran free on the farm. When spring came they would be wild, ornery and bad tempered. After a couple of weeks in front of a turning plow, my grandfather would have them as mild as a kitten.

“Los Angeles is home to the 3 little white lies: “The Ferrari is paid for,” “The mortgage is assumable,” and “It’s only a cold sore.”

When pulling a plow or a wagon, if Joe and Bill started to wander out of a crop row, my grandfather would holler Gee or Haw, depending on which way he wanted them to move. Gee, they would ease to the right, or Haw and the two mules would ease to the left.

During the summer months we would go to my grandparents house. There would be beaucoos of aunts, uncles, cousins and grandkids. My grandmother (and aunts still living at home) would have the dining room table covered with several different meats and just about every vegetable known to man. Since the dining room table would only seat 12 to 14 people, we ate in shifts. Adhering to tradition, men first, then children, then the women. This tradition was based on the women of the house preparing the meals, the men and children would come in from the fields at noon, eat and return to the fields. The women would eat, clean up the kitchen, do the domestic house work, prepare for the evening meal and then milk the cows and feed and water their animals.

Sundays on a farm, after church, was a day of

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rest and recreation. Following a large noon meal, the adults would sit on the long front porch and discuss how their crops were doing, especially their tomato plants. For some unknown reason, discussions about tomato plants were as lively and energetic as discussions about politics and religion. My Uncle Leon outdid them all one year. He had planted his tomatoes next to his potatoes and (I can't recall which) either the potato plants had tomatoes, or vice versa. Not only did he earn bragging rights, he got his picture with the plants, in the Chattanooga newspaper.

We kids played games like horse shoes, tag, dare, Annie-over and different board games depending on the weather. Two of my favorite activities; if the mules had had a couple of days off, we would hook them to the hay wagon and ride around in the pastures. The other was a trip down the hollow to Ledbetter Cave. The cave was still alive and was filled with huge stalactites and stalagmites. There was one room where thousands of bats roosted, evidently for hundreds of years. The floor in that particular area was several feet deep in guano. There was a stream that ran through a part of the cave that had little white creatures that resembled a cross between shrimp and a crawfish.

Prior to TVA my grandfather installed electricity in their house for lights and a radio. He built a windmill that had a small generator. The generator kept a battery pack charged that had sufficient watts to run incandescent lights in each room, as well as the radio. The radio was a floor model that stood about 4 feet high by 2 feet wide. He had the only radio on the south end of the mountain. Saturday nights, friends and neighbors would come to their house to listen to radio shows. I know they listened to different shows, but the only one I remember was The Grand Ole Opry.




When my grandparents started to lose agility due to age, all their children decided to go in together

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and build them a modern bathroom...in the house. My grandfather would not have it. That sort of thing had no place in the house, so they built my grandparents a stand alone, modern bathroom with flushing toilet and shower, down next to their barn. Many years later, their children convinced them to accept a new bathroom in their house. The old bathroom is still being used when we have family gatherings, sometimes as many as 60 to 70 people.


Something that always intrigued me about both of my grandfathers was the peculiar way they drank their coffee. My grandmothers would serve them coffee in a cup with a saucer. Both grandfathers would lift their cup, tilt it slightly, and let the coffee flow down the side of the cup and into the saucer. Then they would drink the coffee from the saucer. I would try to imitate them but usually ended up with coffee running down both sides of my cheeks and into my lap.

Both the Keys and Paseurs (my mother's parents) were farmers and had several children. They mainly lived off of the animals they raised, vegetables they grew and staples they bartered for. They both lived in very rural areas. Both of my parents told me they never knew when the Great Depression came. Their life style never changed. They had just as much, and lived just as well, during the Depression as they did before the Depression.


EPILOGUE

My great grandfather Smith (my father's grandfather) was a Holiness Preacher and owned several acres on Grassy Mountain less than a mile from my grandparents. During the Depression, and into the 50s, my great grandparents grew a very large vegetable garden and orchard. They opened it to anyone that wanted to gather vegetables and fruits.

This gracious undertaking I'm sure prevented a lot of people, who weren't as fortunate as my family, from going hungry.



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Growing Up in Huntsville

by Hugh Michaels

Growing up in Huntsville was an experience which many people will never forget. Stories of life of old Huntsville will live in their hearts and souls forever.

One of the pioneers of Huntsville was a gentleman named Charles Burgess. He lived in Mill Village.

He was a graduate of Joe Bradley High School and Southern Christian College. Charles proudly served two years in the Army. He is a Korean veteran. He also served in the Army Reserve for six years.

Charles was married to Betty McCanelly. They lived together for 56 years. Betty passed away several years ago. They had two daughters - Sheri Patterson and Sheila Calhoun. They also had six grandchildren.

He became interested in songwriting at an early age. He wrote approximately 25 songs over a period of 56 years. His biggest hit was "Through the eyes of a child." He was a member of the Sacred Airs, "Gospel Cadets" and "Space City" gospel quartets.

"By all means, marry. If you find a good one, you'll become happy. If you find a bad one, you'll become a philosopher."

Socrates



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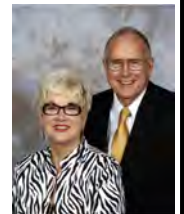
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He was an excellent singer. He sang tenor. While Charles lived in Mill Village times were tough. His father worked in Mill Village but Charles chose a different profession. He worked as a salesman for Mutual Savings Insurance Company. He worked at this job for 37 years.

People living in Mill Village helped each other. Neighbors helped neighbors. Times were difficult. People shared good times and bad times. Youth had to work at an early age. Charles worked at Owens Grocery Store when he was 15 years old. If a child was visiting a neighbor and had done something wrong, the neighbor punished him. When he returned home, he received another "spanking". Neighbors helped neighbors.

Charles had lots of friends who worked and played together. Most of his friends had nicknames. Some of the names were "Punchy, Coot, Chigger, and Moon Eye."

A popular place for youth to hang out was a place called Rock. This place was near Harvey Owens store in Huntsville.

An unusual happening occurred while Charles was growing up. The water at Merrimac Pasture Creek was frozen solid. A snake was frozen on the lake. A group of youth retrieved the snake. It was frozen solid. They took the snake to school. The students were terrified. The snake became "thawed out". The youths were required to take it from the school.

When Charles was 13 years of age, he attempted to ride a bucking mule. This was a bad

decision as the mule started bucking, kicking and hollering. Charles was thrown from the mule. He likes to tell this story. He will remember this incident for the rest of his life.

Charles was a lucky boy while living in Mill Village. He was the most popular kid in his neighborhood. He owned a bicycle. He got the bike by finding a ticket in the road. Someone had lost it. It was a ticket meant to be used in a fund raising event and it was the winning ticket.

Melvin Burgess, brother of Charles, played a guitar. He

would entertain at local functions.

The only recreation available to the youth were playing marbles and pitching horse-shoes. These games could only be played on the weekends.

Charles witnessed his dad catch a catfish which weighed 105 pounds. He caught the fish while fishing in the Tennessee River.

Movies were available on weekends only. Movies were shown at the Joe Bradley School. The cost to see the movies was five cents. Popcorn cost five cents. The most popular movie



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1911



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George Burns

stars were Johnny Mac Brown, Roy Rogers and Gene Autry.

Rabbits, squirrels, coons, mink and possum were hunted in a crude way. The youth hunted with "slingshots" or "flips." These items were made from the tongues of worn out shoes. The rubber was obtained from discarded rubber tubes. The most popular creature to kill was pigeons.

