



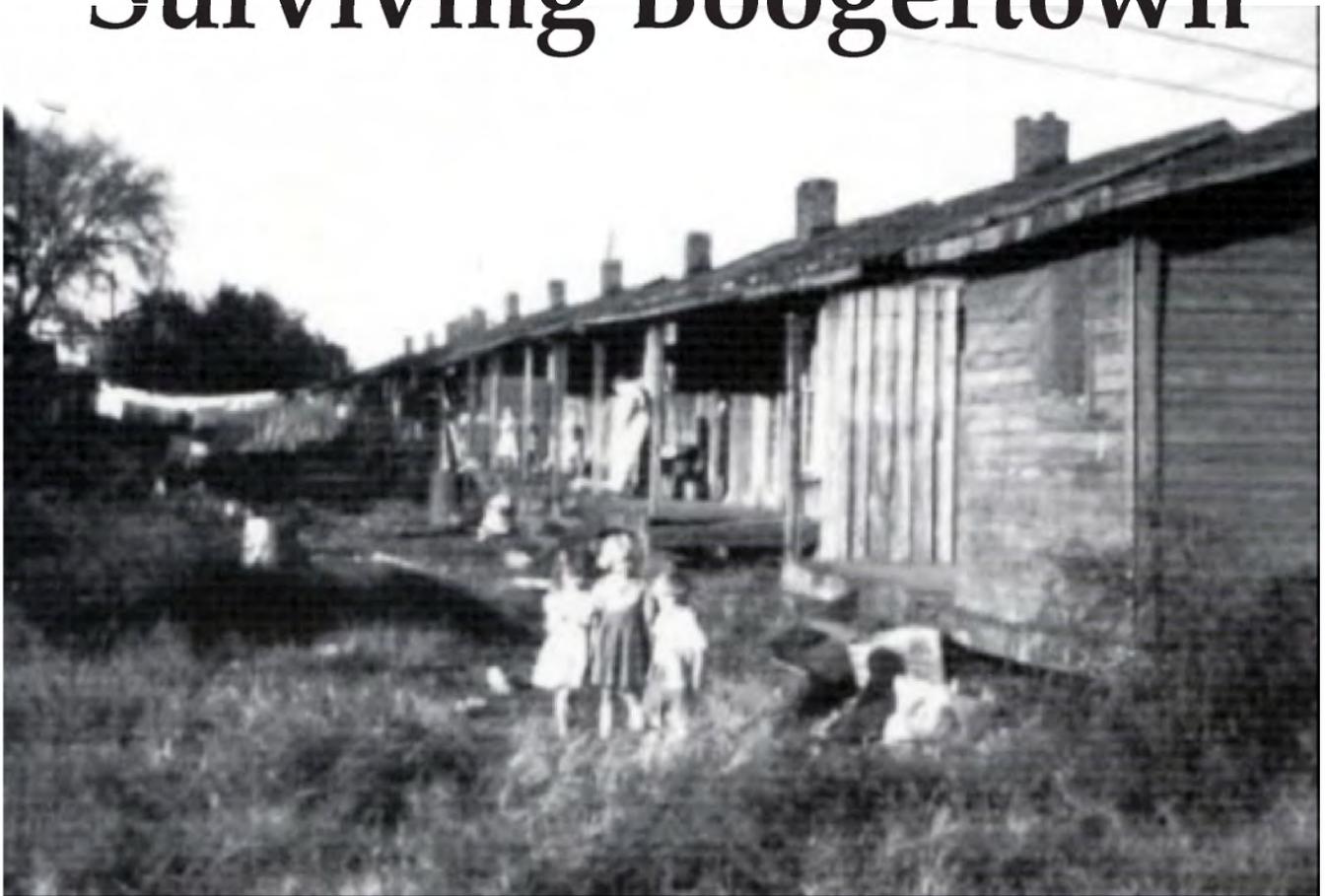
No. 314
April 2019



Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

Surviving Boogertown



Also in this issue: **Ghost Children of Walker Street**

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Doime Lewter
Mac Lewter

Surviving Boogertown

*As told to John E. Carson,
by Judy Hallman*

Also known as "Dixie Village", Boogertown was located just west of the J. C. Brown General Merchandise building around the current intersection of 9th Avenue and 9th Street. It was constructed by the West Huntsville Spinning Co. for its employees. When the mill relocated out of Huntsville, it was originally slated for demolition in 1956, but the project was delayed to 1958. Demolition consisted of burning the houses and relocating the residents. The largest of Huntsville's slums, it qualified the city for the Federal funds used for redevelopment of other areas.

Judy Hallman lived in Boogertown for a number of years growing up until her family was able to move on. This is the first in a series of stories she shared with the magazine after seeing the Old Huntsville postcard with her picture on it and contacting the publisher.

Most people won't talk about Boogertown. Rundown shacks

on the wrong side of the tracks, it was a place that made the residents of Huntsville, Alabama very uncomfortable.

There are many misconceptions about that place - one of them being that the residents were people of color. There were no black people there at all. Most of the residents were related in one way or another as the houses were originally built by a cotton mill that had relocated from Decatur to Huntsville. If you did not work there you could not live in the houses. Once touted as a workingman's paradise, the mill villages declined with the mills and most folks found themselves unemployed.

My Great Grandmother and Aunt ran moonshine and I quit school at 12. When I was 15, I went to work at the Crystal Cafe and helped buy food for our family. My Mother worked also, and my father was a roofer and eventually became an alcoholic.

I can remember folks saying nothing good ever came out of Boogertown. I was born there, as were some of my brothers and sisters. All told, there were six sisters and six brothers born to my parents, Aline Ledbetter Ward and Fred Ward. One sister was lost at birth.

It was a hard life there, with drugs, drinking and fighting and as a little girl I remember we had no bathroom and I took baths in a foot tub. We were hungry much of the time and relied on government commodities as one source of food. We did not know

**Remember parents,
never let your daughter
take a purse to church
large enough to hold
a kitten.**



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what food stamps were in those days. The cheese was the best you could get and so was the peanut butter, but they gave us some beef in a can that we now call dog food and most dogs would not eat it!

We were survivors, most of us kids raising kids. Playing in the yard was all we had, and we made most of the things we played with. Once I fell off the back porch and landed in a pile of garbage almost cutting off my thumb on an old tin can. There was no doctor or Emergency Room for me; Momma tore up a diaper, bandaged my hand and said, "Go out and play."

We lived in a four-room shanty with one bedroom, a kitchen, a living room. We all lived there: Momma, Daddy, Diann, Tommy, Barbara and Susan, who slept on the back porch, screened in to keep out the critters.

Fights were common and would spread from one shanty to the next and the next with kids yelling, "My dad is going to beat up your dad!" It was not unusual to have the whole community involved before they ended.

We would watch for the Salva-

tion Army wagon at lunch time. The wagon would bring peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and milk to drink and the kids would all run to meet it. It was often the only food they would eat the whole day.

We were thankful to God for that wagon and looking back, I know where my strength came from; if you could survive Boogertown, then with God's help you could do anything! We had no television, no toilets and most of the time just each other and the clothes on our backs.

But it was not until I grew up that I knew just how bad it was there and one thing I learned from the experience was to never say I was limited because of where I came from.

To say that nothing good ever came out of that place is just not true - my family counts 179 members that got started in Boogertown. Among those are members of almost every profession; Doctor, Real Estate, Contactor, Roofer, Nurse, City workers, Policemen, Business owner, Painters, Carpenters, Landscapers, Wedding Coordinator, Children of God, City Councilmen, Hous-

ing Authority, Firemen, Photographer, U.S. Armed Forces - Marines and Army and a Medical Tech.

Back in the late 1950s when that postcard photo was taken of my sister and brother, with me in the middle, Boogertown made people uncomfortable and still does to this day. If truth be told, it was Boogertown, more than any other slum around Huntsville, that qualified the city for Federal funds that were used for the development of our highways and other improvements the city needed to keep up with its growth. It was Boogertown that produced some of the city's best benefactors in one area or another.

So, before you get on your high horse and ride away, remember, it was the horses that drew the Salvation Army wagon that helped create the Huntsville you know today and the people that survived life in Boogertown that helped to run it.



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Good health begins with good information.

Healthgrades has announced that Huntsville Hospital is the only hospital in Alabama to be included in America's 50 Best Hospitals for Cardiac Surgery for five consecutive years (2015-2019).

The respected national organization also recognized Huntsville Hospital as the only one in Alabama to be among the Top 5% of hospitals in the nation for Spine Surgery for 2019.

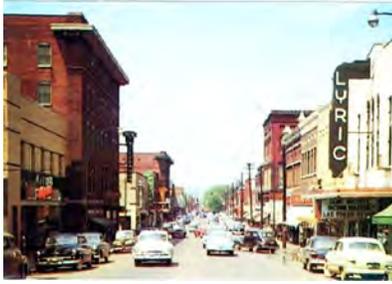
And if you're counting stars, Healthgrades also gave a Five-Star distinction (its highest rating) to Huntsville Hospital's Total Knee Replacement program.

Improving lives.



Bank Night

by Walt Terry



"Bank Night" at the Lyric Theater back in the bleak days of the Great Depression offered chances of sudden riches - as much as \$100 - to a very lucky ticket holder.

For the brief time that these events were held, my parents seldom missed one. Usually, I'd go along with them even if it meant I'd have to suffer through Shirley Temple's "Good Ship Lollipop" or Jenette McDonald and Nelson Eddy swapping halitosis in a musical.

I remember one event with clarity. There was the usual packed house on a night in late spring, or early summer

in 1934. There came a sudden swishing sound, accompanied by two big puffs of "smoke" on each side of the stage. Someone yelled "FIRE!" and the crowd exploded into instant panic.

My good mother, a school teacher to the very end, stood up on her seat calling out, "Stay Calm! Leave in orderly fashion!"

With the cringing, self-consciousness of a typical thirteen-year old, I felt more embarrassment than fear, especially when it turned out to be a false alarm. The swishing sound and the "smoke" came from the initial start-up of two big ventilating fans. The "smoke" was just dust that had collected in the duct work.

And there was my mother, standing tall in her seat and yelling for all to be calm - I felt like crawling under my own seat.

It wasn't until some years later that I became mature enough to appreciate her level-headed and responsible behavior.

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BRING HISTORY TO LIFE AS YOU STROLL THROUGH THE OLD TOWN HIDDEN GARDEN TOUR

by Mike Self

This summer, as part of the yearlong Alabama 200 Bicentennial Celebration in 2019, Huntsville's Old Town Historic District will hold its Hidden Gardens Tour. The date is Sunday, June 2, in the afternoon from 1:00-5:00 p.m. (rain date following weekend).

In addition to the gardens, in recognition of Alabama's 200th Birthday, Old Town will also highlight a few of the many homes whose stories have made significant contribution to our State's history.

As visitor's stroll from garden to garden they will also be able to locate yard markers which share a brief story of each home's history. Old Huntsville is pleased to be able to share a few of these stories with our readers. (Note: these homes will not have gardens to tour).

704 Clinton Ave.

Original construction of this Queen Anne cottage was completed by Robert Pulley in 1907. The presumption was that it was a rental house until a change of ownership to Jimmie P. Lowry in 1937. Five other owners had the house prior to the Smith's purchasing the home in 1987 including the Byers of Byers Nursery fame that left a number of unique plantings in the yard.

The Smith's have fully restored the home adding an attached garage and a kitchen expansion with a breakfast room. Rumor has it that the upstairs was used to house nurses who

supported the infirmary located at 701 Randolph Avenue. The upstairs suffered a fire in the 1930's and the outside staircase was removed and the door walled up. The Smith's restored the 2nd floor with an enclosed staircase creating 3 bedrooms, a bathroom, and playroom all containing 11 foot ceilings.

East Clinton School Campus (Home of Providence Classical School)

Green Academy, a private boys school, operated on this site from 1812 until it was destroyed during the Civil War. In 1883 it was the site of the first public school in Huntsville. In 1902, a three story building was erected, only to be replaced when it burned down by the current Art Deco building in 1938. This site is the second oldest solely used for education site in Alabama.

The Lloyd House 111 Calhoun

The Lloyd house, built in 1857, is the oldest remaining frame house in the Old Town Historic District. The house is Greek Revival but retains

"You have a ready wit. Let me know when it's ready."

Henny Youngman

The only time a woman wishes she were a year older is when she's expecting a baby.

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many Federal features. The Victorian era porch was added using columns from the original smaller porch. A spacious foyer and graceful staircase are noteworthy for a house this size. It stayed in the builder's family for 90 years. It has seen life as a men's boarding house before being lovingly restored in 1979.

Roselawn (The Dill/Rice Home)

118 Calhoun

Roselawn is a symmetrical five bay, brick, Federal Greek Revival built by Matthew Steele for attorney Isaiah Dill in 1855. The facade is basically unchanged since it was built, when the property extended to White Street. During the Civil War, Union Troops camped on the property and that of the school.

