



No. 344

October 2021



# Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

## The Legend of the Dogwood Tree at Chase Depot



***Also in this issue:* Johnny Mack Brown & Alabama Football; Halloween 1955; Almost Deadly Fishing Trip; October on Capshaw Mountain; Paint Rock - a Sense of Place; Favorite Local Recipes, Dog Superstitions and much more!**

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*Domie Lewter*  
*Mac Lewter*

# The Legend of the Dogwood Tree at Chase Depot

by Bob Baudendistel



After the War Between the States trampled over the Heartland of the South, many displaced cities we taken advantage of by northern carpet-baggers while Huntsville wasted no time moving ahead on the fast track toward a full economic recovery. Community Leaders, in conjunction with business development and trade groups, sought to promote Huntsville with outside investors. This approach carried our great city well into the 20th century and for all intents and purposes, has

stood the test of time.

Early attempts to stimulate new commerce led to a bumper crop of new cotton mills. While these threads of new development were spindling across the city, another unique flora was hidden in the undergrowth at many remote locations with plant nurseries pollinating the sale of trees, flowers and ornamental shrubs. Abundant water, rich soils, affordable land and a talented workforce provided a boost as these and other forms of horticulture came to take up root.

In 1889, Herbert, Charles, Henry, and Robert Chase paid a visit to Huntsville seeking to expand their nursery trade based out of Rochester, New York. Like many northern agri-businesses, they too were bombarded by brutal winters, snow drifts off The Great Lakes, and Arctic cold fronts. Many nurseries unable to propagate a flowery return on their investment were further impacted by the North's increasing cost of labor, less forgiving soils, short growing seasons, and rapidly changing markets. In order to keep their businesses blossoming, many nurserymen, including Chase, looked ahead by looking south.

Back at Huntsville on October 31, 1889, the Chase Brothers purchased land west of Pulaski Pike along the Oakwood Trail where the Alabama Nursery Company, Inc. turned over a new leaf of business. Despite its success, getting goods to mar-

**“Prowling his own quiet backyard or asleep by the fire, the cat is still only a whisker away from the wilds.”**

*Jean Burden*



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Publisher - Cathey Carney

Advertising - (256) 534-0502  
Sales & Mrktg. - Cathey Carney  
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Gen. Manager - Sam Keith  
Copy Boy - Tom Carney  
(in memory)

“Old Huntsville” magazine is a monthly publication. Annual subscriptions are \$40 per year for print copy and \$25 per year for digital. Copies can be found in boxes and machines throughout North Alabama.

For subscription change of address, mail new information to the above address.

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ket carried a hefty premium. At the time, even the most traveled corridors were little more than glorified wagon trails making transfer to and from nurseries difficult at best. Finding a solution with the transportation issues became a top priority.

Early one morning aboard a train leaving Huntsville, Mr. Robert C. Chase noticed a unique location about 5 miles northeast of town where two railroads converged, passing through a gap at the north end of Chapman Mountain. On a return trip back from Winchester, TN over the Huntsville Branch of the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis (N.C. & St. L.) Railway, Mr. Chase requested the train make an unscheduled stop at this location so he could have a look around. The determination was made this would be the perfect environment for a nursery.

After purchasing some of the land in 1903, Chase Nursery Company constructed its fully-bricked packinghouse between the two railways where faster shipment of goods proved highly beneficial to the nursery and

its bouquet of wholesale customers.

With Henry B. Chase as company president and Robert C. Chase secretary-treasurer, the nursery's success continued to bloom exponentially until nearly 1,000 acres immediately over the mountain featured endless rows of trees and shrubs. Known for giving the green light to innovations, the nursery featured cold storage at its facility, implementing wooden containers for shipment of sensitive plants. Chase also obtained a patent on the Cloud Nine cultivar (Cornus Florida Cloud 91) of the dogwood tree. There were some disputes as to the validity of this patent due to the fact it might have infringed upon the previously grown Barton's White Dogwood found at a nursery in Birmingham. Still, Cloud Nine became an iconic tree within the nursery's catalog noted for its overlapping white petal blooms in spring, dark green foliage throughout summer, reddish-purple leaves during fall, and glossy red berries into winter. Back in the day, a motorist heading over Chapman Moun-

tain would be shocked to see countless springtime blooms of this heavenly white dogwood. As one patron suggested while passing through, "We were walkin' in high cotton!"

Chase became quite a thriving community. Across its picturesque landscape were villages with tenant quarters to house nursery workers and families. Also included was a commissary, Post Office, barns, maintenance sheds, blacksmith shops, greenhouses, several administrative offices, retail space, and

**"It may take a village to raise a child but I swear it's going to take a vineyard to homeschool this one."**

*Beth James, mom*

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single family residences. In 1937, a new union depot was built providing passenger and freight services over both the Southern and N.C. & St. L. Railways.

Work conditions with higher pay and a healthier standard of living shed many seeds of new opportunity to those willing to toil and harvest the fields. Daily tasks involved pruning, fertilization, cultivation, burlapping, irrigation, weeding, soil preparation, transplanting and much more. Being employed at the nursery was considered a leap of faith in career accomplishment, described by one employee as "More peaceful and relaxing." Having been a young slave before the war, the gentleman praised that "While working over these fields, one could always take a break to stop and smell the roses!"

Major changes embarked upon Chase in 1968 following the announcement by Madison County Commission Chairman James Record that the Chase Industrial Park was being developed to promote new business and industry within the area. First to open was the Barber-Coleman Plant specializing in mechanical refrigeration units followed by PPG Industries manufacturing specialty glass products. Today, the park has expanded to more than 40 businesses generating over \$1 billion dollars in annual revenue. Sadly, the Chase Nursery Company eventually ceased operation by the early 1990s when all remaining lands sold. While a precious time in history with the nursery may be gone, the landscape it so gracefully inspired lives on.