Rabbits were caught by rabbit traps. These traps were made of wood. A box was fixed to trap the rabbit once he entered the trap. Sliced apples were usually used as bait.

Cotton was king during the early years. Charles could pick 200 pounds a day. His mother could pick 300 pounds of cotton a day.

Mr. Burgess, father of Charles, would catch mink, muskrats, raccoons and possums and sell the fur to dealers. The dealers met each Saturday at the Post Office and purchased the fur. The money received by the seller would be used to feed his family. The animals were mostly caught at Brahan Springs. The animals were killed by an instrument called the hollow pipe. Families were happy when the hunter had a good kill.

Merrimac Mill would give all of the kids gifts at Christmas. The kids received toys, nuts and fruit.

The Burgess family picked blackberries and wild plums for canning purposes. These canned goods would be available when it was winter time.

Perhaps the most frightful time of Charles' life happened when a group of men were assembled on the banks of the Tennessee River.

Two men, relatives of Charles, attempted to cross the river. The water was rough with whitecaps. Neither man had life

jackets. One of the men could not swim. The wind caused their boat to capsize and sink. The boat turned upside down and Charles was helpless. He tried to help but none was available. The men yelled for help. They fought the waves and fought for life. Charles watched his cousin and uncle drown.



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A Hog Contest

by Kate Watts

Back in the thirties, my Aunt Hattie and Uncle Monroe ran a small hog farm. By all accounts, Aunt Hattie was a saint; Uncle Monroe, however—and I'm putting it charitably — was not. And though Aunt Hattie knew this better than anyone, she was in no position to do anything about it, and so she'd always reassure worried friends by saying, "His bark is worse than his bite."

Well, Uncle Monroe had heart problems. Whenever he felt his heart jumping a little, he'd swallow the nitrite pills his doctor prescribed. If he didn't, he risked a heart attack. As if that weren't dangerous enough, because he spent all day alone on the farm, if he did have a heart attack, no one would know until it was too late. Therefore, Uncle Monroe always carried the tube of little white pills in the pocket of his overalls, especially when he went deep into the farm to tend to the hogs.

Hogs, you might know, can be nasty. But as you can imagine, a nasty man like Uncle Monroe was just the person to understand their temperament.

One late summer morning, Uncle Monroe headed out to tend to the hogs. He wore his overalls, his plaid shirt, and his muck boots, just like always. I suppose Aunt Hattie reminded him to take his pills along.

Aunt Hattie spent that day taking care of her own chores. Perhaps she spent the day polishing his only good shoes or doing his washing before hanging it out to dry in the scorching August sun. Maybe she worried that her washing job wasn't good enough, that he'd look the job over when he got home and fly into one of his rages. But that was life back then, and she had little choice.

The strange thing was ... Uncle Monroe didn't come home by dusk. I'm sure Aunt Hattie kept the beans on and the cornbread in the oven as she sat on the porch

swing, watching and waiting.

But night fell, and still, he didn't come home.

Eventually, she got word to her nearest neighbors, but by then, it was night, and stumbling around on a moonless night in search of one man was a fool idea, so it wasn't until dawn broke that the men could go search for him.

I wonder what went through Aunt Hattie's mind all that day. Maybe, like a lot of women might, she only remembered his good points, or how all his hard work kept food on their table. Maybe the women keeping her company that day were of the same opinion. Or ... maybe, although I'd bet none of them would ever confess it, maybe they all kept their fingers crossed.

About mid-morning, the search party returned. The women ran out to meet them and discovered that the men had, indeed, found my uncle.

Correction: they'd found what was left of him.

Seems my uncle had forgotten to take his pills with him that day. Seems he'd had a fit and fallen down just after opening up the hogs' stalls ... but before he'd gotten to feed them.

Hogs, you know, can be nasty, especially when they're hungry, and they're not that picky ... especially when their dinner is still warm.

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AUNT SHIRLEY AND AUNT DOROTHY

by Harry Dill

The picture on the right is my Aunt Dorothy at the grape arbor. My Aunt Shirley is on the left. My two Aunts were entirely different and one had a relatively long life while the other died very young. These are some memories about them.

Aunt Dorothy was born on September 15, 1904 and died on April 18, 1975. My Aunt Shirley was born on June 10, 1910 and died on April 21, 1934 in a truck accident on a curve on Monte Sano mountain.

I will write about my Aunt Dorothy first as she is the oldest and I know more about her and she lived much longer than Shirley. I know very little about my Aunt Shirley so I will write about her at the end this article. These two aunts of mine were very different from each other as you will see.

Aunt Dorothy was more serious and went to work at Chase Nursery Company at Chase, Alabama at young age. I always remember her as working there as a bookkeeper and office worker. She

helped send her older brother Oscar Evan through dental school. She didn't have any boyfriends that I know of and never got married and was considered an old maid. She liked us children though and gave us money and things we could use and toys. She gave me a little child's real lawn mower so I could help Uncle Alvin cut grass. It was a push mower and when you pushed it on the grass when the wheels turned the blade would cut the grass. She planted a rose in the front yard that she gave me. It was a pretty yellow color. She gave me many things and at Christmas our stockings were filled and lots of presents were under the Christmas tree provided by her.

Aunt Dorothy (we all called her Sister so now on I will refer to Dorothy as Sister), had several radios and her favorite programs were Edgar Bergen and Charley McCarthy, Jack Benny as well as Amos and Andy. She listened to them regularly. She read the newspaper too and she would leave them on one side of her double bed thinking that she would finish reading all of it, but she never could and the newspapers accumulated until there was a big pile of papers taking up at least half of her bed space. She didn't want to throw anything away.

Sister was good to all of us and to my girls also giving them money when they asked her. She gave them a tin bank that took dimes and it would count how much money was in the bank each time you put a dime in. Sister gave dimes regularly to put in my bank.

She had a xylophone toy that she would show me from time to time. She had 5 or 6 discs that where in different colors and the edges of the disc were all different. They were labeled with what the name of the song was. She would put on a disc and a wind up the machine and a little man would play a different tune from each disc! I used to

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really enjoy listening to those tunes played by that little man!

Sister gave me a little motor boat made of metal. I would fill the exhaust with water and light a candle and the boat would run around in the bath tub. I enjoyed that toy. Sister on Christmas gave me a little red wagon. Another Christmas she gave me cowboy clothes and belt with double gun holsters, and two cap pistols for the holsters, with plenty of caps. Sister gave me a Red Rider BB gun with plenty of BBs. She gave my sister Jean dolls that would shut their eyes when you laid them down, doll dresses, doll houses, toy cook stove and dishes, etc.

These were all in addition to giving us store-bought stockings filled with games, puzzles, etc. And she gave the family a large box of Whitman's Samplers every Christmas too!

Daddy was having a hard time just making a living so this was especially nice and we had such nice Christmases. And while Grandma was living we ate Christmas dinner with all of them at Grandpa's house.

My Aunt Dorothy lived a lot longer than my Aunt Shirley. Aunt Shirley was a very pretty woman and she liked to have fun in the late 20s and early 30s. Aunt Shirley was enjoying the times she lived in. Young women of the 1920s and 30s challenged traditional Victorian morality by adopting the carefree "flapper" lifestyle. Flappers engaged in drinking, smoking and free-spirited dancing. They drove fast cars and frequented bars and

dance halls. They also openly mingled with men without supervision and were educated about sex. The economic hardships of the 1930s forced women to seek more affordable social outlets. Parlor games and gambling grew popular and local theaters flourished.