To prevent the hungry young troops from stealing the family chickens, they were hidden in the attic - much to the confusion of the soldiers who could hear the cocks crowing in the morning. When the current owner, Frances Rice, bought the house it was still four apartments. Francis and her husband were some of the original founders of the Old Town Historic District and the park at the corner of Walker and Pratt is named in their honor.

Arvie Pierce Home
601 Holmes

Arvie's brother built the Times building. There are a couple of stories as to why the elevators of the Times Building do not go all the way to the top floor. One is that he was too cheap and the other was that they wanted it to be taller than

the Erskine Hotel, of the same vintage, and the elevator had already been ordered.

507 Clinton

In the mid-sixties a circus elephant was discovered to have been buried under this home. Apparently in the late 1890's while a traveling circus was in town its very old elephant died. The only place close-by with enough space to bury the elephant was on this property which was the old George Steele brickyard. When discovered there was a great deal of excitement that the bones might be those of a Mastodon. The University of Alabama was called in, only to finally decide the bones were just elephant bones!

Homes on Steele Street

Before this street was laid out it was known as the George Steele Line, indicating the property line of Mr. Steele, who had a brick factory on the East side of the street. Even now the old bricks are found in peoples' yards, apparently working their way slowly back to the surface.

The smaller homes on this block (107, 110 and 122) remain as examples of the original side streets which often housed the servants and workers of the larger homes. It is interesting to note that most of the original houses on this street were owned by descendants of their original black owners. The first white resident on Steele St. was not until the 1980's.




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105 Steele

Approximately at this location was a small church. The Steele Street Baptist Church was built circa 1884 and was in use until 1925. They owed \$412 to a builder for lumber and improvements.

Sadly, the church went bankrupt and was demolished sometimes after that. The church is now the First Missionary Baptist Church on Blue Spring Road.

**Sheppard House
507 Holmes**

The Sheppard house is the oldest structure within the Old Town District and one of the oldest homes in the area. It was originally just two rooms and was built outside the city limits. It has the most exquisite wooden scrollwork in Huntsville.

The house was built by Levin Sheppard. Mr. Sheppard and his son, Charles, operated

a private school for boys for 50 years. His motto was "Spare the Rod & Spoil the Child."

**The Cooper House
127 Walker**

The Cooper House has a copper mansard roof and a lovely 3 story tower with rounded topped windows. It was built in 1889 Italianate in the Second Empire Style. This house is said to be haunted by the ghost of Shelby Pleasants who hurled himself out the turret with a

rope around his neck and hung himself.

He was a prominent attorney at the time and was being investigated for murder in the 1920's.

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Remember the Eight Party Line?

by Betty Hallmark Atkinson

I was 12 years old when we got our first telephone. I was so excited. But trying to talk on it was very aggravating, because when you made a call, you had all of these other folks listening in.

One time my Grandmother had to go to Memphis, Tennessee for surgery. We were back in Alabama waiting on some news to see how things had gone after her surgery. Finally when the call came, it was hard enough trying to hear, especially with all of the other folks listening in, and one person's breathing was so loud that we could barely understand what was being said.

We had no more hung up the phone, when the phone rang again, and it was Mrs. Hail, who happened to be on the party line, saying to my Mother that she couldn't hear everything about my Grandmother's surgery and how her condition was. Nosy old woman.

Years later I was still on an eight party line, and one day I had just had it with that old woman eaves dropping on my phone calls. I got my 3 year old daughter and decided to just go see that old woman in person, and give her a piece of my mind.

Not having a car, we had to walk down a long road just to get to her house. When I finally

got there, she opened the door, then said to someone, I couldn't see, "Daddy, look who's here".

Now how did she know who I was? Of course this busy body woman knew everybody, I thought.

She welcomed my daughter and myself in like we were the most special guests. We ended up having the best visit. I noticed her husband was confined to a wheel chair and it suddenly dawned on me that this woman was not the nosy busy body I had judged her to be.

Why she was just a lonely person and the telephone just kept her connected to the outside world. From that day on my daughter and I spent a lot of happy moments visiting with the Hall family.



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"My wife and I are at that ripe age where we like to talk about the hereafter. We go in a room and say, 'what did I come in here after?'"

George Hodge, PA, ATP

One Clever Cat

by Ted Roberts

Cats are clever. I once knew one (who "belonged" to my daughter - or so she thought) who enjoyed room and board with three other families on the street. Her names were: "Blackie", "Kittie", "Betty", and "Midnight". And each loving and providing family thought she was exclusively their cat and happily offered a full bowl of premium cat food daily. Did Blackie, Kittie, Betty and Midnight do this on purpose? Or did she wander into this deception.

Bring a connoisseur of cats I think Blackie and company planned the scam. Cats are clever.

Understand that each of four families thought they owned Blackie while she was luxuriating in the comfort and generosity of four owners (if cats have owners). Reminds me of a girl I knew 30 years ago.

I knew this cat well - no special features to indicate her feline deception. Just a regular animal with four legs and furry skin. She was super nice to her two footed providers. She would even come over when called. I guess so. Who wouldn't walk a couple feet for the equivalent of a filet mignon supper. She would lick your hand in appreciation while three other families wondered where Kitty was.

Of course she was busy traveling to four houses to keep her scam preserved. How clever, she had chosen four houses close together. And oddly the four scammers were never seen together.

The plot was only revealed when my daughter had a conversation with her neighbor about their cats. They sounded remarkably similar. Blackie and Midnight shared the

same pool of feline behavior. Strangely, they dwelt next door but were never seen together. My daughter was suspicious but not enough to call the cat police.

My daughter never sees her favorite feline on Friday night. She wonders about that. How could she know that Friday night is leftover Salmon from lunch at the Simpson's. How can Blackie, or Bettie, or Kitty, or Midnight resist that. It's kin to the mystery where Kitty and company are never absent Saturday night for a bowlful of chicken livers from daughter's Saturday lunch chopped livers.

The trickery only came to light when my daughter spied Kitty, Blackie, Midnight and Betty lapping up a bowl of cream on the Simpson's patio. She called around the neighborhood and converted Kitty, Midnight, Blackie, and Betty to an indoor cat. Cats are clever ya know.

The humor of "ted, the Scribbler on the roof", appears in newspapers around the US, on National Public Radio, and numerous web sites.

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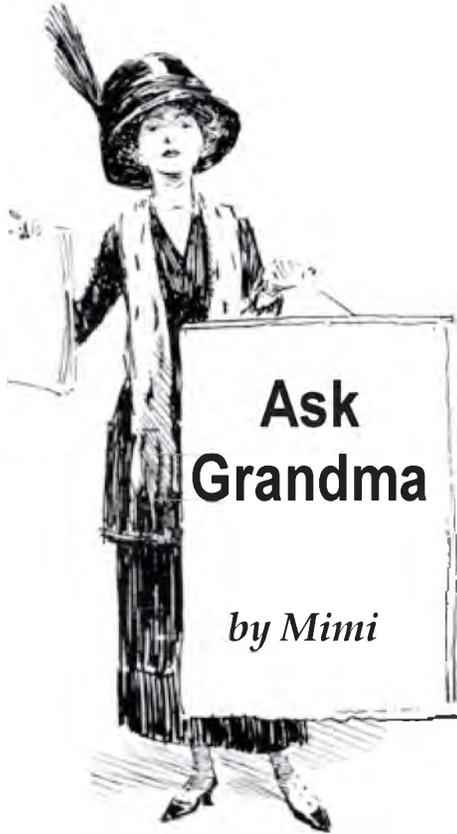
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Grandma was asked by a friend who was taking her grandchildren to Disney World on vacation, how to keep the children entertained on the fourteen-hour drive. They are eight, six and four years old.

This is what I told her. Get three bags and put each child's name on a bag. Find out what each of their interests are and buy age appropriate items and fill the child's bag with them. Set a time for every so many miles then the child can close his eyes reach into the bag and retrieve a gift. Have each item wrapped so as to intensify the excitement. If there any arguments or fighting the youngsters forfeit getting to receive a gift.

There are also many fun games to play with children while on trips. Car Bingo is fun, counting colors of cars and portable DVD players for movies you buy or rent. The library is a great source for DVDs. The old fashioned travel games as you drive is more family fun and gets the interaction of everyone. In my day, we

enjoyed reading the Burma-Shave signs every so often on two-lane Highway 31 heading south.

Must add what my daughter contributed, that today's kids often have access to an iPad or phone type device. She pre-loads new games on their devices for them to play, and if they are old enough to read, puts some new stories on the devices for them to enjoy.

That's similar to taking a few new story books in the car when I traveled with my little ones years ago.

Stop every couple of hours and get something to eat and have a restroom break and let them run around. I don't advise traveling at night because if the children do go to sleep

then when you get to the destination, they are wide awake, and the adults are dead tired. I do know some adults who travel at night when the kids will go to sleep and be quiet for much of the trip. In that case, just try to get them back to sleep in the room as soon as possible.

My daughter travels with two children in the back seat watching movies in the dark and they usually nod off to sleep, but if they stay awake, it does keep them entertained.

The final word of advice for adults is to get tranquilizers. You are going to need them and lots of money for all the items kids think they must have at every stop.

By the way GOOD LUCK!

A black and white photograph of an elderly couple sitting on a wooden dock, looking out at a body of water. The man is on the right, wearing a dark jacket, and the woman is on the left, wearing a striped shirt. The background shows a calm sea and distant hills under a soft sky.

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*Love You Daughter,
MOM*



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Kwiki Man

by Bill Goodson

Bill Goodson was a Community Columnist for the Huntsville Times when this was published in January, 1998.

There was nothing illegal about what we were doing, but at the conscience-driven age of fifteen, it had that feel to it. When the tall man in the dark suit approached the service window at Zesto, I instinctively suspected something. Not that we never served well-dressed businessmen, but nearly never.

Fast-forward: I am often asked about my dad's famous Dipped Dogs, the trademark staple of East Huntsville's Five Points that put me through medical school in the 50s at fifteen cents a pop. How do you make them? Where'd you get that name? I have to explain that the recipe is under an ironclad family trust, that I'd have to kill them.

The name is a different matter. Many have forgotten that the original name of the hotdog-on-a-stick was Kwiki Dog, a franchise that distributed the flour mix and collected royalties. Possessed of

an acute sense of cents, it took Houston Goodson only a year or so to decipher the ingredients of the batter. He ditched the trade name, coined Dipped Dog and cut off the monthly check to the Kwiki company.

It was a few months later that I found myself saying, "May I help you?" to the suspicious-looking character.

"I'd like a Kwiki Dog," he replied matter-of-factly.

Then, in perhaps the keenest moment of insight in my young and naive life, I cannily parried the question. "Do you mean a Dipped Dog?"

"No," he persisted, "I want a Kwiki Dog. Don't you serve them here?"

"No, sir," I said emphatically, shaking my head and looking him straight in the eye, more sure of

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**"Clothes make the man.
Naked people have little
or no influence in society."**

Mark Twain

myself by the moment, "we don't have those anymore."

He shuffled and frowned, finally accepting the dog-by-any-other-name. With mustard. I watched him disappear around the corner before notifying my dad of the encounter.

"Well, I guess we've been visited by the Kwiki man," he said. "They warned me about continuing to use their name." Then he chuckled and congratulated me on the way I'd handled it.

We went on selling deep-fried dogs and burgers and greasy onion rings, bucking the trends of an increasingly cholesterol-conscious citizenry, until Dad retired and sold the business in the 70s. Others kept the traditions going for years.

Then I looked up one day and saw a bar where the restaurant sitting area used to be. A BAR!! In FIVE POINTS!! Where crew-cut and bobby-soxer kids used to come after school and ball games! What would Dad say if he were alive?

Now, make no mistake, Dad could bend an elbow and throw his head back with the best of them, and it mattered little whether the stuff was bonded or not. But right out in the open? This is different. "Oh, friends, we got Trouble, right here in Rocket City! With a capital T and that rhymes with B and that stands for Bar!" Meredith Willson would have loved it.

Then the fire came. Sodom and Gomorrah all over again.

Now, out of those ashes a new edifice is taking shape, and, by the time this piece is published, a new era will have begun for Dipped Dog, and who knows what sort of company it will be keeping.

I could be spiteful and publish the recipe.

I could sic the Kwiki man on them.

Time marches on. Nothing stays the same. The Bear retires and then dies. Target comes to Jones Valley.

Get over it, Kwiki Man.

"I will not participate in any sport where there's an ambulance at the bottom of the hill."