For what it's worth: Seasoned rail veterans David and

Robert ran many trains over the East-End Division of the Norfolk Southern A-Line. While sharing the road together, they became avid historians who felt railroads were much like churches, being only as fruitful as the people they served.

Getting to know the hidden layers with every community along their route became more than just a passion. It was spring of 2011 one afternoon when their train (#365), powered by a trio of EMD SD40-2s, was heading west out of Chattanooga. Making good time across northeast Alabama, the train was piloted through Gurley as it rolled around the bend, having never missed a sunset since they didn't know when. The dispatcher in Birmingham issued them a new track authority granting permission to proceed from Brock to Decatur River Junction. After Conductor Rob repeated the required check boxes, dispatcher Matthew gave clearance at 5:14 in the PM.

Soon, the train topped the grade at Jordan's Ridge west of Ryland heading through Chase Creek Valley over green pastures and beside quiet waters with strays of heavenly bamboo beside the roadbed. Deep within a

wooded forest were sycamore trees as plentiful as cedar while through a clearing south of the right-of-way were several dogwoods and their pearly white blooms. Moments later, like the work of a Good Shepherd, the crew rode a short ways taking in the sky, lost in a firepower sunset, with a splash of amber blended in with shades of red. Conductor Robert called out over his radio: "NS 365, gotta clear signal from Cloud Nine at Chase....out. —"

Confused as to what the conductor meant, the dispatcher summoned the train once again asking, "365, could you repeat that location? Over—"

Robert replied. "Sorry about that, looking off into another view of God's Grace..... guess I kinda lost my 'train' of thought!"

And with a chuckle in his voice, Matthew replied, "Amen to that brother!....AMEN!"

To this very day, out across its glorious landscape, one never has to look very far to conclude that the Legend of the Dogwood Tree from Cloud Nine at Chase has stood the test of time.....for those fertile fields are never far away.

**"When I said I cleaned my room, I just meant I made a path from the doorway to my bed."**

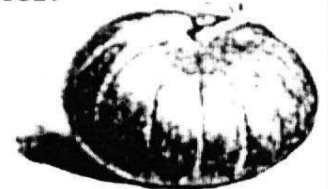
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# UFOs!

by Gwendolyn Joop



My lovely and wonderful husband, Frank Joop, booked us a trip to Palm Springs, California on June 24th, 2021 for two weeks.

His intentions were great. Considering I had been homebound since September 2018 after a serious game of bumper cars on Rideout Road and I lost!! I was qualified to be the National Spokesman how to stay home when COVID-19 hit!!

Always have been intrigued with stars, planets, atmosphere etc. There is no city in the 50 states where the stars appear you may just reach up and touch them, than Palm Springs, California.

This trip was a bit different. First a major heat wave. Accustomed to 105-110 with dry heat. Nope..this trip was 118-122 with humidity that made Alabama humidity seem nice.

One morning at 3:00 am PST I decided to sit on the balcony at least finding my favorite Evening Star. Every night was cloudy.

Suddenly, the clouds opened up. A beautiful bright florescent beam of light shined down, becoming wider the closer to earth. The curious one stayed trying to figure out what I was witnessing. Then my brain informed me. Oh crap, Jesus is com-

ing back and the world is ending. Now what?? Still glued to the sky. Appeared a strange shaped object with bright red lights and fluorescent lights surrounding this peculiar object. Logical person, must be a plane. Nope. At least five minutes. Planes do not hover. Grabbed my mobile phone. Snapped a picture.

Made an Executive Decision. Needed a witness. My husband is not a morning person. He has to wake up to wake up. Especially, at 3:00 am. Weird. When my eyes open I'm ready to blow and go.

Ran in the condo woke him up. Come now. Emergency. He looks up at the sky. It's a plane. NO!!! Planes don't hover or stay stationary over five minutes. Both on the balcony. Quickly, the object zoomed to the left out of sight. Frank went back to bed. His bottom did not hit the mattress until summoned again to the balcony.

The sky looked as if 500 glow-in-the-dark freebies were going North, South, East and West. Frank stated, most likely it was a spot light. Par-



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don me, we are in the middle of the desert at 3:09am. Do not believe an Automobile Dealership is shining a spot light!!!

Frank - "Well, I have no clue. DO NOT WAKE ME UP AGAIN!"

So I stayed on the balcony until the weird things stopped.

Next morning on the way to the pool. Frank would not admit it, but he was baffled. Told me he was not worried if I had been abducted. The unknown species would have returned me very FAST!! I talk nonstop and have this fetish of pushing buttons and gadgets to find out what their purpose is. HOW RUDE!!

Once returning home. Next day phoned, Tom, my former SR Executive Vice President of Worldwide Sales. Shared my story. "Gwendoline (all he's ever called me) most normal people would have run inside." My inner circle friends are so kind!!

Once had a friend, very wise and most intelligent person have ever had the privilege of knowing. Explained one day, All Good Things

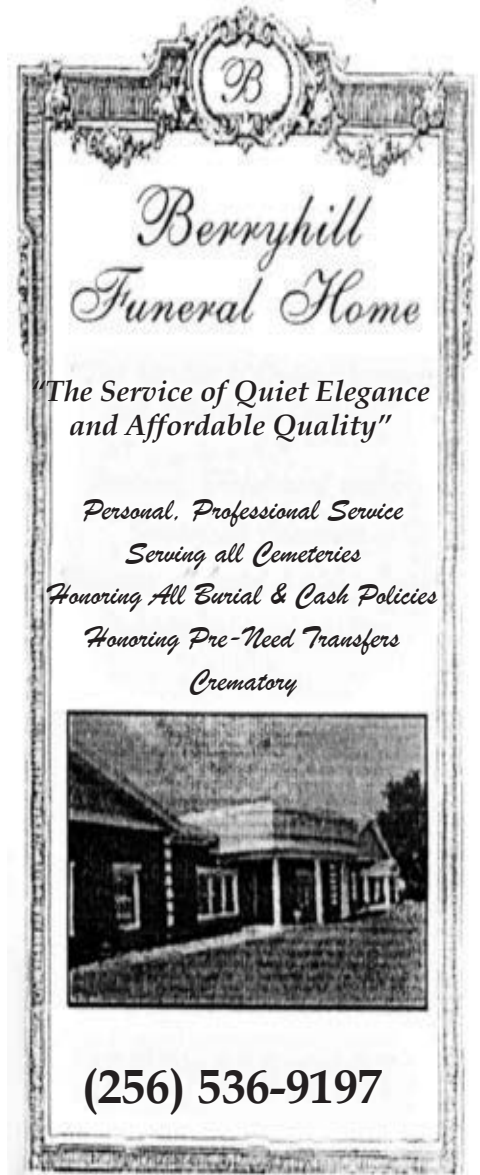
Must Come To An End. Never doubting most of his advice and teachings. This is one statement must disagree. There are times one has to accept what we are not able to change. Changing what we are capable to change. Never settle and keep punching onward. Remembering in life. It is not where we have been. Where we are going.