As the Swing replaced the Charleston, jazz halls remained popular as well. Dance continued to offer an affordable way for women to let loose and mingle with men. I think she was a flapper as they called them back then. I don't remember much about her because she died when I was only around six years of age.

I do remember that she and her boyfriend Mike had been dancing and drinking up on top of Monte Sano Mountain at the Clubhouse in the park close to the picnic area. Mike was driving his truck back down the mountain when he could not make a sharp steep downward curve and the truck hit a tree. Shirley was thrown out and her neck was broken and she died on the spot.

I remember that she lay in her casket in the dining room of Papa and Mama's house awaiting burial. Certain flowers, if I smell them today, bring back that memory of Shirley's death and all the flowers.

Shirley had a short life of only 24 years. Dorothy had a much longer life.

God gives and God takes away, Blessed be the Name of the Lord! I think I was so lucky to have known two of the best aunts a family could have.

Don't worry - that spider is smaller than you. Yeah, so is a grenade.

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Never Too Late

by Brome'

As an assistant manager at Firestone's North Parkway store in the mid-seventies, I saw many of the residents from the Presbyterian Home up the street. Most were just occasional customers and we tried to be as accommodating as possible. Several stand out in my mind but there were two that have that special place in my mind and my heart.

Miss Lilly (not her real name) was the sweetest thing. She was slightly frail but had the nicest smile that lit your heart and made your day. We looked forward to her visits and made sure she was comfortable.

She was not a frequent customer but you couldn't help but remember her.

There was another resident of the Home I'll call Paul. He was (to be somewhat polite) a butt. He griped about the price and everything we did and didn't trust anyone there to do a competent or honest job. He would stand over us while we worked, and question every step we took. We had to save all old parts for his inspection and nothing was ever to his satisfaction. I had asked the manager if I could be extra rude to him hoping to run him off but the idea was vetoed.

One day Miss Lilly came in for her car to be serviced and after making her comfortable, we set about to do the work. Paul also came in to bless us with a visit.

As it happened Miss Lilly's car had a broken shock on the front that was dangerous. The shaft had snapped and could cause her to wreck. I went in and told her the problem and her needing to buy them in pairs. She asked Paul who she recognized from the Home for his assessment and after making sure we hadn't broken it ourselves conceded that she needed the pair and the sale price was reasonable. The two vehicles were serviced and they left. I had noticed them talking and was relieved that his mind wasn't on bothering us.

Several months past and the two drove in together and he went around to her side to open her door. He took her hand and helped her to the waiting area and went to the counter to let us know what he needed. He smiled sweetly and in a very pleasant manner gave us the necessary information to get his work done. He was all smiles for the first time on any of his visits. When he went out to check on the work being done,

nicely asking "just to see how long it will take". I stopped to visit with Miss Lilly and asked her what she had done to him.

She smiled shyly and told me that just prior to WWI, they had been in high school together in Minnesota and at the start of their senior year the war started. Paul, like most in the town, enlisted and went off to war. They had planned on being married as soon as they got out of school but the war came along instead.

During the war, she had heard he had been killed and a few years later she married and moved away. Paul had been injured and by the time he got well enough "to be a fit husband" she was gone. He married and he too raised a family and in time was widowed. Imagine the odds of them finding each other. An old man, bitter in his loneliness found the sweetheart of his childhood dreams.

She, unlike the old grump, had accepted her lot and enjoyed her coffee with friends at the Home and a rare visit from family. She said she dreamed many times of what might have been but never thought for a minute they would find each other. I still think about him holding her hand with his other hand under her armpit to steady her and opening the door for her.

Joy like that I don't think many people get to have.



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Golden K Kiwanis Spotlight

Reggie Skinner



I was born 29 November 1937 in Charles Town, West Virginia. A small town located in the eastern panhandle noted for its racetrack (horse) and the trial of John Brown during the Civil War period. My parents were Reginald (Reg) and Catherine (Cathy) Britt Skinner. My grandfather Britt gave me my nickname Skippy taken from a newspaper comic strip. As I aged Skippy became Skip which many people call me today.

We moved to Huntsville, Alabama in the summer of 1941. The population was around 15,000 with the city limits at the Huntsville Hospital. My father was a civil servant making chlorine and caustic soda during the war years. We lived on Whitesburg Drive, Newman Avenue and Surrey Road.

I grew up as an Episcopalian, and attended the Church of the Nativity located downtown Huntsville. My schooling started with Darin's Kindergarten, East

Clinton Elementary, Fifth Avenue Elementary, Huntsville Junior High School and Huntsville High (9th grade). As a member of the Mayfair gang my primary interests were softball, baseball and tennis. I moved to Moundsville, West Virginia because of my father's job. After high school graduation I attended Virginia Polytechnic Institute and Athens College where I received a BS degree in physics. I later completed a MS degree in systems management from the Florida Institute of Technology.

I joined the United States Army in 1959. My basic training was at Fort Dix, New Jersey and advanced Basic at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. I was assigned to the 84th Field Artillery Corporal Missile Battalion in Vicenza, Italy. I completed my military assignment as a Sergeant E5.

I began my civilian professional career in 1963 working for The Boeing Company on the Saturn V and the Lunar Rover programs over a ten year period. I was placed on the Apollo/Saturn V Roll of Honor for distinguished participation in the first United States manned lunar landing

I joined the civil service in 1973 with the Sam D/Patriot Project Office working in both the Program Management and Technical Management Divisions. In 1985 I began working for the AD Command and Control Systems Project Office as

"I've learned that no one is perfect until you fall in love with them."
Jed Tayler, Arab

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the Program Management Chief, later serving as Chief of Product Assurance, Test and Configuration Management. I was the Deputy Project Manager for ADCCS in 1988 and was responsible for the initial fielding of the Forward Area and Air Defense Command and Control System in 1993.

Since 1988 I have been active in the development, integration and fielding of Tactical Operation Centers and the Airborne Command and Control System Initial fielding of the TOC'S Superior Civilian Performance Award.

I married Diane Snyder in August 1965 and have three children: Judith Anne married Marc Crooks and lives in Huntsville, Stephanie married Rick Betts and lives in Atlanta, Georgia and Matt married Laura Long and lives in Tuscaloosa. We have six grandchildren.

Diane and I are now living in a garden home in the Brookdale Senior Service Community. I enjoy playing bridge, working on my ancestry and rooting for Alabama football. Roll Tide!!

Diane keeps in touch with her Mother who is 101 years young, keeping up with her grandchildren (6), participating in many Brookdale events such as hand & foot card games, prayer group meetings and musical concerts.

As I go into my senior stages of life I appreciate all my friends in Kiwanis Golden K and the Brookdale Community. I can say that my life has been good.

"The cat could very well be man's best friend but would never stoop to admitting it."

Doug Larson

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NEWS FROM HERE AND THERE

In 1907 - Preacher Condemns the Sins of Huntsville

Rev. J. H. Newberry, who is conducting revival meetings in the big tent at the Calhoun lot, says that Huntsville has many influences for evil. He has directed his batteries at the popular amusements of the city and says that the picture shows, the skating rinks and the natatorium should not be tolerated by the Christian parents of this city.

He said that the mothers who allow their daughters to go to the rinks and roll on the skates there are allowing them to run the risk of rolling on into hell. He said that the bathing pool and the picture shows have influences against social purity. He promises to continue in his denunciations until he receives a sign telling him to stop.

Two weeks later the following article appeared:

"The gospel tent that has been put up in the Calhoun lot for the Evangelistic services that were to have begun Sunday afternoon, was blown down in the storm of Sunday afternoon, an hour or two before the services were scheduled to begin. It was impossible to open services then. Preacher Newberry is spending the time working on new sermons."