Erma Bombeck

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B26 Crashes Near Huntsville

by Charles R. Wells

On an early summer morning In June of 1944, I decided to go fishing. With Mama and Daddy's permission, I found my fishing pole, dug a can of worms, got my new (to me) bicycle and got ready to leave. I had celebrated my fourteenth birthday about three weeks earlier (June 2nd) and Daddy had scrounged together enough money (\$6.00) to buy me a Hienz 57 used bicycle. By this, I mean it had oversize handlebars, no chain guard, a 26-inch wheel in the back and a 24-inch in the front. I was always going downhill. I rolled up my right overall leg to keep it from being caught in the sprocket and headed over to one of my favorite fishing holes on Indian Creek.

After traveling about three or four miles, I had gotten to the hill on the west side of the creek and the north side of Highway 72. I was pushing my bicycle along a cow path that ran about halfway up the side of the hill. As I was nearing the highway, I heard a huge explosion to the south and looked that way. It appeared that the whole end of Rainbow Mountain was gone. There was fire and a lot of smoke and I could see trees falling from the sky.

I looked up and saw a plane, a B-26 Marauder, coming toward me. It was on fire and smoke was coming out of the cockpit and the bomb bay doors. It was losing altitude rapidly as it passed over me and headed toward a cultivated field at the top of the hill. Its nose was down at a very steep angle and did not flare out before impact.

Upon impact, the nose-wheel collapsed, the nose of the plane dug into the ground, the tail went up into the air and a matter of seconds later, it blew up. The pilot had apparently dropped part of his bomb load on Rainbow Mountain.

I made my way closer to the crash site. The pilot must have radioed the base that he was in trouble because only minutes after the crash, the area was crawling with MPs, police cars and ambulances. Within minutes, they had formed a circle of guards around the site. There were several planes flying around the area. Curiosity seekers began to gather on the highway but were not allowed to approach the crash site.

No one questioned me as to what I may have

seen. I was told to leave the area immediately. I guess a freckled face, barefoot boy dressed in overalls, carrying a fishing pole and holding on to a weird-looking bicycle could not tell them anything they wanted to know. An article in the Huntsville Times stated that the only witness to the crash was a woman who could not tell them very much.

Besides myself, the McMurtrie family working in their field across the highway were also witnesses to the crash. For whatever reason, none of us were ever questioned about the crash. I had seen the plane many times before. Almost daily, depending on the weather, it would come over the farm several times; always approaching from a southeasterly direction, pass over and then go on to the southwest. A few minutes later, we would hear the report of exploding bombs dropping on a mock village on the Arsenal. Sometimes it would be flying low enough that we could clearly see the pilots. We would wave and sometimes they would wave back or dip their wings to let us know that they had seen us.

The crash site is now occupied by Huntsville Memory Gardens. Perhaps a fitting tribute to the three men who perished there.

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Lynda Montgomery, Gurley

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- **For Sale** - One Everett piano, bed stands, chairs, gas stove, air tight heater, one double set of harnesses, one saddle, one refrigerator, kitchen safe and few other household articles; also one lot cedar posts and kindling. Can be seen at my home on west Clinton Street for the next few days. - Mrs. C. F. Suggs

- **Found** - Buggy lap robe on Franklin Street. Owner return to this office and recover by describing and paying for this advertisement.

- **New four-room Cottage** at the corner of Pratt Avenue for rent cheap. Apply to J. E. Pierce

- **Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Newman** left yesterday on a business and pleasure trip to their silver mines in Canada.

- **Miss Willie Harris** is reported to be quite ill at her home on Adams Avenue.

- **E. R. B. Martin and J. K. Mahan**, millionaire natural oil operators of Pittsburgh, PA and who have options on more than 20,000 acres of oil lands in Madison County, left this afternoon for their home after spending a few days here in the interest of their probable local operations. The tip was secured by a prominent business man and friend of the gentlemen, that within a very short time, they expect to simultaneously start the drilling of 5 to 10 oil wells near Huntsville. The gentlemen made a visit to the Hazel Green and West Huntsville wells of the New York-Alabama Oil Co., and were pleased with the prospects.

- **Serious Street Car Accident Today** - About 9 this morning Street Car No. 5, east bound with Dick Hatcher, motor-man, collided with a two-horse wagon belonging to Hon. D. I. White and injured the two men who were driving: Jack Parham, slightly and Jim Fields, seriously.

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Heard On the Street

by **Cathey Carney**



Our Photo of the Month winner for March was **Shirley Moore** of Arab. She was the first one to guess the identity of that cute kid in the picture and it was **Mike Kaylor**. We had many calls after hers but the first one wins! Shirley has worked at the only Arby's in Arab for 25 years. Her husband **Charles** is retired as a postal worker and they love life in Arab. Shirley's Mom lives in Arab and loves reading about the history in Old Huntsville magazine. Her name is **Shirley** too and her daughter sends love to her mom!

One of the great things about spring and summer in Huntsville is all the activities that happen here, for everyone. It seems every year the events to go to multiply but some of our favorites have been around for years. **Lowe Mill has Concerts on the Dock** and this is their 11th year. On April

19th the headliner will be **Quantaphonics** and April 26th **Taylor Hunnicutt**. The concerts are every Friday at the dock and go from 6-9pm. There is a \$5 fee for parking but the concerts are **FREE**. You sit on the grass and bring chairs, kids, pets, food, blankets, and of course your choice of beverage. SO much fun.

Then many people love **Panopoly** each year and this is put on by Arts Huntsville. This year the weekend event will open up Friday April 27 and there are several great bands coming in for the weekend. You can read more about it online but there are lots of food trucks, artwork by people of all ages, crafts and music. That's a great combination.

We love **Green Street Market** every year and I'm ready for it in April but it starts in May. It goes through the end of October with the freshest produce and tea and flowers and arts/crafts.

And don't forget our **Farmers Markets** like **Ayers Farmers Market** on Cook Avenue. Remember how good fresh tomatoes taste? It won't be too long!

Thousands bring their chairs and go to **Concerts in the Park** every year - this year it goes from June through August 5.

We have certainly watched all the weather related disasters this past year and I can't remember a time when the weather in different parts of the country has been so violent. But the Lee County, Al tornadoes really was heartbreaking. Can you imagine living your normal life and all is OK one day, then the next day you have noth-

ing? And so many people lost their lives, everyone wants to help but you just don't know the best way. Many of our churches and agencies organized events pretty quickly but kudos to Channel 48 who put together a telethon and raised nearly \$60,000 to help out. Our Huntsville utilities workers helped, North Alabama churches, many in Huntsville went there to offer assistance and it just shows you the goodness of many people.

Brian Hopkins and **Kenny Adams** work for Huntsville Police department and are Community Resource Officers. They recently spoke to our group about the technology that is helping to coordinate efforts of Madison County police, Huntsville City police, the Fire Departments (volunteer fire departments too) as well as first responders so that we are kept safe. I didn't know that there is a Senior Police Academy in the spring and fall, one day a week for 8 weeks, from 1-4 pm. You have to register but it's free and you learn so much about the departments as well as self-protection. Check it out yourself by looking up "Senior Crime Academy for City of Huntsville" Thank you to Brian and Kenny and all our policemen

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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He called himself the "copy boy" but he was so much more than that.



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Many are so happy to see little blooming flowers and warm weather. Even the time change was a positive. I heard someone ask a lady the other day, "How do you know when it's time to put out your flowers?" and she replied, "It's whenever you see them at the plant stores!" I thought that was funny.

OK if you've read this far, I have hidden a teeny **baseball bat** somewhere in this magazine. If you find it and are the first to call you win a year's subscription! I will accept calls on April 15 at 8am to give our out-of-town subscribers a chance too. But I did so well on the toothpick, no one will call. Get out your specs.

You know not everyone is cut out for college. There are some high school graduates who would love to work with their hands in something like Automotive Repair. Calhoun Community College has an amazing program for these kids and these days cars and trucks are nearly all controlled by computer. Therefore the students are learning about computers as well as the mechanics of autos. And with self-driving cars already here, this is a very important career for many youngsters to get into. Especially when salaries can be \$80K and above. Just some-

thing to think about. Lewis Nall works as instructor at the automotive academy there and is the one to contact.

Tenders serves some of the best chicken you'll find anywhere and they just added another location - it is where Little Paul's BBQ was on Madison St. across from Huntsville Hospital ER entrance. They are on Hwy. 20 and in 5 Points in Huntsville and also on Wynn Drive so this is their 4th location. Good food and a great staff always makes for a winning combination!

Jane Tippett told us that her grandson Nate Henderson just turned 19 on February 22. Not only that, he received a full baseball scholarship at Columbia Jr. College and he has a super busy schedule. Proud mama is Pam Henderson, Jane and Louie Tippett's sweet daughter.

Rosemary Leatherwood is on the mend since recent surgery and we are so happy she's feeling good again. She wants to wish her dear daughter Jamie Woods a Big Happy Birthday on April 14th and let her know how very much she loves her.

Since 1974 this box sat in front of the Public Law Library at 205 East Side Square. You know you've seen it, trying to look into the cloudy Plexiglas to see the brick at the bottom. Well, a very

dedicated group of people has been working hard to preserve this piece of Huntsville history. Curious? You'll be hearing much more about this in May.

A tip to the ladies when getting into your car after shopping - lock the door as you're getting in. If someone is watching and tries to get into the car with you, you've locked the door. If nothing ever happens, so much the better! Always be safe.

I just heard that **M.D. Smith**, who writes for Old Huntsville, had one of his stories accepted by "Reminisce Magazine". Many people have seen this nostalgic publication and it is really good. Congratulations M.D.!

It was certainly an honor to be one of the judges at the NARSEF 2019 Physics and Astronomy Science Fair at UAH. This is an annual event and it allows kids in grades 5-12 to develop projects that prove or disprove a hypothesis. **Richard Peters** and I represented the Golden K Kiwanis as judges and there were some amazing and thought-provoking exhibits there along with the students who were the creators. Looking forward to next year already.

Enjoy this warm and hopefully dry weather and remember to keep an eye out for your neighbors - you never know when someone may need your help.



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Easy Chicken Casserole

- 3 lbs. chicken breast, cooked & cubed
- 1 c. chicken broth
- 1 10-oz. can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 4-oz. jar sliced mushrooms
- 1 16-oz. container sour cream
- 8 oz. seasoned stuffing cubes
- 1/2 stick real butter, melted
- Garlic powder

In a bowl mix the first 5 ingredients, then place into a greased casserole dish. Pour the stuffing cubes on top and drizzle with the melted butter. Top all with a sprinkle of garlic powder. Bake at 350 degrees for about 40 minutes.

Old South Cracklin' Bread

- 1-1/2 c. cornmeal
- 1/2 t. salt
- 2 T. all-purpose flour
- 1 egg, beaten
- 3 t. baking powder
- 1-1/4 c. milk
- 1-1/2 c. cracklings
- Vegetable oil

Combine the cornmeal, flour, salt, baking powder, egg and milk. Add the cracklins and

mix well. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto a hot, well-oiled griddle and fry til golden brown.

Garlic and Herb Cheese

- 2 8oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened
- 2 c. butter, softened
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 3 T. chopped fresh herbs (basil, thyme, or chives)
- Salt and pepper to taste

Use a large fork or food processor and blend the cheese, butter and garlic til smooth. Add remaining ingredients and mix well. Store in airtight container in fridge.

Rosemary Garlic Potatoes

- 4 lbs. small new potatoes, sliced, raw
- 1/4 c. fresh rosemary, chopped
- 2 t. minced garlic
- 1/4 c. olive oil
- 2 T. lemon juice
- Salt to taste
- 1/4 t. fresh ground pepper

Heat olive oil in skillet and saute the garlic, rosemary and lemon juice for 3 minutes. Re-

move from heat and put your potatoes in a greased baking dish. Pour the oil mixture over the potatoes, sprinkle with salt and pepper. Bake at 350 degrees for 40 minutes and potatoes are tender.

Vanilla Icebox Pie

- 4 egg whites
- 1 c. sugar
- 1 t. vanilla
- 1 c. toasted pecans, chopped
- 13 graham crackers, crumbled into small pieces
- 1 can shredded coconut

Beat the whites til stiff, add the sugar and vanilla slowly. Add the coconut, pecans and graham cracker crumbs. Pour into a buttered pan and bake for 30 minutes at 350 degrees. Chill before serving.

Chocolate Gravy

- 1 c. sugar
 - 3 T. cocoa
 - 1 c. milk
 - 1/2 to 1 stick butter
- Mix sugar and cocoa, then add milk and mix well. Put in

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a deep pan and bring to slow boil over medium heat, being careful not to burn. Add butter and boil til it gets as thick as you want. Slather over fresh biscuits.

Honey Butter Spread

- 1 stick softened butter
- 6 oz. honey

Combine the two ingredients in a small mixing bowl. Whip with hand mixer for 2 minutes. Serve on hot biscuits or dinner rolls.