I'm like the late Honorable Congressman John Lewis. Always stayed in GOOD TROUBLE!! Never been a "normal" blend-it type of person. Someone that shakes up life a bit.

Regardless of Political Party or Religion, believe what your eyes see and ears hear. Stand strong. Never allowing any person de facto your opinion.

Be kind and respectful to each other. Agree to disagree. GET YOUR COVID SHOT!! God Bless America and God Bless the World. Stay safe.


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# THE LAUNDRY

by Betty Pettigrew



When I was a young teenager, we lived on a farm. We had electricity but no running water in the house and laundry was done outside. Running water meant that I ran down to the spring, dipped a bucket in carefully to avoid the moss and carried it up to the house. Hot water happened in a galvanized wash tub balanced on two rocks over a fire built with firewood. When I had filled the wash tub and lit the fire, we would have hot water to wash.

Our washing machine was electric and powered by an extension cord from the back porch. Luckily for us, no one was electrocuted with water and an extension cord side-by-side. Our laundry room was an open space with the machine and two tubs positioned near it; one for rinsing and one for bluing water. Because this was my job and I had been doing it a long time, it only took about an hour to get water into the two cold tubs, put the bluing in one and heat the hot water for the washing machine. Now we were ready to go.



Although this was a big job, I liked being outside except for one little thing. We had a banty

rooster who hated me and any occasion to flog me made his day. He always got between me and the out house, and would threaten when laundry was going on. However, he hated water so just a couple of handfuls got him to stay away. There were six people in our family; parents, two brothers, me and my grandmother. Grandma would always supervise the laundry from a seated position outside by the washing machine. Clothes had to be sorted well because all those dirty farm labor clothes had to be washed last.

We were lucky to have an electric washing machine that agitated on its own. However, to move the clothes from the machine to a rinse tub meant you must put them through a wringer that started working when you touched the ringer with the clothes. If your fingers were too close, your hand was going through the wringer. On the top of the wringer was a release lever that you turned to open it so you could get your hand out. This was grandma's job. I would scream and she would run over and turn the lever. Everybody helped. If the clothes were white or light colored, they went in the bluing tub and if they were colored into the clear rinse tub. By the time we got to the dirty farm clothes, it didn't matter where you rinsed them.

Hanging clothes on a clothes line is an art form. The lines have to be wiped down before you start and there is a place for different kinds of clothes. First, you hang the outside line next to the road with sheets or towels. This keeps people driving by from seeing all your clothes. Underwear is next behind this shield so no one gets to see that. The other outside line is for jeans and anything else heavy that takes a long time to dry. For the rest of the day, you watch the sky. At the threat of rain, you run like crazy and grab everything off the line before it gets wet. Teaches you a lot about weather.

Now when I look back on those days on the farm, there were many lessons learned from doing the laundry. If there is a job to be done, find a way. Be very careful around moving machinery. Pay attention to detail and modesty. Roosters really should be Sunday dinner.



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## DASTARDLY ATTEMPT TO BURN THE BUSINESS BLOCK ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE 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. As he passed the storeroom 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. He 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. 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.

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 hollered 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 of this little space. He 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.

It is safe to say that when he is arraigned for an investigation of his criminal act he will be fully known and dealt with accordingly.

My wife yelled from upstairs and asked, "Do you feel a sharp pain across your whole body like someone has a voodoo doll of you and they're stabbing it?"

Sounding concerned, I said, "No."

She responded, "How about now?"



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**"When I was kidnapped, my parents snapped into action. They rented out my room."**

**Woody Allen**

# JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE OLD DOESN'T MEAN YOU'RE WISE

*From the Nashville Banner  
Aug. 11, 1941*

*By Dorothy Dix*

**Editor's note:** This Dorothy Dix column appeared in the August 2011 issue of The Nashville Retrospect, a widely read digital nostalgia/history newspaper. To see more ([www.nashvilleretrospect.com](http://www.nashvilleretrospect.com)) just get to their website and you'll find podcasts, videos, history maps, archived articles etc. Really interesting.

HERE are ten commandments for old people:

1. Don't give up your job too early. Most old people climb up on the do-nothing stool too soon. There is still twenty year's of good work in them if they will only buck up and do it. Also, it will keep them young if they keep busy. The real elixir of perpetual youth is doing something in which we have a pride and skill and that keeps us on our tiptoes. The reason so many old people get to be pests is because, hav-

ing nothing to do and no interests of their own, they have to stick their fingers in everybody else's pies. Meddling is their escape from boredom.

2. Don't live with your children. Keep some place of your own, where you can do as you please and have freedom and independence, instead of having to walk on eggs to avoid friction with your in-laws and your grandchildren. Better is one room that belongs to you than the guest suite at Mary's. The father or mother who goes to live with the children has to become either a rubber stamp or a firebrand—neither of which is conducive to happiness.