Huntsville Real Estate Bargains in 1907

\$5,500 Two story, 7 room brick residence on Randolph Street, large lot.

\$5,000 The old Gordon property on Lincoln Street opposite Presbyterian Church. Large lot and brick house.

\$4,100 Two story 8-room brick residence on Randolph Street, lot 106 x 200 feet.

\$2,000 Buys 17 lots in Cast's addition on Paterson Street.

\$2,750 Buys 4-room tenant house on Adams Avenue.

Hollywood Stars Testify at Communist Hearings (Reprinted from 1947 Huntsville City Newspaper)

Actor Ronald Reagan, President of the Screen Actors Guild, testified before the House Committee on Un-American Activities today and said that

"Bachelors know more about women than married men. If they didn't, they'd be married, too."

Adam Dempsey, Athens

the guild is not controlled by leftists.

Yesterday, in its third day of hearings on Communism in the film industry, HUAC declared it would present "at least 79" subversives in the coming days. Actor Robert Taylor testified against other stars. His deposition was not as damning as the panel may have hoped; he failed to specifically name any card-carrying Communist infiltrators.

Taylor's arrival at the session was greeted with appraising gasps by women spectators. He took a seat before a microphone and swiftly stated, "I personally believe the Communist Party should be outlawed. If I had my way they'd all be sent back to Russia."

He suspected a few actors, but added sheepishly, "I don't know whether they're Communists." He noted some Screen Actors Guild members "who, if not Communists, are working awfully hard to be so." After 30 minutes of questioning, Taylor retired from the session.

Next week, a group of Hollywood stars plan to protest the hearings. Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, Jane Wyatt, Danny Kaye and Gene Kelly are among them.



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No One Knew

by Mark Dyer

I have never told anyone but my son-in-law about trying to design a childproof, quick access location for my home defense, always kept loaded shotgun. I suppose now is as good as any for confession.

I had designed and built a special hook that could hold my twenty-gauge, but the location was such that the gun could only be lifted by someone taller and stronger than a member of the Lollypop Guild. While testing my quick draw technique, I unwittingly managed to push in and release the safety. Additionally, I had wisely kept the gun loaded just in case I was attacked while working on my security system. To make things even safer, I had forgotten that I had racked a shell in the chamber.

While adjusting my location, I yanked a little too vigorously upward, pushing downward on the now un-safety secured trigger of my loaded and chambered shotgun. On the upside, the hole in the ceiling was surprisingly small and I managed to hide it with one of my hats. On the downside, my dog, who usually stays right with me on my projects, still holds a grudge for that one. I really prefer we keep this one between just you and me. And for gosh sakes, don't tell Job Service.

AMASNOT (Amazing Manager and Supreme Nurturer of Two) told me I wasn't allowed to bring my gun into the store (very smart on her part), but I was given power tool privileges (questionable on her part). In retrospect, the gun, even loaded with the safety off, was probably less lethal, at least for me, but I can see why you might call this one a toss-up.

I had never used a circular saw before attempting the build-out of our store. It turns out saws are sharp and more than a little unpredictable. Also, I don't see why they have to position the power cord so that during a

"I found out it's not good to talk about my troubles. Eighty percent don't care and the other twenty percent are glad I'm having them."

Tommy LaSorda,
LA Dodgers Mgr.

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deadly kickback with the safety guard disabled by locking it in the up position with a coat hanger, you slice through the cord every single time. This was dang inconvenient all three times it happened and that's not counting both fires and my defibrillation. I barely had any cord left after cut number three and I had ruined two perfectly good shirts and one of my favorite shoes. On top of all that, my eyebrows grew back funny again. I had a good mind to complain to someone.

It is my wish that anyone who reads this might gain wisdom, so pay attention, here is a whole bucket full. If you are trying to loosen your ripping blade from your circular saw, consider not holding it by the blade if you opt to keep it plugged in for either convenience or laziness.

However, if you feel it necessary to grasp the blade while keeping the saw plugged in, make sure to have your wrench situated so that when you accidentally hit the power trigger, the wrench jams into the coat hanger wired open guard and chokes down the blade before it can remove one or more fingers. I found this to be a handy tip and sprained wrists generally heal in a week or so.

While on the subject of fun experiments with electricity, I am reminded of those halcyon days with my father on the jobsite. Some of my most warm and memorable blackouts date back to these experiences. I learned to check things myself when asking if the breaker is switched off.

Dad had a weird sense of humor and he was casual about amperage, voltage and other deadly stuff because he had worked with electricity for so long, his hands no longer conducted the potential. As you might remember from my humorous electrical engineer roommate college days, I loved experiencing potential and my hands conducted wondrously. I watched Dad time and again handle 110 volts and even 220 volts at 200 amps when I knew for certain the circuit was hot. Honest. All of those familiar with electrical work should be shuddering about now.

Unfortunately, I didn't inherit that superpower and many's the time when he was testing circuits by flipping breakers on and off that I was lit up while wiring a plug in another part of the house. I stopped even bothering to yell at my father after regaining consciousness. It took him forever to stop snickering and get back to work, anyway.

To continue this shocking theme, one afternoon while balancing on a swivel chair and wiggling around on top of a desk, I was engaged in connecting a music system for the store. You can probably tell this is not going

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Seen in local church bulletin

"Be a real good kisser. It might make your wife forget that you didn't take out the trash."
Advice on love from Tim, age 7

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"With much affection for what is on the inside of the cup!"

to end well. I had just wrapped everything up and plugged the power cord into a socket when I realized I needed to tighten something I had left loose.

Okay, now it gets a little convoluted, but hang with me. I unplugged the power cord from the back of the music system, but left the other end still plugged into the live socket. I stuck the free end of the power cord in my mouth so that I would have both hands free to work and balance myself from a certain death plunge.

Of course, just letting the cord hang freely would have been just as well, but who could be bothered with having to reach and grab a cord when you could use your convenient "third hand," the one filled with highly conductive saliva, to hold it for you? I was just humming away, cranking my screwdriver, when it dawned on me what I had in my mouth. I yanked it out, spinning the chair and nudging the wheels over the edge of the desk.

Thankfully, the "death" part of death plunge played hooky and, as a bonus, there were no broken bones. Contusions, sprains, torn ligaments and arterial bleeding, basically common day-to-day stuff, was all I had.

I lay there on the floor, keeping pressure on where it was most needed, and examined the cord end that had just been clamped between my teeth (the other end had been yanked out of the socket during this latest disagreement with gravity). Both of the conductive wires ends were completely soaked in spit. Looking at the evidence, I should have blown off my jaw, but since I was now driving better vehicles, I figured THOGAC (The Hooptie Official Guardian Angel Crew) had been retrained by Celestial Job Service for HIPSED (Heavenly Idiot Protection Service - Electrical Division).

Remember, wisdom is our goal here, so feel free to take notes.

"I have six locks on my door, all in a row. When I go out I lock three of them. I figure, no matter how long a thief stands there picking the locks, they're always locking three."

Elaine Boosier

Good Cheese Cake

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* A person was permitted to burn out a stove pipe or chimney flue only when the roof was wet from rain or covered with snow.

* A fine from \$10 to \$50 was assessed upon any individual

who carried an unguarded candle or lamp into a stable, or who kept ashes in barrels, boxes or wooden vessels of any kind.

* All persons attending a fire, and not a member of any company, were required to assist the firemen, if called upon, or pay a fine of \$10.