Apple Crisp

- 1 qt. sliced apples (peeled and sweetened to taste)
- 2/3 c. brown sugar
- 1/2 c. all purpose flour
- 1/2 c. regular oats
- 1/2 t. cinnamon
- 3/4 t. nutmeg
- 1/3 stick butter, crumbly

Pour sweetened apples into a greased pan, 8" square. Mix all the other ingredients together and pour over the apples. Bake for 35 minutes at 375 degrees.

Chocolate Popcorn

- 1/2 c. sugar
- 1 T. butter
- 1 square unsweetened chocolate

- 3 qrts. freshly popped corn
- 3 T. water

Boil sugar, butter, chocolate and water til it spins a long thread. Pour the mixture over your freshly popped corn and stir til all kernels are covered.

Creamy Peanut Pie

- 1 c. corn syrup
- 1 c. sugar
- 1/2 t. vanilla
- 3 eggs, slightly beaten
- 1/3 c. creamy peanut butter
- Unbaked pie shell

Blend all the filling ingredients, pour into unbaked shell and bake at 400 degrees for 15 minutes. Reduce oven heat to 350 and bake for another 30 minutes. The filling should appear slightly less set in the center than around the edges.

Hello Dollies

- 1 stick butter
- 1 c. graham cracker crumbs
- 1 c. flaked coconut
- 1 c. chocolate chips
- 1 c. chopped pecans
- 1 can Eagle Brand Milk

Melt butter and mix with graham cracker crumbs. Press firmly in 9 inch square pan. Add layer each of coconut, chocolate and nuts. Pour milk over top. Bake 30 minutes at 350 degrees. Cool in pan.

Pecan Brittle

- 2 c. chopped pecans
- 1/4 t. salt
- 2 c. sugar
- 1/4 t. baking soda
- 1 t. vanilla extract

Spread nuts close together in a buttered, shallow pan. Heat sugar in saucepan til melted and a light golden color - be careful not to burn. Remove from heat and quickly stir in the salt, soda and vanilla. Pour over the nuts. When cold, break into pieces.

Mandarin Orange Dish

- 1 c. mandarin oranges
- 1 c. sour cream
- 1 c. marshmallows
- 1 c. pineapple tidbits
- 1 c. toasted sweetened coconut

Drain fruits, mix all ingredients and chill.



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Where Have the Quail Gone?

by Derek T. Robertson

The dirt clod from our garden sailed through the air hitting my brother on top of his head. Direct hit! It was summertime and I was in our family garden hoeing between the rows. My younger brother was at the top of the hill mowing grass. The boredom of working in the garden coupled with thoughts of the chores that were before me made me take to such a challenge. The throw had to be at least thirty yards or better. What accuracy!

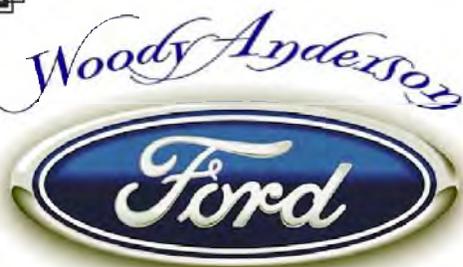
After the shock, my brother realized what had just befallen upon him and who was the responsible culprit. I could not help but stand leaning against the hoe laughing. A skirmish broke out, but it did not last long. The lawnmower was still running on the hill, wasting gas and the weeds were still growing in the garden and our father was not going to tolerate our shenanigans. The sound of his voice thundering through the door of our barn telling us to get back to work had my brother pushing the lawnmower and

myself working the hoe handle as fast as we could move. Skirmish resolved!

By now the grass cutting had moved over to the other side of the property. Country silence fell upon the afternoon. All that could be heard were the birds singing, a warm breeze rustling the leaves on the trees, a cow bellowing off in the distance and barking beagles on our neighbor's farm.

There was a distinct whistle heard off in the distance. A familiar tune I have heard many times that made my heart race and my mind wander. It was the beautiful sound of a Bobwhite Quail calling its mate. As I made my way through the garden rows all I could think about was how far away the November opening day of Quail season seemed to be an eternity. He whistled again and again. Thoughts of me and my pointer standing locked before a covey of quail played through my mind as I wiped the sweat off my brow, that hot summer day.

Little did I know only a few more seasons for hunting quail remained for me. Old pointers were retired, girlfriends came



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and went, high school football games were played and growing up was inevitable. I soon found myself in the U.S. Army a couple of years later and before I knew it 21 years had gone by and I found myself retired. My career in the Army was bittersweet but undoubtedly it was an honor to serve this great country of ours.

There were so many things that changed during my years of service. I always found some time to hunt between training and deployments. The days of small game hunting were days gone by and I gave in to the chase of large game. Partly because of my love to hunt but also to harvest the trophy to feed my ego like all the other hunters around me. Did no one hunt squirrels, rabbits or quail anymore? I would not ask in fear of being humiliated. Wouldn't want these folks to think I was a redneck.

But what I didn't remember was my experience hunting back home was not all about the fun and the quarry but rather it supplemented our much-needed food source. I would not say we were poor because the Lord and my dad provided for our needs. But we did work harder than some other folks. Hunting for us meant food on the table. Yet somehow, I forgotten the purpose and was on the chase for bragging rights instead.

I had long forgotten my roots and the meaning of why I hunted and my love for the sport.

I'd given up on the notion after about ten years in the Army that I would ever move back home. Work, family and logistics did not seem as though it provided a path back

to my North Alabama home. Yet somehow the path I was on did not agree with our Lord and He saw fit to move me back where He and I first met.

I did as most typical military retirees do; I got a job, bought a house and tried to settle down back to my roots. Familiar things that were once robbed of me while I was away soon came flooding back. Reconnecting to the homeplace was a welcomed feeling.

Not long after I retired I began visiting some of my favorite fishing spots. I also knew I wanted to hunt again and my ego had since deflated and wanted to hunt small game. Opinions of me were not as important as they once were in terms of my hunting preferences. The two acres I owned may have produced a squirrel or two and every now and then a dove may fly over the property, but it sure was not ideal hunting grounds. I

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Vivian Kruse, Huntsville

remembered how it impressed me when I was young when my father would knock on the door of one of the farmers that lived in our community and asked for permission to hunt his property.

As always, we obtained the landowners permission with the same rules as all the other landowners' property we hunted. Close the gates behind you and please make sure to pick up any trash. I remember my father saying to me to close the gate and latch it. After shooting at a covey of quail my dad made sure I picked up my expended shell casings.

Though the landowners never asked my dad, I was always volunteered by him to help with putting up their hay when the time came or some other chore that needed to be done on their farm. The arrangement my dad made was for payment in exchange for the opportunity to hunt their land. All I cared about was getting permission to hunt. I would have pulled the plow myself and given the mule a rest as long as I could chase down the sought-after coveys.

Yet after all these years after I moved home something had changed. The new landowners of this generation would not permit hunting on their property. Door after door was closed in my face and permission denied. Partly because many folks had no respect for the landowners' property and partly because North Alabama had quite an extensive deer and turkey population and the landowners did not want them spooked or hunted.

I didn't care for hunting the larger game anymore. I did not have to hunt for food and my ego no longer needed to be petted. But I did enjoy small game hunting, and it brought back pleasant memories of time spent hunting from years gone by. Moreover, it seemed very few hunted small game which meant more for people like me that still enjoy

a rabbit running or squirrel scurrying up an old hickory tree. Their loss was my "game." Times have changed. Hunting for me was very limited and my focus was on fishing now.

I hated that old garden we had when I was a young boy. But isn't it funny that things we hated in our youth we later love when we enter the afternoon and evening times of our lives? I now enjoy and take care of a garden for me and my family. I knew I had too much garden, but I loved the hard work and the amazement of how a seed will bring forth life and feed us. I would spend much of my time while working in the garden praying, figuring out problems and reminiscing.

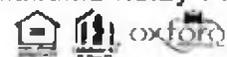
I remembered from long ago how the ladies in our community would help my mother with her canning and the men would trade their vegetables with my dad and likewise he would trade ours with them. Bragging about the size of the watermelons and the endless buckets of green beans were discussed under the shade tree over a cup of coffee or a glass of sweet tea. But a recessed memory came across my heart one afternoon while hoeing between the rows of my own garden. I felt there was something I needed, or that something was missing. For days I could not put my finger on it. Suddenly, while remembering the famous dirt clod throw of 1979 it came to me. Where was the whistle of the Bob White quail? As a matter of fact, a sad feeling loomed when I realized it had been 20 years or better since I heard the whistle from Mr. Bobwhite. Are there any quail around? Why do I not hear their whistle?

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**Mayor Marion Berry,
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I read in a local hunting magazine where the reduced or almost nonexistent quail population was mainly due to the reduced number of farms and the pesticides used. However, there are many more reasons I came to discover. The onset of transplanting turkeys to North Alabama were partly to blame. The turkeys eat the quail eggs.

Of course, it was good enough for our Lord to kill two animals and use their hides to cover Adam and Eve's newly discovered nakedness but today dare we use fur for clothing and hurt the political correctness of this up and coming generation. And by doing so, trapping and the fur trade have almost disappeared. We are over populated with the predator of the quail and their eggs that being the coyote and fox. The hawk too has been so pro-

tected that even they are over populated and another on the list of predators of the quail.

It seems the only hope for me to ever have the privilege of hunting old Mr. Bobwhite is to hunt at a place in Section, Alabama, called the Northeast Hunting Preserve. Though I have not yet had the privilege of hunting their preserve, I did meet Jeff Ferguson at a Hunting and Fishing Expo and discovered there are still people that love the sport of hunting quail and preserving the tradition.

No matter, even if I did not have a place to hunt I could still enjoy the Bobwhite's call for his mate if only they were not driven away. Where have the quail gone? So, I continue to hoe between the rows hoping that one day I will hear the whistle once again.

Lemon Squares

- 1 box lemon cake mix
- 3 eggs
- 1 stick butter, melted
- 8 oz. cream cheese
- 1 (16oz.) box powdered sugar

Mix cake mix, one egg and butter. Press in bottom of a 9x13 inch pan to form the crust. Beat 2 eggs, cream cheese and sugar with a mixer til smooth. Pour over the crust. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes.

Note: Lemon squares must be completely cool before you cut them. The best way to slice into bars: run the knife under very hot water and wipe before slicing.

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Sam, the Blue-Fronted Amazon



by Judith C. Smith

It was a rather dreary cold day in December, one day before my husband's birthday. I was still at a loss for something unique for a gift. I had thought about it all day and as a matter of fact had thought about it all week, still nothing came to mind. I'd made his favorite cake which was an angel food cake with chocolate icing and also center filled with icing. I knew he would like it.

Oh, that reminds me that I forgot the cat food when I went to the grocery store. No problem as I needed to exchange something at the mall. I could get the cat food at the pet store, kill two birds with one stone, as my mother would say - no problem, I can handle that.

When I had exchanged the package, I headed to the pet store and got the cat food. When I was leaving, I heard a loud voice ask, "Are you okay?" I spotted him. His name was Sam and again he said, "Are you okay?"

The owner just began to laugh and said, "That's just Sam. His owner is very ill and can't look after him any longer. She will be in the hospital for quite some time and since she brought him from us, I told her we would find him a good home."

Immediately I realized that Sam would be my husband's unique birthday gift even if it was a day early. I couldn't very well leave him in the car overnight, could I?

After getting food, a huge cage, bird toys and Sam - the

owner, Sam and I headed for my van, I am now headed home thinking won't M.D. be surprised with this birthday gift. Well, surprised is hardly the word I would use to describe his reaction.

When I got home and called him at his office to see if indeed, he was coming home for lunch, his answer wasn't what I expected. "No, I am pretty busy, will just skip lunch, unless you want to bring me something. I'll try to get away early," was his answer. I could not believe my ears - he always came home for lunch. I told him that I had gotten him something special. So, he said he would come home. I could just envision that \$1500 bird freezing to death in four hours if he didn't.

I forgot I don't like things with feathers. This goes back to my childhood when my sister let loose her parakeet in the bathroom while I was in there. The bird would fly at my head, then the mirror over and over. I can still hear myself scream-

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ing until my father came to my rescue.

We had Sam all situated in the big bay window in the breakfast room, his new home. He didn't say a word, so you can see why no one in the family was impressed. The next morning Sam was up and ready to go, showing off his vocabulary, starting with the full chorus of "Jesus Loves Me" followed by "Do You Want Popcorn. Sam Wants Popcorn, Hello". Then sounding like a microwave. "Are you okay, feed the bird." He never shut up.

He quickly learned the children's names, especially Brent's. When the phone rang, he would say "Brent, telephone. Ya Ya Goodbye". At Christmas he would say "Merry Christmas" and a week later "Happy New Year". Whenever company came, the first thing they would want to do was to talk to Sam.

Well, Christmas came and Sam was saying Merry Christmas as he had for fourteen years, but then he didn't say Happy New Year and I noticed he hadn't eaten any of his food. I quickly called the bird Vet, got the boys to load the big cage with Sam in it, all wrapped in blankets so he wouldn't get in the cold or wind.