3. Keep a medium-tight hold on your pocketbook. Give your children as much as you can afford, but keep most of your money in your own hands. Never turn over all your property to John and Mary on the promise that they will take care of you. A good child would not ask such a thing, and a greedy child is more to be dreaded than any other grafter. In old age our best friend is our check book. Between father and mother who have gifts to bestow and a will to be made and father and mother who are

empty-handed is the difference between finding welcome on their children's doormats and having to eat cold shoulder at their children's tables.

4. Follow Benjamin Franklin's advice to keep your friendships in good repair and continually add new ones to them, for old friends have a way of creeping off to the cemetery and you will be very lonely unless you have provided some one to take their places. Make a business of cultivating people. Show them little attentions. Write letters. Send telegrams. Show an interest in their affairs. Never forget that if you want to have friendship you have to earn it.

5. Keep yourself as attractive-looking as possible. Too many old people think that age gives them the privilege of going slouchy and frowsy and even unwashed. They cut out the barber and the hairdresser. They have dandruff on their collars and grease spots on their vests and generally look as if they needed to be run through the laundry.

6. If you do not want to be forgotten and sit at home grouching over how lonesome you are, keep in the running by doing things for other people.



# THE INCONTINENTALS

## ROCKIN' OLDIES

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Go out of your way to show them favors. Put them under obligation to you by paying them attentions. Entertain as much as you can. After all, a chop calls for a chop. And when we are old we are no longer so ornamental and glamorous as we used to be. We have to throw in a chromo with our pound of tea.

7. Don't try to run your children's lives. Let them mess them up in their own way. Because they are your sons and daughters is no indication that they have a single taste or talent in common with you. Anyway, times have changed and what might have been a wise thing to do in your day may be a fool thing to do now.

8. Don't think you are Solomon. Don't indulge yourself in the common vice of age, which is self-conceit. Just because you are 80 does not automatically make you wise. You may have lived all these years without learning a single thing and be just as stupid at the end of your life as you were at the beginning.

9. Don't think that age gives you the privilege of making yourself disagreeable. Don't be one of the peevish, fretful, ill-tempered, ill-mannered old people whose families are looking forward to the time when Grandma or Grandpa dies and they can have a little peace and comfort.

10. And, finally, don't be a repeater. Don't tell the same stories over and over again until people flee at your approach. Keep tabs on your reminiscences and never recall anything that happened later than last year unless you are specifically asked about it. As long as you can read the daily papers you never need go senile in your conversation.

(Source: Tennessee State Library and Archives)

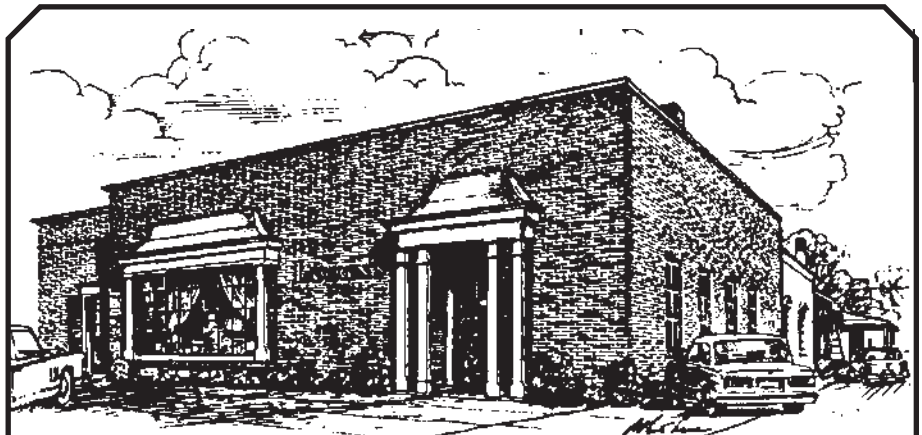
## A Huntsville Heroine - 1901

A Huntsville lady was the other night compelled to do a very unlady-like thing. There was an invalid gentleman sleeping in one part of the house, and her chamber was in another quarter, and these two were the sole occupants of the premises that night. She heard somebody trying to get into her room through one of the windows and wanting to catch him at it she didn't scream and faint away. She had no doubt it was a robber and she could not call to the invalid man without frightening her game.

The lady went to a dresser in her room and got a long, sharp butcher knife that happened to be there, and went to the window and waited. At length the intruder was about to step into the room, and she attacked him with drawn knife, daringly disputing his entrance. She slashed right and left at him on the window-sill while he called to his friend beneath the window.

At length she gave him a deep one in the chest and he fell back and to the ground. The friend dragged the robber off and into the darkness, and the lady returned to her slumbers and was disturbed no more that night. In the morning it was found that the intruder had bled like a stuck pig, both on the window and in the yard below, and it was hoped some Huntsville doctor would report a man with a bad wound in his chest, but no one had done so at last accounts.

There is probably not another woman in the town who would have done what this lady did, and therefore her act is unlady-like and she is called "a Huntsville heroine."



# LAWREN'S\*

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Now that fall is upon us and schools are back in the swing of things, I am wondering where the summer went. I guess the older one gets; the days just seem to go by faster.

Halloween costumes and candy have been out in the stores for over a month now and October just has arrived. In two stores, I even spotted Christmas decorations that seem a little bit much to me.

Please watch out for the trick or treaters this year. Parents need to put some kind of reflector on their children so a motorist can see them. Inspect the treats before your child eats any.

I was asked where they could buy children's Halloween costumes and at reasonable prices. The most affordable is to make your own out of scrap materials and face paint. We did that for a few of our children when they were growing up. But for purchase, my answer was to check out the many thrift stores. More than likely, they were worn only once, if at all, and are very

**A recent study has found out that women who carry a little extra weight live longer than the men who mention it.**

reasonably priced along with fall decorations. I was just in a thrift store the other day and saw several beautiful wedding dresses for only ten dollars each.