* All businesses except hotels, boarding houses and apothecaries were required to close on Sundays. Barbers could keep their shop open until noon.

* A fine of \$1 was assessed upon any person who bought goods or commodities of any sort on Sunday. An exception was made in the case of sickness or necessity.

* No sports, public exercises, exhibition or game was allowed on Sunday. Violators were subject to a \$5 fine. A similar penalty was required of any person who loaded or unloaded

a wagon, or drove horses, cattle, sheep or swine through the streets, except in case of necessity, on that day.

* If a person erected a frame building on the public square, or within 300 feet of its boundaries, he was fined \$50 for each day the structure was allowed to stand, either in process or after completed.

* A tax of \$1 per head was levied for each hog more than six months old and for each litter of pigs found at large in the city limits.

* A tax of .50 cents per head was levied annually on dogs.

* Kite-flying was banned as a misdemeanor.

* Bathing in the Big Spring branch within less than 300 yards below the dam, if done between the hours of 4 a.m. and 10 p.m., constituted another misdemeanor.



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PET TIPS FROM ANGEL

Little Champ, the Chihuahua Hero



At 6 pounds, ChiChi might be most at home in a handbag. "He's small and I can scoop him up with one hand," says Mary Lane of her energetic pet. "Most people see him and think he's useless."

But last October, the Chihuahua mix proved to be more than just a pretty face. Mary and her husband Rick were relaxing on the beach one afternoon while on vacation in North Carolina's Outer Banks. As usual, ChiChi was lying on his blanket in his own little beach chair.

"We had our noses buried in books," recalls Rick, "when suddenly the dog became extremely agitated. His bark was different from anything we had heard before. And he would not let us ignore him."

ChiChi ran back and forth in front of his chair, straining at his leash as if to run down the beach. He had never acted like this before. Rick and Mary Lane were paying attention now to see what was happening.

The Lanes sat up to see two elderly women in the ocean, about 100 yards down the beach and 10 feet offshore. One was on her back, her head tipping under the waves. The other was frantically trying to keep her friend's head above the surface. It definitely looked like something was very wrong.

The Lanes rushed across the sand and into the surf. Rick waded to the woman in danger of drowning, while Mary held fast to the other one and pulled her up on the beach.

"Then I went back to help Rick," Mary recounts. "The sand dropped

off steeply and a riptide was sucking the woman under. She was completely disoriented."

Still recuperating from recent knee surgery, the woman had been unable to turn over or push herself up. "Her friend had been in danger too," Mary says. "The waves were pushing her around. There's no way she could have held on much longer. And the riptide that day was so strong."

The women hadn't called out for help. "They were struggling so hard, there was no time for screaming," Mary recalls. But ChiChi had sensed danger nonetheless. "The dog knew that something was really wrong and did everything he knew to do, trying to get our attention. I've puzzled and puzzled over how he knew."

Duty done, ChiChi was back in his chair, asleep, by the time the two women were on dry ground and the Lanes had returned to their blankets. The women were shaken but okay, and after the Lanes delivered them to their condo, they all said they'd see one another again during the week.

The Lanes never did get their names, and didn't make contact again.

As for ChiChi, he's a celebrity back home in Greensboro, North Carolina. His veterinarian has a local newspaper clipping hanging in his office about ChiChi, and the Lanes have ordered a special collar with the words "Hero Dog" embroidered on it.

They hope it will bring a modicum of respect to little Chihuahuas everywhere.

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From the Desk of Tom Carney

Monte Sano Railroad

Near the intersection of Tollgate Road and Bankhead Parkway in northeast Huntsville are several entrances into the western slope of Monte Sano mountain. Take any one of these trails and you will find yourself going back into another time, a time of long ago, a time when Huntsville was much simpler and life was not the complicated reality that it is today.

Yet, people then, as today, had dreams and ambitions. The dream that once existed on these now quiet trails on the western slope of Monte Sano Mountain took the form of a railway ... the Monte Sano Railway.

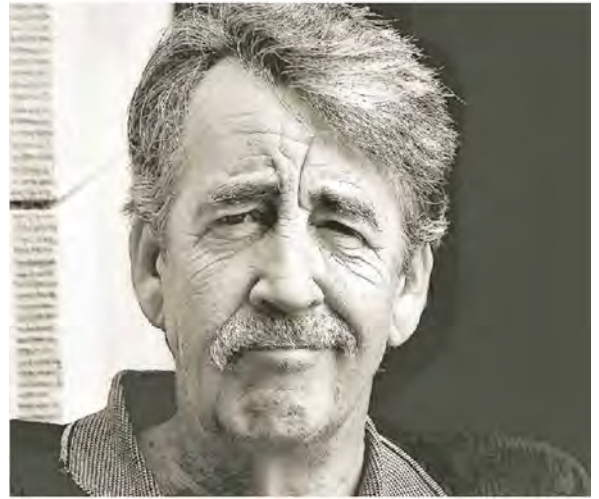
The year was 1888 and with the ever growing popularity of the grand hotel on top of the mountain it became clear that better transportation up the mountain was needed.

The Huntsville Belt Line and Monte Sano Railway Co. employed engineer Arthur Owen Wilson to construct the railroad to the hotel. The line started from the Union Depot and ran south along Jefferson Street. At Clinton, it turned east towards the mountain and eventually down into Fagin's Hollow, where it began a circuitous route, gaining altitude all the time. Winding and circling to the rim of the mountain, the route rose so steeply that the grade seemed impossible for an engine to ascend. The remainder of the way lay directly across the top of the plateau to the back yard of the hotel. Half an hour was required for the entire journey when the line was finished.

In the construction of the Monte Sano Railway, more than 300 persons were employed on a regular basis. The weekly payroll was approximately \$10,000. Mr. Wilson, himself, designed the three coaches that comprised the train and the St. Charles Car Co. manufactured them.

The engine was of standard gauge, although smaller than those used on the trunk line. The compact size of the engine was the reason the line was called the "dummy line," as the undersized locomotive resembled a trolley car. Of course, some Huntsville wags called it the dummy line because, "only a dummy would ride that steep and perilous route to or from the mountain!"

Sure enough, not long after the railway opened, there occurred an incident that seriously damaged the popularity of the railway. Returning from the hotel, the train's sand-pipes



clogged as the engineer tried to check the speed of the locomotive down a steep incline. The train went out of control and left the tracks. Luckily no one was injured, but people then became understandably nervous about taking this precarious path to and from the mountain.

Luckily, this accident had no lasting effect on consumer confidence and the Monte Sano Railway was successful in bringing visitors to the mountain and business as the hotel continued to flourish.

Unfortunately by 1895 the hotel was suffering financial problems and the railroad had to be shut down. Tracks were torn up and sold as scrap to pay off debts.

Now, with the passage of time, the old railroad bed and stone foundations of the trestles are all that remain. They say that as late as the 1950s there were still railroad ties stacked up near the area known as the "button hole." But they're gone now.

So, take a walk on the old railroad bed trail. Knowing what was once there makes the trek all the more worthwhile.



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Old Pence

by Malcolm W. Miller

His name was Pennsylvania Jones, however everyone that knew him referred to him as "Old Pence." He was a very old black man. How old was he? I doubt if he really knew himself; but suffice it to say, he was very very old.

Old Pence just seemed to kind of drift in and start living with an old black lady who lived just down the road a piece from us. Her preacher husband had just passed away about the time World War II started and no doubt she needed help around the house carrying in wood and doing chores.

Since Old Pence did not have a radio and did not get the paper he would stop me as I passed by the little two room shack where he was staying. As I recall he would always ask, "Well, son, how is the war?" I would always stop and chat with him awhile. We would talk about everything; the war, the weather, the crops, friends, etc.