The next morning, I was so surprised when the Vet called and said Sam died in the night. I knew when birds stop eating and talking it was a bad sign but I certainly didn't expect to get that call.

We had an autopsy and found out that when we got carbon monoxide it had affected Sam's liver. We had a burial in our backyard and much to my surprise, my friends missed him, so they sent flowers.

I still remember walking into the kitchen feeling really tired some mornings and Sam saying over and over "are you okay". Unless I would say "Sam, I'm okay, are you okay?" he wouldn't stop and sure enough after saying I'm okay about a dozen times I'd be OKAY.

**"I drink too much. The last time I gave a urine sample it had an olive in it."
Rodney Dangerfield**



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Being Accepted in Huntsville

by Henry Everitt

I was graciously and immediately accepted by the natives upon my arrival in Huntsville, Alabama. The year was 1958 and I was a fresh engineering graduate from Georgia Tech. I had accepted a job offer from the Army to work in the Ordnance Missile Labs on Redstone Arsenal and I reported for duty in late May 1958. I knew only one person from Huntsville—a fellow student at the Flats (affectionate name for the Georgia Tech campus). His name was Jimmy Watts.

I drove my 1952 Chevrolet across west Georgia and east Alabama on that May day in 1958, alone and excited. I arrived at the designated place to report for duty and the office was closed. Ho-
ray, I said to myself. These people go home in the middle of the afternoon. (That year, the Arsenal did not observe daylight saving time, but closed early because of the time change with Washington). They made up for the early closing by an early arrival as I was to learn later.

So, now I had to find a place to stay for a week before having to go to military summer camp at Ft. Belvoir in Virginia. One week to make my entry into Huntsville. And what a week it was!

Huntsville, in 1958 was an emerging city. Short term accommodations were scarce. What to do? I decided to call Jimmy Watts home for advice. Advice, mind you—nothing else. The pay phone I used was at the Russel Erskine Hotel which was fully booked that day. So I called for help. Mr. Jim and Mrs. Susie Watts answered my call for advice and this was their response: "Please come stay with us." Not what I had expected, but their warmth and hospitality was convincingly genuine. How could I object? So I followed their directions and shortly arrived at their home.

It was the LeRoy Pope home on Echols Avenue. Not a common portal for entry by an immigrant to an historic and sophisticated city. Jimmy was away for the summer, but his parents treated me as if I were his best friend. They included me at mealtime and offered me a place on the screened porch for sleeping. It was a comfortable place and perfectly adequate for a week-long stay. Mr. Jim showed me around town during that week. He owned a coal and ice business on Clinton Street. He took me to some property he owned and was thinking about developing. He wanted my reaction to his development plans. It became Fagan Springs —

a notable and desirable location for future Huntsville residents. At the time it was a delightful valley pastureland.

He introduced me to his neighbor, Guy Spencer and that was a gift that endured for more than 50 years, multiplying as Guy included me in his circle of friends (Bob Adams, W.O. Watkins, Al Moore, Merritt Wikle, Walter Price). At the end of that week I left for Ft. Belvoir, grateful for the warm reception I had received from the Watts family at the home of Huntsville's

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founder, LeRoy Pope.

But that's not the end of the story.

While I was at Ft. Belvoir for 6 weeks receiving basic military training and being commissioned as a Second Lieutenant, Mr. Jim Watts was busy arranging a place for me to return to. I had not asked him to do this, so I was pleasantly and gratefully surprised when I learned that he had persuaded his sister, Miss Anna Roseborough, to rent me a room in her house two doors away. Guy Spencer lived in the house between the Watts and Miss Anna. What a reception into a new town!

Miss Anna, as I learned to address her, was a gracious lady who had never rented a space in her house to anyone. She was away in Washington State when I moved into my room across the hall from hers in the upstairs of her home. I was totally unknown to her until she arrived home a week later and introduced herself to me as my landlady.

Guy Spencer and I became the best of friends. We were both bachelors and frequently double dated in his 1958 Packard. His dad had been a Packard dealer before the brand folded. Guy had a two door sedan that had air springs that would "level" the car if its load was unbalanced. My date was startled once when the rear seat began to rise after she and I sat down on it. Guy not only included me in his circle of friends, he invited me into his civic organizations (Acme Club, Kiwanis, Heritage Club), accepted me as an equal in every way. We remained friends as we married, had kids and participated in the life of Huntsville, Alabama.

I have been truly blessed by the people I encountered that day in May of 1958 and the months that followed. Surely my life here has been greatly enriched by that chance phone call for advice to Mr. and Mrs. James Watts and their gracious acceptance of me as a new Huntsville resident. Thanks be to God.

"I don't believe in dying. It's been done. I'm looking for a new exit. Besides, I can't die now - I'm booked. I can't afford to die - I'd lose too much money."

George Burns



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LOCAL NEWS FROM 1911



- News reached the city today of the death of Rev. C. B. Sanders, the "sleeping preacher," a book on whose life was written by, and received wide circulation at, the hands of Rev. G. W. Mitchell. Rev. Sanders died last evening at Stevenson, Ala. He was in his 90th year. The deceased is well remembered here by many of our older citizens, he having filled a number of pulpits in this county.

- News reached the city today of a horrible killing at New Hope yesterday morning at 7 o'clock in which John Logan lost his life at the hand of Jim Hunt and his son, Gardiner, both of whom are now in jail. The men disputed over the division of some land. A desperate quarrel followed in which Logan, it is said, was shot to his death with a pistol in the hands of one of the Hunts. Jim Hunt surrendered and his son was captured by Deputy Childers.

- The Tennessee River now is more than three miles wide. The water was stationary, but heavy rains were reported to have fallen above here. These are expected to cause an even greater rise. The weather here is in a very unsettled condition, with strong indications of more rain.

The present flood will delay farming in the Tennessee River bottoms more than a month and will cause great losses to the farmers

by their fences washing away and some of their small outbuildings. Along the river several large barns have been washed away and a few dwelling houses have also gone.

- The storm of wind and rain on the morning of April 4th wrought considerable havoc and enacted some freaks worth mentioning in this part of the county. Mr. James White, living east of Hazle Green, came to the village that morning on his mule, tying the animal under the old scale shed back of Mr. Lowe's store. The shed blew down, the animal being crowded up close to the store building, was thereby saved from serious injury. Arriving home later, he found his garden fence all blown down and his top buggy blown out of his shed through the wire fence into the road and the top badly demolished.

- Mr. Will Leonard had garden and field fence damage and a badly demolished barn yard gate to repair and he was not able to do much work previous to this.



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A School Prank Gone Wrong

by Barry Key

Larry and I were subject to playing a prank but never anything hostile, vicious or destructive. We pulled a prank while in junior high and hadn't put enough thought into the consequences if we were caught.

At New Hope High School, if you didn't have a class scheduled, you had to sit in "study hall" which was in the auditorium. The auditorium floor was on a slight downward slant from the back of the auditorium to a stage at the front. The floor was made of boards running perpendicular to the slant. The building was very old and the cracks between the boards had widened.

A monitor sat behind a desk on the stage to maintain discipline while people were studying. One day someone dropped a pencil and it began to roll down the slanted floor and each time it hit a crack it would make a little muffled sound. Larry and I simultaneously looked at each other with that "light bulb in a cloud" over our heads.

That afternoon we devised our plan. The next day in study hall we both sat at the very back and on opposite sides of the auditorium. On a signal we each turned loose a hand full of marbles. Let me tell you, glass marbles hitting cracks in the floor, and the metal legs on the seats, didn't sound anything like a wooden pencil. As they rolled down the floor, the faster they got the louder the clicking sound. As the marbles hit the front of the stage they made even a louder noise. I know it couldn't have lasted more than a minute, but it seem like the marbles would never stop rolling.

Coach Carpenter was the monitor for study hall that period of the day. Coach Carpenter looked up and immediately motioned for Larry and me to come down to his desk. I'm not sure what Larry was thinking, but I was thinking this is my last day on earth. Although guilty, we both tried to deny our way out of it but Coach wouldn't listen. The old legal adage "innocent until proven guilty" and "due process of law" held no bearing on our case.

At times, while Coach was giving us a stern but calm speech, you could catch a little smile in the corner of his mouth (I really think he thought it was funny). As calm as he was, I was beginning to think maybe he was going to set us free. But after his speech, he marched us downstairs to the principal's office.

Mr. Ealy, our principal, believed highly in corporal punishment, so I thought we were going to get our rear ends busted good. Instead, he wrote a message to our parents and sent us home. We were to bring the paper back with our parent's signature before we could come back to school.

I had been sent home one time in elementary school and I wasn't about to give that message to my parents. The next day, thinking things may have blown over, I went to homeroom just as usual. Before I was seated good, here comes one of Mr. Ealy's aides to escort me back to the office. This time Mr. Ealy drove me home and personally gave the message to my mother (I only lived one block from school). After Mr. Ealy left, my mother spoke only 7 little words, "just wait until your father gets home".

I will close here and leave it to "your imagination" as to how things went for me the next few weeks..



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Sparring with Joe Louis

by Charles Hughes



Joseph Louis Barrow greeted me with a boxing stance, and I responded with the same as I entered Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas.

I was there to get back some of the money I'd previously lost on the roulette table. So seeing Joe gave me a little consolation.

Fortunately for me, the only punches passed between us was him patting me on top of my head. Joe easily stood 6 feet 2 inches — a couple of inches taller than me.

Joe Louis, aka "The Brown Bomber," was born in Lexington, Alabama, but grew up in Detroit. He had lots of brothers and sisters. He turned pro in 1934 and retired in 1949, only to fight again in 1950. Then he lost to Ezzard Charles and Rocky Marciano. Of his 69 fights, Joe won 66 (52 by TKO) and suffered 3 losses.

The Brown Bomber held the heavyweight title longer

and defended it more often than any other boxer in history. During this period, he earned more than \$5 million. Most of it evaporated. The IRS got a share, one wife got a share, he spent a lot and gave lots away.

Joe Louis was the first true African American national hero and toward the end of his life, he was wheelchair limited.

During WWII, Joe joined the Army and eventually gained the rank of Sergeant. He died in 1981 and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

Yes, I sparred with Joe Louis.

Contact Charles Hughes at testequipment38@gmail.com.

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A Dastardly Attempt to Burn the Business Block on the North Side Square

From 1891 Newspaper

Monday morning about 1:30 o'clock, as one of the Mercury's compositors was going home after his night's work, and as he passed the store room recently vacated by Mr. J. B. Bradford, and since then has been unoccupied, he saw a small light through the front door, way back in the rear, also could detect a volume of smoke rising. He called a gentleman or two who were standing on the Huntsville Hotel corner, and after a slight examination the cry of fire was given.

It did not take many minutes for the fire department to appear, and headed by Fire Chief Baker, the front door was burst open, lanterns were brought into requisition and in the hands of two or three men, the rear end of the store was visited, and just as the corner of the stair was reached from which a door opens into a place reserved for a private office, a fire made of paper and kindling was on the inside, built right on top of the floor. As soon as it was discovered, the men in the front hollowed for the hose, but at that time a member of the department, William Hayden, caught a man's form in a crouching position up in a dark corner with little space, and immediately laid his iron grasp upon him and drew him from his hiding. Officers Ward and Fulgham were on hand and the man was turned over to them. They got him into the calaboose, while he was kicking, jerking and making strenuous efforts to free himself. Finding the man created a great deal of excitement, but the small gathering set to work and in a few minutes had the fire put out.

If the fire had gained any

headway no telling what damage it would have done, for the entire block would certainly have been in danger. The villainous fellow arrested would not disclose his

name, nor residence, neither could anything be learned of him from those present. But it is safe to say that when he is arraigned for an investigation of his extreme criminal act he will be fully known and dealt with accordingly.

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My Relative, A Ruffian

by William Sibley

My great-great-great-grandparents, Robert Uel Childress (1799-1886) and Temperance Connally (1798-1865) were married on June 6, 1817 at Colliers' Beat in Berkley, on Big Cove's east side. They were the parents of seventeen children, including popular twins, who both died in the Civil War in separate battles. George Burton Childress (1833-1862) died in the Battle of Corinth. Hugh Martin Childress (1833-1862) died in the Battle of Baton Rouge.

I am a descendant of child no. 4, Catherine P. Childress and John Dimue Owen. The children of the Childress-Connally marriage appear to have been law abiding citizens, but my brother Bob has found a very interesting newspaper story that reveals that a grandson of Robert Uel and Temperance was a lawbreaker. The story was written in Chattanooga, Tennessee but was printed in an Alabama newspaper, The Vernon Courier, Lamar County, Alabama.