In the past, I have even had wedding dresses donated to me to cut up and make tiny dresses for premie babies in the hospital. The parents are most appreciative of the wee dresses and it takes very little time to make them. It's a bit like making doll clothes.

Fall break comes in the early weeks of October, depending on the school. You and your family might consider a trip to the mountains in Tennessee to hike or just enjoy the fall foliage. There are still plenty of lovely days to get outside before winter really sets in.

Apples are in season and I don't know about you, but I can't wait to make apple pies. They just remind me of fall. I highly recommend picking your own apples at Scott's Apple Orchard at 2163 Scott Rd, Hazel Green. You have to check out their schedule for live picking. Else they come from their store. It's great fun to pick the apples you are going to eat right off the trees.

And you can get your pumpkin decorations and let the children pick out their own. Visit either Tates Farm (8414-A, Moores Mill Rd, Meridianville) or Lyon Family Farms (130 Bellview Rd, Taft, TN).

The local scary haunted houses should be opening soon, as long as your heart is not too weak. A good scare at Halloween time is always fun. Also, I like seeing how creative the creators of the houses can be.

Until next time, get your third covid vaccine as soon as it is available to you. By the time you read this, I will have had mine. Stay safe.

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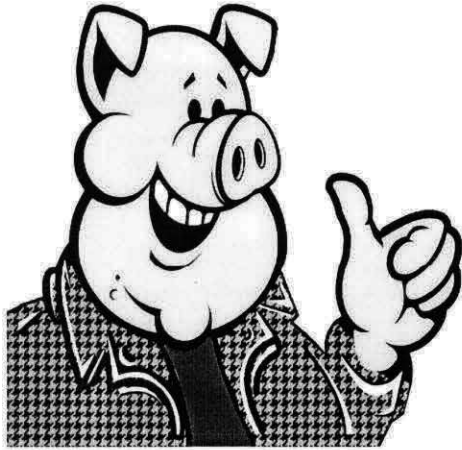
# O'le Dad's Bar-B-Q

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- Turkey Sandwich
- Grilled Ham & Cheese
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- BLT
- Rib Sandwich
- Chicken Fingers
- Hamburgers - Made Fresh Daily
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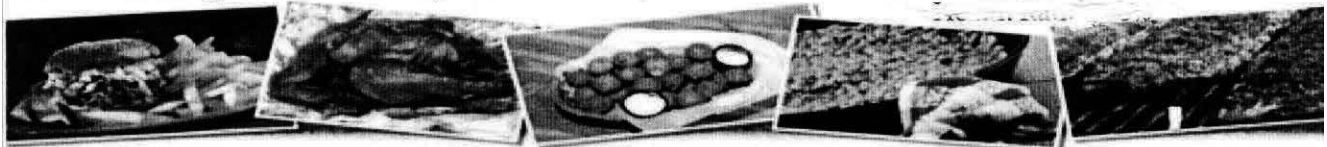
- Hot Dogs
- Slaw Dogs - Red Or White
- Chili Dogs
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- Whole Chicken
- Pies
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# Local News - January 1916

**For Sale** - My fine horse and buggy; also riding saddle. Apply to Dr. A. M. Duffield, Huntsville, Ala

**Lost** - Gentleman's small pearl handle knife; two blades. Return to the Daily Times for reward.

**Want to buy** - Second hand Ford Car. Either two or five passenger; must be a bargain. State condition and price - Address: New Market, Ala - PO Box 15

**Wanted** - traveler for 1916. Age 27 to 50. Experience unnecessary. Salary commission and expense allowance to the right man. J. M. McBrady, Chicago ILL

**For Rent** - 7 room house on Walker Street. Apply to J. N. Mazza

**House and Lot wanted** - wish to rent house and 10 to 30 acres of land near Huntsville. Reply to the Times.

**Wanted** - two or three unfurnished rooms - for information call Twickenham Barber shop

**J.D. Bragg Suffers \$1000 Fire at Dallas Today** - Jan. 19, 1916

About 2 o'clock this morning fire of unknown origin starting in the soft drink stand of Ben Moring at Dallas Village. It destroyed the general mercantile store and its contents belonging to J. D. Bragg and also his residence adjoining. The residence was occupied by Mr. Walker, who saved practically all of his household goods.

Mr. Bragg's store and contents are a total loss. He carried no insurance on his stock of goods but had something like \$1500 on his store building. He estimates his loss above the insurance at between \$2200 and \$2500.

The local fire department responded, but was handicapped in rendering service, the fire being so far beyond the city's fire limits.

**Lost** - Large size Bull dog, ears trimmed, short tail and wears aluminum collar - also has two red spots on forehead. Answers to the name of Jack. Information leading to recovery will be rewarded by George Church, West Huntsville.

**Going out of Business** - Mason Brothers - everything will be sold for cash at cost. Fixtures will be sold. One slicing machine, coffee mill, 2 pair scales, 3 shoe cases. Come and you will secure a bargain. 218 West Homes St.

**Umbrella Repair** - We have an expert umbrella mender and all styles covered at low prices. The Guarantee Shoe Shop, No. 214 Washington St., Phone 557

**Patrolman Shot** - Arab, Ala - The bullet that pierced the abdomen of Patrolman W. M. Flaherty when he was mistaken for a burglar and shot, will make him immune from any future attack of appendicitis. The appendix was severed just as it would be in an operation. Physicians said that Flaherty probably would recover.

**Attention Farmers** - Mules and Farm Machinery Bargains, having moved to Huntsville and desiring to dispose of my mules, horses, farm machinery, etc. same are offered at a big bargain either as a whole or in part. The lot includes one fine saddle horse. Animals can be seen at Preston and Butcher's stable on Washington Street or you can secure further information by calling at No. 425 W. Holmes St.

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**For Rent** - Beautiful rooms for light house-keeping. Kitchenette and gas. Near public square. If interested apply to "L" care the Daily Times.