I would always leave Old Pence and walk on down the dirt road feeling better than I did before I had talked to him. I felt better about people, the war and life in general.

My family was poor as were many others during these times but this old gentleman really had nothing. His shoes

had long since fallen apart and were tied to his feet with wire and twine. His baggy clothes had been patched so many times that they looked like a quilt. During this time there were no Government welfare checks for the poor and other people looked after the poor as best they could. I know from talking to him that there were times when he was hungry, however he seemed to always look on the bright side.

Almost every day when the weather permitted you would see Old Pence going down the lane past our house headed for the river, loaded down with fishing poles, a burlap bag to put his catch in, and a homemade chicken wire dip net. If he saw me outside he would always say in his very optimistic way, "I am really going to catch a bunch today."

It didn't seem as though he

caught any big fish, but whatever he caught he took to his home and it was cooked for dinner, whether it was a carp or a turtle. He was always happy regardless of the catch of the day or anything else that was going on.

Many times, even today, when I really get depressed and life seems to be really bad for me, I think of Old Pence and remember our conversations and it makes me realize that I have much to be thankful for. There are always so many people who have it much worse than you think you do. Pence taught me lessons that I'll never forget.

Thanks to an old black man who lived many years ago I learned to look on the brighter side when things are rough. It is amazing to me which people make excellent long lasting impressions on the young.

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"When your kids become teenagers, be sure and get a dog so that someone in the house is happy to see you."

Mae Johns, Gurley



Mill Village Baseball

by Tom Carney

Years ago, Huntsville's attention was directed to Atlanta, Georgia as the Atlanta Braves battled for the World Series championship. Few people realized that baseball could have also put our city on the map ... if things had worked out a little differently.

Baseball history in Huntsville, like much of our history, is full of irony and untold stories. Perhaps one of the best tales of baseball is one of a young man who grew up over in Georgia and made his way to Huntsville in pursuit of a career.

The young man was born near Royston, Georgia in 1886. At a young age he discovered the sport of baseball and immediately it became the passion in his life. This was in the days when every city, town and mill village had its own teams and professional players were almost unheard of. At the age of nineteen the young man left home to pursue his new career. Walking and hitching rides on wagons he made his way across the Southland, looking for the "Big Time," or so he thought. According to one report of the day, there were so many baseball teams that the scores were no longer listed in the newspaper.

The young man sought out every sandlot team in town trying out for a position but was repeatedly turned down.

One team offered him a position as an unpaid player, but he had to furnish his own uniform and glove. The young man had a glove but did not have the money to buy the uniform.

The manager of a local team, a mill village team, listened to the young man and then burst out laughing.

"Son, you better go on back home and get a real job. If you think you can make a living playing baseball, why, you're crazier than you look!"

Probably a large part of it had to do with the exorbitant salary he was asking... \$65.00 a month. Disappointed, he left Huntsville after only a few days and eventually ended up in Detroit where he landed a job with a local baseball team.

This team went on to become one of the best known teams in baseball history and the young man, Ty Cobb, became a legend in his own time.

Spring WILL be here soon! Wishing a Happy Spring to the Readers of Old Huntsville Magazine and especially the Huntsville High Class of 1966!



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THE OLD ROLLING STORE

by Rhonda Nix as told by Faye Miller, Mr. Lee's Daughter

Honk! Hoooonk! I can still hear the sound of the air pressure horns blowing as Daddy would sound the welcome of the old peddling truck as it entered the old cotton fields in the rural areas of Madison and Triana.

This sound generated a bustle of excitement among many on a hot summer day. It mattered not whether you were hard at work in the fields, doing home chores, or just playing in the yard, it had your attention.

The sounding of a bell ringing signified the end of a factory mill work day for the adult or the end of a school day for young children. The sound of the old air horns blowing sig-

nified it was about to be break time for the cotton pickers and anyone else under the sound of its friendly blow.

Work often ceased for just a few minutes as cotton field workers came dragging their sacks behind them, mamas with children in hand or running alongside the truck as many tried to be the first to place an order with the peddler, Mr. Wiley Lee, my dad. Whether you were there for a needed supply of soap or thread or something more enjoyable such as a tasty lunch snack or candy treat, you were about to have a memorable experience. So you excitedly waited your turn to shop on the old rolling store truck.

Bologna, cheese, crackers and ice-cold colas were among the favorites among the adults. While the children could hardly contain themselves as they ordered items such as candy, Cracker Jacks and Moon Pies.

It only took small change

to be able to obtain these luxuries and the children were not ashamed to scramble for the nickels and dimes it took to make a purchase. The shopper never had to beware because on the rolling truck you always got your money's worth and it was always a fair trade.

However, Daddy did have to sometimes beware because as is sometimes the case in the retail business there were those who shopped the truck that were known to have sticky hands. But Daddy was wise and diligent in his business and because of this, he often limited the number of customers who could board the truck at one time.

Of course, in the early days, some people with less money to spend chose to barter instead. It was not uncommon for Daddy to have a chicken coup on the truck to house those he had obtained in exchange for some needed or desired item a customer may have had.

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Daddy didn't usually turn anyone down and because of that there was always those whom he allowed to purchase on credit, sometimes even if it was a disadvantage for him.

One granddaughter tells of a memory she has while on a trip with him. As he approached one particular stop, he explained to her to pay attention as he was about to teach her a lesson. As he pulled up to the stop, he explained to her that these people did not owe him any money. Happy to see him, the people began to come out of nowhere to shop on the rolling store. However, as he approached the next stop, he explained to notice that this group of people did owe him money. She remembers watching in amazement, as people began to run and hide to keep from being seen and I imagine to escape the temptation to go farther in debt.

Daddy knew the value of top customer service for while he was working and making a living, it was also a pleasure to be delivering to the people the things that were much needed and appreciated in country life. For life in the country rural areas of Madison and Triana and the old Huntsville areas were quite different from that of town. Simple items that some may take for granted were a blessing to be delivered by the visiting truck.

Over the years my Dad had several employees or helpers to assist him. That is if you can count his children and grandchildren who may have ridden for a day here and there in exchange for a few dollars or candy treats. Not to mention a great experience and memory that they carry with them to this day.

I especially remember being paid \$3.00 a day to assist him on an occasional route. These are treasured memories and I was proud to get to work with my Dad and see him hard at work. Those who were too young to have the privilege of traveling on the route still have their memories of the special treats he would gather off the truck and give them when they visited.

I'm sure having grandchildren of his own caused Daddy to especially enjoy the children on his peddling route. He often gave treats to little ones who otherwise may not have gotten one.

Also in the earlier years when I was still at home, after Daddy would return home he

would dump all the change onto the kitchen table for me and Mama to count. Training a young entrepreneur of his own, he would give me and Mama the nickels and pennies for helping him.

The year was the late 1940s. The old peddling truck was a 1947 Chevrolet and found its life's purpose shortly thereafter. Daddy had purchased the truck from my Uncle Vick Cantrell who lived in Georgia. Daddy was very innovative so the idea of a peddling/rolling truck was born. Thus a 20+ year adventure began in the 1940s and continued

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"Science does not have a moral dimension. It is like a knife. If you give it to a surgeon or a murderer, each will use it differently."

Wernher von Braun

through the 1960s.

Fortunately, the Double Cola Company painted its advertisement and logo on the side of the truck. This kept Daddy from having to have paint jobs done on the truck and it always made its massive presence even more inviting.