On Feb. 28, 1896, The Vernon Courier reported that Dick Childress, "a noted desperado," was shot and killed by an Alabama officer. Richard Jackson "Dick" Childress (1861-1896), son of John Frederick Childress and Sarah "Sally" Cobb, was the grandson of Robert Uel Childress and Temperance Connally and Bryant Anderson Cobb and Mary "Polly" Grayson. He was a first cousin of my great grandfather, John Farmer Owen. The ancestors named above were early settlers in Big Cove.

On the night of Feb. 20, 1896, Childress was in a "drunken condition" and was brandishing a pistol and frightening some people in Gurley. Policeman Dick Erwin was called to the scene. Childress attempted to shoot Erwin, but the Gurley officer was too quick and shot and fatally wounded Childress.

On April 11, 1889 Childress was convicted of arson, "complicity" in burning the jail at Gurley "cremating two men." He was sentenced to ten to twenty years in the penitentiary for his crime, but due to poor health, his sentence was commuted and he was discharged from prison on Dec. 11, 1895. Childress is buried in Gurley Cemetery.

Alabama convict records show that Childress was a laborer who had previously resided in Manchester, Tennessee. His wife and children were residents of Gurley.

The Vernon Courier, when reporting Childress' death, wrote in headlines, "Died with His Boots On."

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Artist for this drawing is Nancy Sims, Judy's oldest sister

LITTLE CABIN ON THE FLINT RIVER

by Judy Hill Key

Although we lived on East Clinton Street in Huntsville, my dad, Leo Hill, was an avid outdoorsman. He took advantage of nature as often as he could. Each year, for several years, he would go to the northwest to hunt pheasants and fish for large lake trout in the cold mountain lakes. However, his true love, and favorite location, was the Flint River just south of Huntsville. He used the river for hunting, fishing and camping. I had three sisters, Nancy, Diane and Sally, and we all loved camping on the Flint as much as my dad.

My dad and some of his outdoor buddies decided to build a small cabin to camp in. The cabin was much more comfortable than fighting the summer pests and extreme elements of winter in a tent, or sometimes under the stars on the ground. They had permission to hunt and fish on Mr. Archie Russell's farm approximately one mile above the Hobbs Island Bridge. He also gave them permission to build their little dream cabin.

They built a two room cabin with a screen porch that ran almost the length of the cabin to eat and lounge in when the summertime pests were out. One room was a living room and kitchen combination with a fire place for heat and cooking during inclement weather. The other room was a dormitory style bedroom with several bunk beds on either side of the room with an isle down the middle. The upper part of the wall above the beds on the screen porch side lifted vertically for ventilation. The cabin had no restroom facilities so when nature called it was a trip to a "little house" in the woods behind the cabin, or a tree... depending.

When they first built the cabin, naturally they wanted it as close to the river as possible and stay above the flood stage. However, after the cabin did flood a couple of times, they decided to move it to a higher elevation overlooking the river. It was in a small, level, grassy meadow... actually a prettier, more convenient location. There was a large cedar tree in front of the cabin. My dad built a circular table around the trunk of the tree to use when preparing meals. He added a circular roof above the table to keep cedar needles and other debris from falling in the food while he was cooking. Adjacent to the tree, he built a fire place with a chimney so that he could grill and cook meals over an open fire.

My dad, my mother Booie, my three sisters and I would go on Friday and stay through Sunday several times a summer. On many of the weekends my uncles, aunts and cousins would stay the weekend. There were no amenities; all our food, water and bedding had to be brought from home. The first thing dad would do when we arrived at the cabin was to walk through and run all of God's little creatures out. It seemed every creature that built a web, flew, walked or crawled, would take shelter in the cabin between our visits.

One of our favorite meals was fried corn cut-off the cob. In late summer, there was a large corn field across the river from the cabin. My

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The racks and honor boxes use about one square foot of floor space. If you know of a location that would like to provide a space, or you would like one for your business, please call.

Cathey Carney 256.534.0502

dad would swim across and bring back a sack full of field corn. Everyone would help shuck and silk the corn. Dad and Aunt Mabel would cut the corn off the cob into a large pan....then with the edge of the knife scrape the cob to get the juice that enhances its sweet taste. Dad had a large, size 14, cast iron skillet that would hold many ears of the cut-off corn. They would pour the corn and juice into the skillet of hot bacon grease and fry it for lunch. Usually there would be enough left for dinner that evening, and breakfast the next morning. Also, for breakfast, and throughout the day, dad had a large coffee pot, at least a gallon, that he boiled coffee in over an open fire. Anyone that has tasted boiled coffee knows that it is the best way to brew a good cup of Java.

My sisters, cousins and I would play all sorts of games in the woods that surrounded the cabin and meadow. We would swim and fish in the Flint River. One of the activities we would do is to climb on top of the cabin, then one of the men would catch us as we jumped. I was getting ready to jump to one of my uncles when someone diverted his attention. I hit the ground hands and arms first and broke my right arm.

At night around the campfire my Uncle Gordy would tell ghost stories and we would squirm and shiver as he told the stories....and as always, some adult would sneak up behind us during a story, scream, and almost make us jump into the fire. The stories were fun to hear, but the down side, as children, we would have to have an adult chaperone us if we had to visit the "little house" in the woods after dark.

Another funny story, which wasn't funny at the time, involved a bull. My sisters, cousins and I were playing in the woods and a large bull got after us. I climbed a tree and the rest of the group went into the river. The bull stopped at the tree I was in and started butting the trunk. After he gave up butting the tree he still would not leave. The rest of the group made it back to the cabin and told the adults what had happened. My Aunt Bobbie got a large towel and came down in the woods to where she could see the bull. She started waving the towel in the air and finally got the bull's attention. The bull started toward her and she ran back to the cabin, with the bull behind her. I jumped out of the tree and headed for the river and the cabin. After the bull left we never saw him again.

Time marches on, and eventually, the cabin would see five families and three generations for the weekend. My mom and dad loved it. Eventually, the trip was just too much for mom and dad and they would go less and less each year. The four Hill girls and their families still would spend some

weekends there during the summer, but the cabin would deteriorate a little each winter and after a few years began to collapse. The last time I saw the little cabin on the Flint River, Mother Nature had reclaimed her area as she wanted it to be.

The cabin was my dad's Taj Mahal and when he died, my sisters, brothers-in-law, a cousin Mike and I, dug through the tangled thorn bushes and rubble to retrieve a large, rectangular, natural stone step that was at the entrance to the front door. We placed it at the foot of my dad's grave in his honor. And now when I visit my mom and dad's grave and see the stone step, many memories of my childhood and my children's childhood, captivate my mind.

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God Bless the Homeless

by Hugh Michaels



There are many people in this old world who don't have a home. They are living under bridges, vacant houses and tents. Some of their stories will touch your hearts. Most of them come from broken homes. These people carry their entire belongings on their back. They can be seen on the streets of Huntsville. They live from day to day look-

ing for a home. The Salvation Army is a great organization who helps the homeless especially during holidays.

Wintertime seems to get our attention more than any other time. We wonder how they can live in such conditions as they face the cold bitter weather seems almost unbearable.

Some have made changes in their lives. A good example is the emcee on the television program "Family Feud". Steve Harvey was on the street at one time, and he is now a millionaire.

It is not easy to change your way of living if you don't have help.

Recently, I met a young man, who was on the street and needed help. I needed help also. His story would touch anybody. I brought him to my home to do some work, which I could

not do.

I needed help. He did a great job. I gave him a chance. He stays with me and is my "helper". He is now known in the community. He is a good man. I am so thankful that I gave him a chance. I don't know how I can make it without him. I am blessed. I thank the Lord everyday for sending him to me.

We can only imagine how life on the street is unless we witness it.

Recently, I read where a man chose to be homeless for a few days every year since 1989. He does this in order to expand his perspective and understanding of people who have no homes to live in.

I wonder how they cope with sickness? How do they survive any type of illness?

The problems they have can only be resolved by God.



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PET TIPS FROM ANGEL

Pet Mistakes We Make



Listening to other people for medical advice.

In today's world, you can find admittedly passionate (yet still wrong) pet care advice everywhere - not only from breeders and groomers, but also animal trainers, pet stores employees, your eccentric neighbor, your friend, your parents, some random guy on the street, etc., etc.

It's better to get the advice of highly-skilled and educated veterinarians when it comes to the health of our furry family members.

Obesity is another common mistake people make with their pets. Being chubby isn't cute or a sign of love. Instead, it can lead to all sorts of medical problems. Experts suggest you feed the best quality food you can afford, take guidelines from the bag about how much to feed and then make changes if necessary. Table scraps, junk ingredients and overfeeding are all very unhealthy pet feeding practices. Dogs and cats are fairly simple when it comes to feeding and maintaining weight. Most food manufacturers provide guidance as to how much to feed based on weight. If you follow that and your pet starts gaining weight, then you know to change something.

Not taking care of their teeth.

Vets often suggest that your pet should have a good teeth cleaning at the annual checkups. Good oral health for your pet should be practiced at home as well. Brushing weekly with a vet-approved toothpaste is the most important component of your pet's oral care. If you can't get your pet to cooperate, try dental rinses and chews.

Not socializing puppies.

Puppies need to experience other dogs and meet people early in their life. Puppies go through a socialization period in their development. This window for socialization closes in about fourteen weeks of their young lives. If puppies aren't properly socialized before approximately their sixteenth week of development, it can have lasting and detrimental behavioral effects.

Arrange a play date at a friend's house, or your own. Ensure that the dogs your puppies will be around are healthy and vaccinated and make sure they will play nice with your puppies so that it is a positive experience.

Let your puppies experience as many new things as they can during the socialization phase. Introduce your puppies to humans of all shapes, sizes, and race and let them experience walking on many different surfaces; smooth tile, carpet, steps, bricks, stone, etc. Show them common household items as you use them so that your pups will not be fearful of these items later. Be sure to offer treats and praise.

Choosing unhealthy breeds.

When certain dogs walk in the door, vets know they can expect a lifetime of health issues. One of the biggest pet care mistakes that many pet owners make is buying dog breeds that have low life expectancy and a proclivity for serious illnesses. It can be easy to forget that these traits were bred into these dogs and are not a natural part of the dog's physical characteristics and therefore, not necessary. Research different breeds and consult with a veterinarian to ensure that the breed you want has a reputation for being healthy and long-lived.

Skipping the annual checkup.

Nobody likes being poked and prodded and maybe you don't want to see your pet uncomfortable either. But it's worth the yearly trip just to make sure there's nothing going on with your dog or cat's health. The health of our pets can change much more rapidly than they do in the human body. This makes sense when you compare the lifespan of your pet to your own. Vets understand that, despite their dedication to the health of your pet, your pet might not share that passion and would rather skip the office visit.

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From the Desk of Tom Carney

The Monte Sano Railway

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 railroad – 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 Street it turned east towards the mountain and eventually down into Fagans 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. 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 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. Happily, no one was injured, but people were now somewhat nervous about taking this precarious path to and from the mountain.

Luckily, this accident had no lasting affect on consumer confidence and the Monte Sano Railway was successful in bringing visitors to the mountain, and business to 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. Older residents of Huntsville say that as late as the 1950s there were still railroad ties stacked up near the area known as the "button hole."



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On Being Retired

by Thomas Mailey

When did this happen? One day I was up to my ears in work, and the next I was contemplating what to do with myself. Wasn't it just a few short decades ago that retirement was the farthest thing from my mind? Why, I thought I still had worlds to conquer.

The psychology of retirement is a major hurdle, for example, having a schedule. I had become used to having a schedule imposed upon me by the system with numerous deadlines to meet, meetings to attend, people to talk to and emails to answer.

Oh, there is still quite a bit to do but no established procedure to do it and no planned method to perform each task. In fact, what I had to deal with first was making my own schedules and with the total freedom to do as I pleased with only myself to answer to. At first that is pretty scary stuff.

Huntsville is still a very good place to retire when one examines the alternatives. There are many retirees here so there are many fine services for retirees and planned activities for seniors.

Well, maybe the climate gets a little hot during the summer, because we have a humid subtropical climate, some would say. This is offset by a lack of snow on most winters. The climate is generally moderate with gradual changes in the seasons.

Quality of life is good with excellent health care facilities and a growing retail services

community. We have no noxious industries and only a little noise from traffic, trains and air planes.

We have a variety of sporting activities and with a little luck we may even get back a professional baseball team. We have superb college football and a short drive to Nashville or Atlanta and we have professional NFL excitement. Furthermore there are many good opportunities for volunteer work or even part time work if you want it.

Fairhope is often considered a nice retirement spot for its access to the Gulf; however, we have the arsenal as a fine resource for those who can use it.

If a retiree gets creative he or she can find a number of nice pass times. For example, grab a takeout dinner from a local restaurant, then find a picnic table in one of our fine parks

and watch a beautiful sunset as the sun slides peacefully down behind that incomparable blue-black sky.