**Wanted** - work for worthy young man; needs some experience in handling automobiles or in garage. Apply to Capt. Worcester, phone 520

**S. R. Butler for State Superintendent**

The Daily Times many times has been pleased to refer to S. R. Butler in connection with the duties of State Superintendent of Education for Alabama. Today there is an insistent demand from one end of the state to the other that he become a candidate. There is another tentative candidate but Mr. Butler's nomination and election would be a mere matter of form. He is positively more closely identified with the educational needs of the state than any other man we know and should he make up his mind to become a candidate in the approaching Democratic Primary, Mr. Butler's victory would be assured. Fact is, the state should nominate and elect him by acclamation but even with opposition he would have no trouble winning. As Superintendent of Education in Madison County, Mr. Butler has made an enviable record and success. He is known to the entire school forces of the state and the people would be glad to honor him.

**Millers Snake Oil Works Wonders**

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T. H. Gilbert, Druggist

**From Amish Folk Medicine**

For people who eat meat, select animals that fly, swim or run. Cows are locked in stationary positions to build fat and weight. Minimize beef intake.

*Op' Heidelberg*

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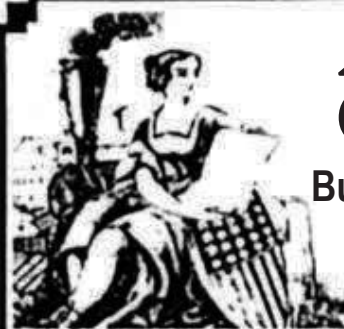
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# I Saw It All on My Radio

by Larry Maples



We must have been the last family to get a television in Redstone Park because my TV memories from those 1950s days all seem to be at somebody else's house. I can see us gathered on the floor at Charles Pike's giving rapt attention to our favorite TV cowboy Benny Carle's latest escapade on Circle 6 Ranch. Or, Friday night at the Catos' following the adventures of Disney's Davy Crockett with Fess Parker and Buddy Ibsen. My brother, David, would be wearing his authentic Davy Crockett coonskin cap.

Or, next door at 397 Redstone Park, Mr. Morrisey would invite Daddy to watch the Friday night fights. I would squeeze in on the floor between Bobby and Patsy Morrisey just as the announcer's dramatic voice boomed, "The Gillette Cavalcade of Sports is on the air! Tonight from Yankee Stadium for the World Welterweight Title: Kid Gavilan and Carmen Basilio."

Or, my favorite memory, game 7 of the 1955 World Series. I watch with Linda Pritchett and her family as my favorite childhood team, the Brooklyn Dodgers with young Johnny Podres throwing a two-hitter, finally overcome the Yankees.

Those TV events were special and rare. My day-to-day following of the sports world happened on my dad's little brown Philco radio. That little box of magic brought a faraway kingdom to my doorstep with just

the click of a knob. On a summer afternoon I could pick up Buddy Blattner and Al Heifer on the "Mutual Game of the Day" live from Crosley Field in Cincinnati or Ebbets Field in Brooklyn or Connie Mack Stadium in Philadelphia. It was not just the big stars like "Willie, Mickey and the Duke" who captured my childish imagination. I could "see" Jumping Jim Rivera leaping high against the Comiskey Park wall robbing Al Rosen of a double, Nellie Fox choking up on his bottle bat and pushing another single through the infield and Wayne Terwilliger cutting off a smash up the middle and starting a 6-4-3 double play.

If my excitement could not be contained, I would disturb my brother David in his zenlike attention to his army men and horses on the floor. In the evenings the golden voice of Gabby Bell brought me Birmingham Baron baseball with fan favorites like Bob Thorpe, Country Brown and Lou Limmer.

In the summer of 1954 the Game of the Day broadcasters were pushing their book, "The Mutual Baseball Almanac" which included statistics for each player, a history of baseball, how to hit by Stan Musial, how to play second base by Jackie Robinson and other fascinating stuff. I just had to have it and was waging a daily campaign with Mother. One day she and a neighbor, Mrs. Foster, were sitting in our living room commiserating about the challenges of motherhood. Mother sighed and brought up her current crisis, the baseball almanac. I perked up my ears and inched closer to a better eavesdropping position next to the screen door. Bucky Foster and I were under orders to stay out on the porch while they visited.

And then I heard the most wonderful words come out of Mrs. Foster's mouth: "Lillie, this is not a problem! Eva ordered that book and they made a mistake and sent her two. Larry can have the extra one." Whoa! This was incredible news on two fronts. First, I get the almanac with zero wait time. Second, this information instantly elevates my reputation. In my mind I instantly went from being a nagging little brat pestering his mother for a new toy to a guy with the same interest as Eva, the Madison County Spelling Champion who was 5 years older than I. She listens to the games just like I do! The little Philco was really

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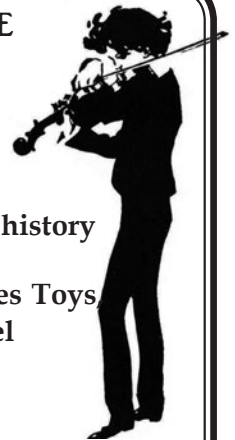
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humming on fall Saturdays because you could pick up several college football games.

Auburn games were the most fun because they were really good in the mid 50s. They won a national championship and came close another year. Alabama was terrible except one year they got to the Cotton Bowl only to get clobbered by Rice. But, the most electric broadcast was Saturday night as LSU exploded on the big 50,000-watt WVWL station out of New Orleans. The crowd seemed even louder than Auburn's and John Ferguson, the voice of the Tigers, was on fire, especially when Johnny Vaught brought his Ole Miss Rebels to Baton Rouge.

WFUN carried the Huntsville Panthers and WBHP the Butler Rebels for my evening's football and basketball entertainment. Players like Ty Samples, Gordon Darnell, Glen Nunley and Donnie Mincher were household names and I occasionally succeeded in getting Daddy to take me to a basketball game. My chances were better if New Hope was playing Huntsville or Butler because he knew the families of some of the New Hope players. Seeing in person those guys I "watched" on my radio was a really big deal for a sports-obsessed kid.