Working in the cotton fields, gardens, etc. was hard work but the welcome sound of the old peddling trucks weekly visits made the hot and humid summer days a little more bearable. I imagine as the customers patiently waited for their turn, the sweltering heat was eased and somewhat more tolerable just anticipating that ice cold Double Cola that awaited them straight out of the cooler. Another favorite was the delicious watermelons. I remember Daddy would make special trips to Birmingham to purchase truckloads of watermelons to deliver and sell out on the route. What a delicious treat!

For many customers, it was the highlight of the week to shop at the rolling store. In a day when things were brought to the customer instead of the customer "going to town" so to speak, this was considered a simple pleasure.

But for Daddy it was pleasure mixed with work as it was sometimes quite difficult to make a living with the rolling store in later years. Times had changed so much and the growth and modernization of the city contributed to fewer farm hands and caused customers to be less in number.

However, as time marched on, the years had also taken a toll on the old peddling truck. The speedometer broke around 1957 but Daddy continued to run her till beyond 1967. (I don't know the year she actually retired.) She also had to have occasional replacement surgery of which some parts were said to be that of a Ford.

It is also said that Daddy once drove her thru a tornado, after which she never seemed the same. But as long as Daddy felt it was necessary, he continued to serve the people on his routes.

On one incident in particular, I remember the old truck had to get out of her comfort zone. My Daddy's sister Aunt Lila who lived in Nashville had taken sick and we decided we would all load up and go see her. What vehicle better to take us than the old rolling truck. With lawn chairs in the aisles and food in the coolers we set out on this unusual journey in our makeshift R.V. Being dependable as usual, the peddling

truck brought us all home safe and sound.

The old truck earned a spot of respect as an icon in our family. We still cherish pictures as she boldly stands in the background of heirloom photographs. Yes, she was a faithful and trusted friend of my Daddy's and they spent many, many happy days together filling the needs of their customers.

I don't know how many stops Daddy made on a given daily route but customers knew the old truck only came a few times a week which made its visits even more special.

You may be one that remembers Mr. Lee and the old rolling store. If so, just close your eyes and imagine with me as you hear the air horns blowing, but this time instead of a welcome of its arrival, picture it disappearing in a dust cloud as it turns to leave the cotton fields of old Huntsville, representative of a day gone by.

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The Dog Catcher's Nightmare

by *Patty Trigg*



There are times when the least little thing will trigger a memory. This story popped into my mind while I was walking the dogs this morning and I suddenly began to laugh out loud.

Foxy was our traveling companion and toured with our band on the road. Foxy got his name because he looked like a miniature fox, especially when he curled up with his tail swooped over his nose. Part Welsh Corgi and part Pekinese with long golden red hair, he weighed in at about ten pounds. Foxy had a wonderful disposition and personality and by all accounts had more fans than we did. He was so popular his feet almost never touched the ground.

In the early 70s our band began to step up in quality job performances. The job that brought this laughing smile was in Reno, Nevada. We were scheduled to perform at the Sahara Hotel & Casino, quite the feather in our cap.

It just so happened that the Sahara was in the process of remodeling and parking was minimal. We traveled in a commercial van and had commercial tags and found a commercial parking spot across from the Sahara and close enough

to allow us to go check our setup before that evening's performance. Well within the fifteen minutes allotted on the parking sign, we returned to our van to find the front of the van was being hoisted up.

The first thing I noticed was that the front windows were completely down and there was no sign of Foxy. I didn't totally panic; however, the pitch and level of my voice raised considerably. Approaching the tow truck driver, I asked him nicely where our dog was and if he would please release our van, and that we would be glad to pay the required fees. The gentleman told me that once he had been called by the police and the van was connected there was nothing he could do.

I then noticed the police officer. My level of discomfort was climbing dramatically. I asked the officer, "Where is our dog, sir?"

With a brusque attitude he replied, "He's going down the street."

I couldn't help myself as I began to transform into mama bear mode. Barely a level below out of control, I asked, "What were you thinking, these are the worst drivers in the world, they'll run him down. He's just a little dog." I added, "I can't believe you would just open the door and turn him loose on these streets. If he is killed by these crazy drivers, I will sue you and this city for everything you have."

By now a small crowd of folks had gathered and were watching this situation as it began to look like it was going to spiral out of control for the police of-



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"Today I'm doing nothing because I started doing it yesterday and I wasn't finished - and I'm no quitter!"

Ken Owens, retired

ficer. He looked around at the crowd and realizing a calmer approach was called for, he then turned to me and said, "I called the pound and they picked him up and they are taking him to their offices. You can pick him up there."

"You what?" I replied. "If you take our van how will we be able to get to him? You better hope they didn't put him in with a bunch of mean dogs and he gets hurt."

The officer once again looked around and the crowd had grown considerably. The band by now had blended in with the crowd of fifty or more. It was just the officer and myself front and center. In this momentary pause, I looked the situation over and noticed that our van wasn't that far off the ground and the driver's window was still open.

Following an impulse, I dodged wires, ducked under the tow bar, threw the driver's door open, stepped up into our van and wrapped myself around the steering wheel.

I turned to the officer still standing on the sidewalk and said, "You'll have to beat me to death if you want to take our van. What is the address of the pound and what direction do we go?"

The crowd in unison turned from me to the officer. I'm sure in his personal thoughts my offer of how he could dislodge me was a desirable option. However, in response he released a heavy sigh, then turned to the tow truck driver and motioned for him to lower the van. A cheer went up from the crowd.

Once the van was lowered and the band members were loaded, the officer gave us directions and an address. We pulled out and as I looked in the rearview mirror I watched as the officer folded his ticket book and as he turned to walk away, the crowd began to disperse.

We made a beeline to the pound, there in the front office being given the royal treatment was my well-mannered, cute, adorable and irresistible baby boy, Foxy, tail wagging and a few happy barks of greetings. We thanked the staff for taking such good care of our little boy.

A most eventful and successful day.

When Your Pet is Coughing

When pets start coughing, it's sometimes a warning sign that something serious—like pneumonia, asthma, bronchitis, a collapsed windpipe or even a heart attack—is going on. How can you tell when to be concerned?

"In a dog, if he's been coughing more than 24 hours, something is wrong and the animal should be checked out," says Carol Macherey, D.V.M., a veterinarian in private practice in Nashville. Coughing is rare in cats, with the exception of expelling hair balls, and should always be seen by a vet.

"Coughing is the most frequent sign of heart disease," adds James Buchanan, D.V.M., professor of cardiology at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine in Philadelphia. If your dog is coughing and is breathing rapidly or seems short of breath, or if he has a swollen abdomen, get to the vet immediately.

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August 2015 and weigh 51 lbs. I have a great sense of humor, a loving heart and I love to play and cuddle.

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Huntsville Coffee Talk

by Aunt Eunice

*With pearls of wisdom
contributed by the Liar's Table*



This was from one of Aunt Eunice's columns, early in 1998. Aunt Eunice authored this column for many years in the Old Huntsville Magazine. She was a feisty and beloved restaurant owner and friend to many. She passed away in February of 2004.

Well, folks, it's the political season again. Seems like they are crawling out of the woodwork!

Gee, Mark Hall, are people trying to tell you something? Three people have already declared for your office and more are rumored to be waiting in the wings!

One of the folks running against Mark is Sharon Brakefield who had a big gala affair at the old Kildare place to announce her candidacy.

Sandra Rhodes will make her big announcement March 14 about the big political jump she is about to take. I think we're going to be hearing a lot from this lady in the future.