Or conversely, get up early, find a hilltop or mountain side that has a parking spot and wait for one of God's incomparable gifts to us: a beautiful sunrise as that orange ball gradually appears. Using reds and gold's He paints beautiful swatches of gold, red and orange streaks across the sky. No Picasso or Rembrandt would make something equally as beautiful.

So, with all things considered and the problems solved, I think I will just roll over and get another hour of sleep.

My wife and I had words, but I didn't get to use mine."

Earl Adkins, Arab

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It Happened on the Bus

by M.D. Smith, IV

It was one of those cold January days in 1954. A milky sky and brisk north wind didn't do anything to help the chilly temperature.

But it was a good day for a movie, so my best buddy Mardis and I were on the bus from the outskirts of the city, to downtown and the movie theatre, to see a double feature of cowboy movies.

We always did "Rocks, Paper, Scissors" to see who got to sit by the window, and I lost.

If the bus was near empty, we'd both sit by a window, but today it was almost full.

The bus atmosphere was uncomfortably warm for us fourteen-year olds, but I noticed some old folks still wrapped tight in their winter coats with gloves on their hands.

As the bus rattled over some winter potholes on the narrow roads on the outskirts of town, it was passing expensive two and three-story houses.

It came to another stop.

Everyone always looked to see who was getting on and dropping their coins in the glass & metal drop box, and we looked as well.

We first saw a little kid, probably no more than five,

come up the steps followed closely by his mother. Both were dressed in quite nice clothing that echoed wealth. The small boy had a gray wool cap with the soft top snapped to the brim and a gray pea coat to match. His polished leather shoes looked new.

They came down the aisle as the bus started up again, and the lady held the boy in one hand and grasped the metal loops on each double bench seat, meant for that purpose, to prevent falling when the bus was in motion. The bus drivers never waited until you sat down, they had a schedule to keep and they did.

I heard her say, "Brent, now you sit here by me, like a good little boy."

Well, little Brent sat there less than fifteen seconds before he was up, first standing by his

mother and the seat, looking all around the bus, at the people, I suppose. Then he began wandering around the bus, looking back and forth at the other adults seated forward of us since we were nearer the back area.

As the bus bounced back and forth and metal rubber covered floor panels rattled, other adults were observing him coming by and giving them the "once over". The kid didn't say anything and didn't smile. Sometimes he'd have to grab onto an adult's leg or arm to steady himself.

I wondered why his mother didn't do something, but she seemed oblivious.

I elbowed my buddy who had been looking out the window, towards the fancy dressed kid. We both grinned and snickered a bit.

"When your mom is real angry and asks, 'Do I look stupid?' it's better not to answer her."

Joey Phillips, age 8

Kiwanis Club of Huntsville

GOLDEN K



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- Downtown Rescue Mission
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- Reading is Fundamental
- Alabama Science Fair
- Veterans Memorial Museum
- Court Appointed Juvenile Advocate
- Huntsville Achievement School
- Boys and Girls Club
- Huntsville Public Library
- Oakwood Univ. & Calhoun Cig. Scholarships

We could tell the other adults were not happy that this kid was not sitting in his seat, since it was clear, as the bus jolted back and forth, he should not be walking around. The atmosphere in the bus was a bit tense.

Finally his mother did speak loud enough for him to hear, "Now come back here and sit with me, Brent."

He ignored her, and I saw she was not happy but didn't want to make a scene.

She spoke loudly the second time and her tone more stern this time, "I said, come sit down."

Brent turned around, and gave her a "or what?" look and only took a step or two in her direction.

The lady glanced back down.

The boy stopped.

I could tell he was thinking. "No," he said.

His mother looked up with an angry expression on her face. Confrontation time and the atmosphere was hushed.

Just then, the bus hit a giant pothole as it went down a hill

and lurched to the side and little Brent went tumbling to the floor and rolling towards the front of the bus. The floor was filthy and now, so was the kid.

His mother jumped out of her seat, quickly was upon her son like a chicken on a June bug, and snatched him up from the floor.

"I told you to come here, young man, and I don't like telling you twice," as she half dragged him down the aisle.

One older man, applauded softly, but he was soon joined by several others, and finally the whole bus, including Mardis and me, were clapping our hands.

The lady looked embarrassed now, and when she got to her seat, she shoved him in first, harshly up against the window and wall and sat on the outside, hemming him in place. He was not going anywhere until the end of the ride.

The applause turned to laughter about the same time the lady's face was turning red.

A more congenial atmosphere existed for the rest of the ride that day.

KEEPERS OF THE LIGHT

by John E. Carson

Artists and writers

Sculptors and sketchers

Molders of metal

And sunlight catchers

Poets and painters

And workers of wood

In temples and churches

And down in the hood

The sages of ages

Expressing themselves

Have filled libraries and galleries

And countless shelves

And every person

Each in their way

Reflects and creates

And has something to say.

We all have a candle

To bring to the night

God made us all

The keepers of the Light.



In 1901 Huntsville Mayor Tom Smith and D.C. Monroe's Band rode on the first electric streetcar in Huntsville during the dedication of the Huntsville Railway Company. Street cars continued in the city until 1931.

Unsung Hero

by Noel D. Tallon



Unsung heroes: people who make a substantive yet unrecognized contribution.

It's the Great Depression. A 17-year-old Oklahoma farm boy walks down the red clay road toward home. He carries a stick of baloney to his six siblings. Not much but something to eat at the end of a long day. His mother had passed just the year before. His father, an alcoholic, was never home.

The boy was tired from school, an afternoon working in town, and an evening job feeding the neighbors cows in exchange for hay to feed his cow. He gazed at the yellow ball in the sky. Clear and bright on this early evening. The craters on it almost forming the design of a man's face. Wouldn't it be interesting if someone could go there? No that's for

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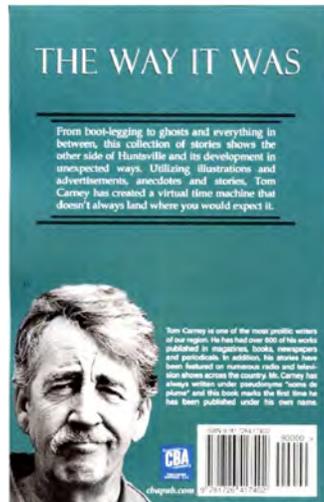
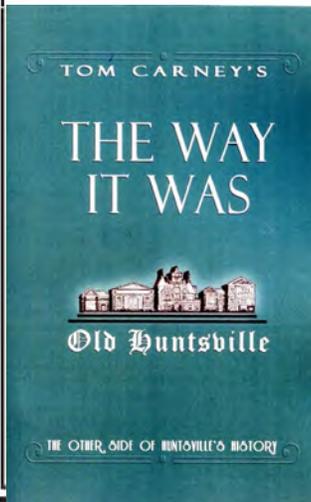
"THE WAY IT WAS"

THE OTHER SIDE OF HUNTSVILLE'S HISTORY

BY TOM CARNEY

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Tom Carney



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comic books. No time for nonsense. Home and bed are calling.

The boy is called to the war in Europe. Later working as a soda jerk and taking college classes, he gets the chance of a lifetime (a job in Wichita some 400 miles away and from there to many other places in this great land including Huntsville). Little did he know.

It is the mid 60s. A young mother rises early and gets her children ready for school and her husband off to work. She notices the late moon but no time for that. She boards a dilapidated city bus to Holiday Homes. Her job is to clean the home of a working husband and wife. She wonders who are these people talking with a funny accent and driving new cars? Little does she know.

Another young man will hold to the back of a truck all day and collect waste. Most often the ball is still in the sky when he goes to work. A hot, tiring and dirty job few want to do but honorable as any. Little does he know.

A ten-year-old boy rides his bike to the newspaper outlet on Drake Avenue. He delivers to Holiday Homes while the ball is still high in the sky. Little does he know.

Another young woman grew up in the city they call Huntsville. She finished high school and worked her way through college. She also gets her children and husband off for the day. She notices the ball in the sky as do the others but her thoughts are the chaos of a day teaching an overfilled class of children (most not from here). Little does she know.

Back to the 30s. A young man looks at that same ball. He dreams that someday a man could walk there. Maybe he could make it happen. He becomes a scientist. But politics lead to a major war. He is not interested in politics. He just wants to live his dream. The war ends and he is brought to a sleepy town in North Alabama. A small city so insignificant that they build an Interstate highway closer to its neighbor.

But this young man is much older now, and knows he cannot do it by himself.

It is July 20, 1969 and all TVs are tuned to one thing. A different young man does something still not believed by many. He leaves his footprints on that big

yellow ball in the sky. Of course, HE knows he did not do it by himself.

Kudos seldom go to the butcher, the baker, or the candlestick maker. But WE know even if they don't that thousands of people figure into a dream come true. We know and our farm boy, maid, sanitation worker, paper boy, and teacher ALL should know that they had their part in putting foot prints where no one had ever gone before and few since.

"That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." Neil Armstrong.

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“Rescue Me” Launches in the Rocket City

by John E. Carson

The 1965 hit by Fontella Bass, “Rescue Me”, is the perfect theme song for the new volunteer group whose mission is to match rescued shelter animals with veterans who suffer from PTSD/TBI and related conditions.

The Rescue Me Volunteer Group, known more commonly as Rescue Me, officially announced its presence in two events in February; the 30th Annual Dog Ball (Raise The Woof), put on by the Greater Huntsville Humane Society at the Von Braun Center and held on February 2nd, and the 1st Annual K-9 Cookie Cutter Fundraiser held at Artisans Cove in Hampton Cove on February 9th.

Participation in those two events was the culmination of more than 3 years of effort by Rescue Me President, John Carson and his service dog, Mr. Freckles, to raise funds and establish a Pets for Vets chapter in Huntsville and Madison County.

Building a volunteer organization is not an easy thing and after two false starts we finally found the right people to put it together. With their help, Rescue Me connected with two donors/sponsors that helped fund the legal expenses and the launch of the non-profit. Christine Downing of Hazel Green, a member of the MOAA (Military Officers Association of America) became our first sponsor and Paula Cushman of Huntsville sponsored Rescue Me at the Dog Ball.

Other volunteers helped make the K-9 Cookie Cutter Fundraiser a success and we are grateful to all those who helped, especially Osborne’s Jewelers of Huntsville for their donation to the silent auction which accounted for half the money raised during that event.

The mission of Rescue Me is to provide as many of the services of the national organization, Pets for Vets and eventually qualify to come under their wings as a chapter. Pets for Vets has provided support and guidance to the Huntsville, Madison County start-up and we are thankful for their assistance. Rescue Me is patterned after their program and will operate accordingly whenever possible.

Other organizations in Huntsville we would like to thank are: The Clayton E. Moneymaker, American Legion Post 237, the American Legion Riders, Old Huntsville Magazine, the SSR Fanatics of Huntsville and the Amer-

ican Legion Honor Guard Post 237 past commander, Jerry Lankford.

Over time our young organization will grow, assisting Veterans and rescuing animals, giving them both a “new leash on life”.

More volunteers are needed; trainers and fosters are our biggest need. Also, we will be looking for groups to talk to and fundraising opportunities. If you can help, please contact John at carsonjohn936@gmail.com.

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THE GHOST CHILDREN OF WALKER STREET

by Jessica Penot



The Spanish Flu killed between 50 million and 100 million people between 1917 and 1920. It swept the globe, killing people in every corner of the world. It was a particularly cruel plague.

Most illnesses prey on the weak. They take the elderly and children, but the Spanish flu was indiscriminate. It killed many healthy young adults as well as the weak. It is considered to be the second largest disaster in human history and it infected 28% of the human population and killed 3% of the global population. It killed more people than the black plague.

Enormous flu wards were created to care for the amazing number of sick that overran hospitals and health facilities where the sick were lined up like cattle to wait for death.

It is no surprise that the Spanish Flu left many ghosts. I've found many ghost stories related to this terrifying epidemic.

The story of Walker Street in Historic Huntsville, Alabama is one of the sadder of these tales. According to local legend, the

Spanish Flu hit Walker Street with a particular cruelty. It took mostly children, leaving entire homes empty. So many people died that the bodies of the dead would be left on the front porch because there weren't enough healthy people left to bury the dead.

The ghosts of the many children that died on Walker Street during the Spanish Flu are still said to wander the streets at night. They've been seen singing and playing in the shadowy dark. They sing nursery rhymes as they play and haunt the living that have been left behind.

There is a rhyme that the children are said to have made up. "I had a bird whose name was Enza, I opened the window and in flew Enza." The children are said to still sing this little rhyme as they wander on Walker Street in Old Town, Huntsville, Alabama.



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walks with you, love good food and swimming. Do you think I would fit into your home? You need a big fenced yard for me and lots of love to offer. Can you do all that? When you come to the Ark, ask to see Spades. That's me.

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Funnies are Where You Find Them

by Jerry Keel

Some time back I wrote an article for the Old Huntsville magazine about some of the wild and crazy guys who worked at The Huntsville Times some 50 years ago. That story brought back many memories for me and made me realize what the passing of time can do to some people.