John Paseur was the best New Hope player I remember. Wendell Nix of the Scottsboro Wildcats was the best shotmaker I ever saw at the old National Guard Armory in Huntsville. Those old Dusty Carter Scottsboro teams played at a frenetic pace and were really fun to watch.

I could pick up some college basketball and Johnny Dee's Rocket 8 Alabama teams of the mid 50s fired my imagination. For a short stretch he even had the upper hand on Adolph Rupp and his Kentucky Wildcats. One year the Tide went undefeated in the SEC and I saw it all on my radio as Jerry Harper, George Linn, Dennis O'Shea and company put the Baron of the Bluegrass in 2nd place.

A decade later I was standing in line at Foster Auditorium registering for classes at Alabama when, between two tables, I suddenly became aware of a brass plate embedded in the floor. Here was confirmation that that magical 1955-56 season was not a childhood fantasy, because it marked the spot where the longest field goal in the history of college basketball was launched by George Linn against North Carolina.

The little brown Philco brought me more than sports. These were the early days of rock and roll. A call-in request show planted the idea in my mind that I could get my own name on the little brown box. I finally got up the nerve to call in a request and was waiting one afternoon to see if the DJ would really play it. Dad-

dy walked into the room at the very moment that the DJ said, "We have a request from Larry Maples for 'Don't Be Cruel' by Elvis."

Daddy grins and my red face told the story I wanted everyone to hear except daddy! My brother David didn't even have to do any self promotion to get his name on the show.

One afternoon I was listening when the DJ blew me away with this announcement, "Fifth Avenue beat East Clinton 19-0 this afternoon. David Maples scored all 19 points in the game. We're going to play Mr. Touchdown for David." Wow!

We got our news on the radio in those days. I'll never forget the day Mollie Ritch (Ray, Molly, Charlie, Joe and Cherry lived next door at Redstone Park) came to our kitchen door with the solemn radio news that "Ike had a heart attack." We all sat down on the back porch and the adults discussed what would happen if he died. I don't remember what they concluded, but I guess Vice President Nixon would have been President Nixon before he became President Nixon.

This old guy had a happy childhood in Redstone Park with kids galore to play Lone Ranger, marbles and baseball. But when things got quiet, I could always count on daddy's little brown Philco to open up a whole other world beyond that 300-unit white-washed enclave encircled by Redstone Arsenal, the Hayes Farm, Farley School, the Baptist church and the Burroughs, Wilson, Cooper and Esslinger stores.



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# Heard On the Street

by Cathey Carney



Our last month Photo of the Month winner was **Lucy Miller**. The baby was none other than **Jackie Reed** who has been at our City Council Meetings for the past 30 years and says she'll be watch-dogging over what the city does, until God calls her to go home! Thank you Jackie for being so passionate about Huntsville's residents! Lucy is 86 years old, lives in Huntsville and remembers many of the people whose stories are in the magazine. She loves the recipes! Congratulations to you Lucy!

Then we had lots of calls for the hidden salt shaker I put in the September issue - did you

find it? It was on p. 34, picture under **Judy Smith's** name, middle of that medical tray. I can't believe ANYONE found it, I lost it myself after I hid it. But **Thelma Brooks** was the first of a few to call, she said her husband **Richard** spotted it. Thelma's mom got her started on Old Huntsville years ago and she lives in Hazel Green. She retired from Walmart with 25 years, and now loves spending time with her grandkids. Congratulations to you Thelma!

For this month we're going to do something different. In honor of October I have hidden a teeny picture of an owl. But don't call until 8am on Oct. 15 because that will allow our out of town subscribers to take a chance at it.

I'll do the same with the Photo of the Month - don't call to identify until 8am Oct. 15. We'll see how that goes!

**Peggy Simpson** is very proud of her grandson, **Lt. Samuel Howard**, a graduate of West Point. He is stationed at Fort Campbell and will have a November 25 birthday.

You'll start your day off on a good note if you make your bed and make sure the kitchen is clean. Just puts you in a better mood. Many ladies say they put on makeup and do their hair, even if they have no place to go. On days you're not feeling good, just pamper yourself and rest up.

Happy Birthday to our friend

**Earl Pool V**, who turned 73 on Sep. 21st. Earl lives in Fayetteville and never fails to pick up his copy of Old Huntsville at Honey's on the square in Fayetteville.

Congratulations to **PFC Jacob Wharry** upon his completion of boot camp. He is the son of **Elizabeth Wharry** and now advances to the Blue Program. That will be the final step in his training.

**Clara Thomas Stewart** had a 94th birthday in September. Her sweet daughter had sent in the information and I apologize for leaving it out of the September issue, but I sure hope it was a warm and wonderful celebration. Happy Birthday to you Mrs. Stewart.

You know how we're getting more scam calls than ever, and if you answer just one it seems like they just multiply. So I make it a habit of not answering calls if it's a phone number I don't recognize. It has saved me so much time and aggravation. So just to do something fun I started paying myself for each call I let ring, and I'm averaging about \$8 a day. When I collect enough I'll

## 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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This young man had his eyes on the stars.



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treat myself to something super special.

Thanks to **Alice Lawler** for a good garden tip - we all have plants, especially hydrangea, that seem to be getting some kind of fungus on the leaves. This is something to spray for during the summer months but Alice said since it's getting late in the season, wait to spray. And be sure to rake up all the leaves that fall from the diseased plants so that you're not overwintering the fungus for next spring.

**Ianthia Bridges** is the beautiful lady who works at BB&T/Truist Bank on Church Street - you'll see her when you go through the drive-through windows. Her family has quite a few special days in October. **Carla "Cee Cee" Jowers**, her niece has a birthday on Oct. 4th. Then **Bridgette R. Pettway**, her cousin, has an Oct. 7th birthday. **Leonard Ramsey** is her angel in heaven and his birthday is Oct. 20th. Happy Birthday to all of you! Then most importantly, Ianthia is a 24-year breast cancer survivor on Oct. 7th. So proud of you Ianthia!