Senator Shelby stopped by for some serious handshaking this week. He said he just came to see me but I noticed the way he kept eyeing the ham and biscuits!

If you tried to go to the "Outback" on Valentines Day, guess what? Only a three hour wait! Tough luck, Lloyd, wish you were doing better!

"If walking were all that good for your health, our postal workers would be immortal!"

Barb Saunders, Hampton Cove

I was really surprised & happy to have Kathryn Tucker Windham stop by to have breakfast with me. She is a master story teller and such a nice lady.

Jeff Enfinger is becoming my regular coffee pourer. He's trying to get a head start on the other politicians!

A special "Good Luck" to Gary Dobbs and Toni Lowery on their new radio program, WTKI 1450-AM's The Morning Mix with Gary and Toni. They are a great team!

Things are looking good for Congressman Bud Cramer in the next election. No one can really say that he hasn't worked hard for North Alabama.

Watch out for Herb Dixon, "The man with the plan," who is also running for Congress. Rumor has it he may surprise everyone!

Well, campaigning hasn't even started but I'm already making my first prediction. Tim Morgan, District Attorney, will walk away with it for another term. Hard to beat a man doing a good job!

Well, I thought Sheriff Whisante was going to be unopposed, but rumor has it that two others are already

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making campaign noises. Good Luck Joe, and keep up the good work!

Hats off to the Seniors from the 1st Baptist Church in Ardmore. Gene Shannon loads them up and brings them in for breakfast on a regular basis. Boy, can they put away the country ham!

My good friend, Roy Martin of Plymouth, MN wrote me a note last week to tell me how wonderful he thought it was to get the Twickenham Church of Christ service on the Internet all the way up there!

We hear that J.B. Tucker, Mayor of Hurricane Creek, is recuperating nicely from his recent heart surgery but the diet is one he's not too crazy about. Bring him on by sometime Margaret, and we'll fill him up with biscuits and gravy!

All the newcomers from St. Louis are fitting in nicely. I overheard one the other day talking about those "yankees up north!". And talk about eating! You'd think they never had ham and biscuits in their lives to watch them put it away!

Friends of Elise Stephens, of Historic Huntsville fame, recently threw a big going away party for her before she departed for Galveston, Texas. She's going to be working with a nautical Historic Foundation out there.

A big thanks to Bill Gates who donated all those computers to the Huntsville Public Library. Anyone who has ever wanted to fool around on a computer just head on down to the library. The folks there will be happy to help you.

If you think folks on the mountain are worried about the possible landslide you should be in Ms. Mayor's position. Not only is she raising Cain with all the departments trying to get the problem solved, she is also rumored to have taken hot meals to the men working on the

mountain.

By the way Keith Clines, who wrote the heading for your story about the landslide? Land Values Slide on Monte Sano? That one should get an award.

Look for a local political scandal to surface this summer. That's all I'm saying about this one. Stay tuned and learn something!

For all you people who have more money than you know what to do with... have you ever considered donating to the Huntsville Humane Society? Lots of little pets out there need good homes.

That's all for this month. Just remember I love you and come by to see me.

Don't Sussie

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Fri. Mar. 9 at 7 pm
Sat. Mar 10 at 2:30 and 7pm
Sun Mar 11 at 2:30 pm



MOODS

All of us have moods - both good and bad. When you're feeling especially good, make a list of what made you feel good. Make another list of things to do to cheer you up when you feel low.

Then when a bad day comes along, read your list and see if anything on there can make you feel better. You'll be surprised about how this works for you.

Precious Memories

by Bill Stewart

My memories are very special about one of Huntsville's early baseball teams - the 1955 Huntsville Parkers.

I was a proud team member and we were the State Champions going to Kansas for the Semipro Tournament. We won 3rd place out of 38 teams all over the country.

I will never forget the wonderful send-off and the welcome Huntsville gave us. The city was so proud of their team and showed it.

Time takes its toll, and I know many of the team has passed away, but the few of us that remain still have wonderful memories.

The above picture is of us boarding the train in Huntsville, a happy and exciting moment, to attend a tournament.

From left to right in the picture - Jimmy & Beany Faulkenberry, Bill Stewart, Payton Drake, W.C. Baker, Bill Gant, Donnie Mincer, John Gaught. We loved each other as friends and teammates.

I am now living in Columbia TN working at Oaks Nichols Funeral Home where I am known as the "Last One to Let You Down."



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REMEMBERING THE NUWAY RESTAURANT

by Buddy Esslinger

I was born and raised in Madison County, just east of the Big Cove Community. My two older brothers, (Bobby and Neel) and myself, lived with our parents, Marvin and Bessie (Sherrill) Esslinger on the farm located on what was then called Gurley-New Hope Pike. We raised cotton, corn, wheat, and chickens and had several dairy cows. We basically provided our own food but occasionally went to town (Huntsville) to purchase staple goods and take care of other business.

Most of the time going to town was done on Saturdays. This was in the 1940s era. We all (five) would pile in the truck and would be gone most of the day. Sometimes Dad would drop Mother off at her mother's, (Maude Sherrill, "Big Mama") home. She lived on Whitesburg Drive, where "Old Bull Dog Antiques" used to be located.

Dad, my brothers and I would go downtown to get haircuts, etc. I remember Dad would give us fifty cents or maybe a dollar with instructions not to spend it all in one place because there wasn't any more, so we learned to spread it around. Also we were told what time we would meet to go back home. This was usually somewhere around the old Courthouse.

There were two movie theaters ("Lyric" on Washington Street and "Grand" on Jefferson Street) that we could go to for ten cents each. We would get to see the main feature, cartoons, news around the world and previews of coming attractions. I would go over

to "Tom Dark Drugs" and sit on the floor and look at comic books (usually I would buy one or two for five cents each) and get an ice cream cone.

The one special place I enjoyed going to was my Grandfather Sam Sherrill's (Big Daddy) cafe, called the "NuWay". This was located on the north side of the Square.

When Big Daddy opened the "NuWay", hamburgers and hot dogs were seven cents each; coffee, coke, sweet and chocolate milk were five cents each; and two fresh eggs with bacon, toast, and coffee was thirty-five cents. Later prices had increased to ten cents for hamburgers and hot dogs.

As you entered the "NuWay" there was a pay phone on the left that cost five cents to make a call. The counter was lined with stools from one end to the other that were stationary to the floor and would swivel.

I remember my Big Daddy would take his long enamel pan over to Hill's Grocery Store on the east side of the Square to buy fresh ground beef. This was 100% pure beef. He would go back to the "NuWay" and sit down in his office taking an ice cream scoop to form balls of ground beef, stacking them on a tray. They would put the ground beef on the grill and flatten them with a spatula.

He also served some of the best homemade chili prepared by Mr. Russell Bennett. People working downtown would frequent his cafe, because service was pretty quick, food was real good and reasonable. Others coming into town to do business would also eat there. I never went there when it wasn't busy.

When Big Daddy retired he sold the "NuWay" to his son, Glenn Sherrill of Chattanooga, who co-owned the Krystal Company chain, and the name changed to "Krystal".

Several years later, the "Krystal" in Huntsville was sold to Mr. Means and thereafter became known as "Snow White". It was where the "Wild Rose Cafe" was located. At that time two hamburgers and a coke were only twenty-five cents.

What a bargain that would be in our present day.

Edit Note: Buddy and his sweet wife Sandra will be celebrating their 58th wedding anniversary on March 5. They're still in love! Happy Anniversary to a very special couple.

"Too many people spend money they haven't earned, to buy things they don't want, to impress people they don't like."

Will Rogers



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