Those memories were as clear and vivid as if they happened yesterday. The odd part is that things that happened an hour or so ago are a mystery to me. Ah, old age! The twilight of a person's life, the golden years and other cliches that aren't always true. Everyone who is blessed with a sharp memory should be thankful.

I spend about as much time trying to remember what I went into another room for as I do actually doing something. Before the memory bank in my head goes out of business for good I want to tell about a couple more of those characters who made going to work almost fun. Mind you, I said almost fun.

One such character was a man who worked in the press-room for many years. He was always ready to play a joke on someone. This guy had a winning personality. He was a product of Lincoln Mill Village. His parents were hardworking, honest people who passed those traits down to him. He also worked hard at finding something funny to do or some prank to play on anyone who came along.

When he came back to The Times after completing his military service he brought that funny part of his life with him. His favorite trick involved a funnel and a 25-cent piece (a quarter). He would take the funnel and stick it into the top

of his pants then hold his head back as far as he could. Then he would take the quarter and place it on his forehead. The object of this game was to slowly raise his head and try to make the quarter fall into the funnel.

When some innocent person saw this they just had to try it. That's when the fun began. Placing the funnel just right in the victim's pants and getting his head in just the right position for the placement of the quarter was a big production. This allowed time for a small crowd to gather to witness this great feat.

It also allowed time for an accomplice of his to get a large glass of warm water. When everything was just right he would ask the victim if he was ready to try to place the quarter in the funnel. Yes, yes I'm ready was the excited victim's answer. Just as he slowly began to lower his head the accomplice would begin to pour the water into the funnel.

The warm water didn't register in the person's mind until most of the water had been poured into the funnel. By then it was too late. Gotcha!! Everyone who was standing around began to laugh deliriously while the poor victim just stood there looking like a dope who had had an accident in his pants.

Occasionally one of the victims would get mad but what could he do. About all he could do was slink off like a dummy who had just been had. Everyone really enjoyed that stuff, that is, everyone but the victim.

Once, however, when he was demonstrating the proper technique for making the quar-

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ter go into the funnel, one of his previous victims had a bottle of water. When his head was tilted back the former victim slipped up and gave the jokester a good soaking with his bottle of water. He laughed more at that incident than he did when he was the executioner. That's the kind of guy this man was.

Another wild and crazy guy was a member of the news department who started out at The Times as a kid in high school who served as a copy boy. His job was to carry news copy to the Composing Room for the typesetters to reset into the metal type which was then used to print the paper. This was back in the days before the computer age.

He had a long and very successful career at The Times. From his start as a copy boy he advanced to being a sports writer. He became one of the best sports writers in Alabama or perhaps even in the entire Southeastern United States.

When the sports editor decided to retire this joker was selected to be the new sports editor. He became a very good sports editor, leading a team of other good writers. His son followed in his footsteps and also became a good sports writer.

The dad's writing ability and down-home approach to his stories caught the eye of the editor-in-chief of The Times, who promoted my friend to the position of columnist. This job only required him to write a column each day so he had lots of time to fulfill the jokester side of his mind.

Throughout all the years he worked at The Times he always had a quick wit about him and also loved a good joke. This was one of his best jokes as far as I can recall.

Herbert, one of the guys in the Composing Room, had just bought a pair of fancy sunglasses. They were really sharp and several of the other guys wanted to try them on. Herbert obliged but an idea popped into his head. Why don't I use these to play a joke on someone or maybe a bunch of someones.

He came up with the idea of putting some of the sticky black printing ink on the nosepiece of the glasses, then when someone put them on they would get the ink all over their nose. That was a wonderful idea, at least to Herbert. He then proceeded to put his plan into action.

He was very successful and

pulled his little funny on several guys. One of his victims didn't like to be the patsy in a joke so he went to my friend the columnist for help in his payback. Of course he jumped at the chance to get his licks in also. He went into the Composing Room as if he had a question about something. When he saw Herbert with his pretty glasses he asked him what he had.

Of course Herbert was only too glad to show him. When he put the glasses on he too got his nose inked. Herbert was jubilant! He had gotten another one. However this one turned out to be a little different. When he pulled the glasses off he feigned surprise at what had happened.

He looked at the glasses, then at Herbert. He looked back at the glasses and slowly began to lower them to the floor. He took the heel of his shoe and ground them into the concrete floor. He then picked up the twisted frame and handed it to Herbert, who just stood there looking bewildered. My friend told him they were nice glasses and turned and walked away.

However, all's well that ends well. The whole affair was capped off with several more people wanting to see Herbert's fancy glasses. They weren't so fancy anymore. The story had a happy ending anyway. The man who enlisted help from my friend went around and got the other guys to donate a small amount to give Herbert so he could replace the glasses with some new ones which he didn't show to anyone.

Just another day at The Huntsville Times. The world was a much better place with men like these around. The have both gone on to that big newspaper in the sky and we sure do miss them!

"I had a linguistics professor who said that it's man's ability to use language that makes him the dominant species. That may be. But I think there's one other thing that separates us from animals. We aren't afraid of the vacuum cleaner."

Jeff Stilson



June 2, 2019 Old Town Garden & Historic Home Info

Two Historic Homes that are not on the garden tour, but are featured for their historic significance.



**120 Walker Avenue
Leroy Pope Walker Home**

Leroy Pope Walker, grandson of the founder of Twickenham (eventually renamed Huntsville in 1811), lived in this home on Walker Avenue (also named after him). Leroy Pope Walker, was named the Confederacy's first Secretary of War by President Jefferson Davis.

He was visiting in this home when he received a telegraph from President Davis to start the shelling of Ft. Sumter, whereupon he walked down to the railroad telegraph office and sent the telegraph to Charleston. Hence, the Civil War started right here in Huntsville, Alabama!

This 1835 home is five times interesting! Its architectural style is a combination of a Federal period (early 1830's) and extensive Italianate (latter 1800s). Secondly it was moved, intact as a two story structure, from the corner of Clinton Ave. and Church St., to its current location in 2004, added onto and now serves as the law offices for Morris, King and Hodge.



**100 Pratt Avenue
The Clemens Home**

More interestingly, the home belonged to U.S. Senator Jeremiah Clemens, elected to the U.S. Senate in 1849 from Alabama. He graduated from the University of Alabama and then from Law School at Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky.

Jeremiah was the son of James Clemens, Jr., co-founder of Madison City along with his uncle, James Clemens, Sr.. Junior, for whom James Clemens High School in Madison is named after, eventually moved on to St. Louis, Mo., to become very successful in retail and banking.

Perhaps most interesting to our purpose here, James Clemens, Jr. was the uncle of Samuel Clemens, making Jeremiah a first cousin to Samuel, who frequented Jeremiah as childhood playmates. Samuel, of course, would go on to earn fame as Mark Twain, even though Jeremiah was a first rate novelist in his own right, having penned Bernard Lyle

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Newspaper Snippets - 1907

* There is a popular outcry in Dallas Village against the enforcement of the city ordinance which forbids allowing cows on the streets of Huntsville and it appears likely that a test case will be had in the courts at an early date. Since Mayor Smith gave instructions for the strict enforcement of the ordinance there have been about fifteen or more cows belonging to residents of Dallas taken up.

Several of the owners have been placed under arrest when they appeared to pay the fine for impounding and they have been fined in the city court. The residents of the village allow their cows to graze on the common and they claim that the animals ought not to be taken up because of this. Some of the people of the village have set about to make up a purse with which to employ a lawyer and take the question into court.

* John Williams, an old man who was arrested a few days ago for drunkenness, was ordered released and directed to leave Huntsville at once. Williams is quite an old man being 72 years of age and Mayor Smith took pity on him.

* By reason of an open switch on the Southern railway freight train No. 306 - J. Edward, engineer and switch train No 431 with Conductor Miller in charge - collided on the side track on Meridian Street late yesterday afternoon, wrecking and derailing two cars of the regular train, demolishing the pilots of both engines, smashing the front of a car and the trucks of the end of the switch train. No one was hurt.

* Hon. W. T. Lawler, Probate Judge of Madison County, entered upon his 4th year of office on Monday morning with every deed mortgage left on the books from the past year. Business is brisk and ahead of the numbers that were posted at this time last year.

* Mrs. Elma Wesley died of apoplexy in Merrimack. A long time resident of Merrimack Village, she died last night after a few days illness with apoplexy. She left three daughters.

* R.C. Smallwood, sixty years, died last night at his residence in the Rowe Mill Village of pneumonia.

* The bursting of a water main lead-

ing from the city pumping station to the standpipe caused no end of trouble Saturday and Sunday. A leak was found in front of the Schiffman Building on the southeast corner of the square early Saturday morning and a force of men set to work to dig down and make the necessary repair. The job was bigger than they thought it to be. When the hard crust of the macadamized street was removed the escaping water burst forth and flooded the street.

The flood washed out a bed down the gutter and being unable to get in the storm sewer at Randolph Street, passed on down to Clinton and flooded that corner. City officials stated yesterday that they hoped all repairs could be finished within the week.



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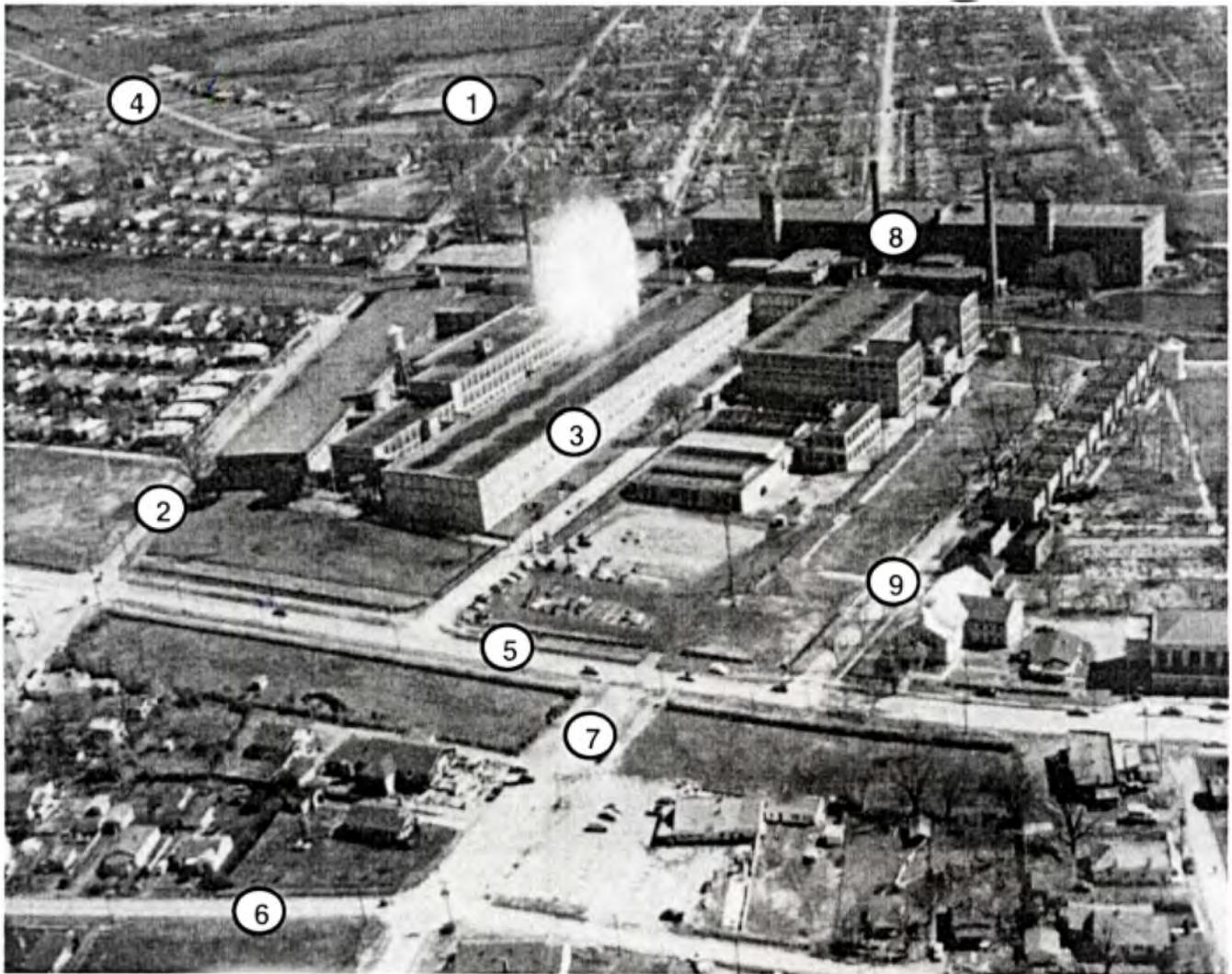
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Woody Allen

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