**Oakwood Farms Market** is your new, healthy food store located in the Northwest Huntsville area. They provide farm-

fresh, organically grown produce, straight from the farm to your table. They also partner with local farmers and vendors. They have a delicious vegetarian Bistro and juice bar, as well as private label soft drinks, wellness products and supplements."

Search Oakwood Farms Market. Their address is at Oakwood College, 5001 Adventist Blvd. NW, Huntsville, AL 35806

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Here's what they say about the October schedule for their Friday outdoor markets!

"We would love for you to join us for our 'Oakwood Farmers Market 2021 Event' held at Oakwood Farms Market! This event takes place in our spacious outdoor pavilion from April through October, every Friday from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. We have a newly constructed!, beautifully landscaped venue at 5001 a Adventist Blvd. NW. Huntsville. AL 35806.

Here's a good tip from my friend David Moore and his cat Leroy: "Our appliances probably all have computer chips in them now. My washer went on the blink a while back and I couldn't figure out what was wrong, it

would do everything but agitate. I tried everything and decided I would just get a new washer, the unknown fix was going to be upwards of \$300.00."

"A light went on in my head - what do you do when your computer acts up? Shut it down completely. I got on the net, searched, "How to reset a washing machine". Answer, Topload washer, UNPLUG for one minute, Re-plug, then raise the lid just above the lock mechanism 6 times within a 12 second period. This sends a signal to the timer to reset."

"\$600.00+ saved. This is for a topload Whirlpool, different brands, probably different procedures. I wonder how many washers have been trashed from the absence of this information being in the owner's manual."

"My grandmother never had this problem with her old double tub wringer washer."

"I don't have this trouble with the dryer, all I need is sunshine, clothesline, a breeze would be nice."

Thank you David for this - it will probably save many the huge fee to buy new!

Have a good, healthy October and take good care of your mental self too!



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# Local Cooks' Favorites

## Olive Cheese Ball

- 8 oz. cream cheese
- 1-8 oz. blue cheese, crumbled
- 1/4 c. butter, softened
- 1 T. onions or chives, minced
- 2/3 c. black olives, drained and chopped
- 1/3 c. almonds, diced

Blend cheeses and butter. Stir in olives and chives. Chill slightly and form into a ball on a serving dish. Chill thoroughly. Just before serving, roll ball in almonds.

Melinda Lacy

## Mustafa's Pasta Salad

- 16 oz. rainbow rotini
- 4 T. olive oil
- 6 T. red wine vinegar
- 1 t. basil
- 2-4 garlic cloves, chopped
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste
- Parmesan cheese to taste

Cook pasta al dente in salted water and drain. Mix together rest of ingredients into a salad bowl. Add the pasta and toss. Serve warm.

Tina Gast Jones

## Olive Summer Salad

- 2 cucumbers, diced
- 1 c. cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 avocado, diced
- 1/2 c. feta cheese, crumbled
- 1/4 c. Greek olives (Calamati) or Spanish olives
- 1/4 c. chopped chives
- Sea salt & pepper to taste
- 4 T. olive oil
- 2 T. basil vinegar
- 1 T. lemon juice
- 2 T. basil, minced

In a large bowl, combine the first 7 ingredients. In cup whisk together the next 4 ingredients. Pour the dressing over the salad, toss 30 times and refrigerate for 1 hour. If desired, serve over Bibb or Sorrel lettuce.

Helen Matsos

## Lemon Garlic Zucchini

- 4 medium zucchini, sliced diagonally
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 2 T. lemon juice
- 2 T. olive oil
- 1/4 t. salt
- 1/4 t. pepper

Combine all in a hot skillet, cook over low heat 5 to 7 minutes and zucchini is tender. Stir frequently. Good with pasta or rice.

Anon

## Shrimp Scampi

- 1 lb. lg. shrimp, cleaned and de-veined
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 T. butter
- 1/3 c. country Dijon mustard
- 1/4 c. lemon juice
- 1/4 c. chopped parsley
- Hot cooked rice

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In a large skillet over medium-high heat, cook and stir the shrimp and garlic in butter til just pink. Blend in mustard, lemon juice and parsley; heat through. Serve over rice. Note: 1 lb. boneless chicken breast, cut into thin strips, may be substituted for the shrimp.

David Beutjer

### Orange Biscuit

- 3-4 eggs, separated
- 1-1/2 c. sugar
- 1-1/2 c. cake flour
- 1-1/2 t. baking powder
- 1/2 c. orange juice
- 1 t. rum

Beat egg yolks well, add sugar and stir until blended. Add sifted flour and baking powder. Heat orange juice to boiling and add to mixture. Add rum and fold in stiffly beaten egg whites. Pour into greased, floured round cake pan or large ring mold. Bake 40 minutes at 350°.

Mrs. Wernher von Braun

### Black Jack Pecan Pie

- 1 c. sugar
- 1/2c. cornstarch
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 c. melted butter
- 6 oz. chocolate chips
- 1 c. chopped pecans
- 3-4 T. Jack Daniels whiskey

Uncooked pie shell  
 Mix sugar and cornstarch. Beat in the eggs. Add the melted butter, stir in the Jack Daniels. Mix in the chocolate chips and nuts. Pour into an uncooked 9 inch pie shell. Bake in a 350 degree oven for 40 minutes.

Pat Lamb

### Marion Anderson Sweet Dessert Dumplings

- Sauce:**
- 2 t. butter
  - 1-1/2 c. boiling water
  - 1-1/2 c. brown sugar
  - Pinch salt

Mix sauce ingredients and cook on top of stove. Boil 5 minutes stirring to prevent burning.

- Dumplings:**
- 1-1/4 c. self-rising flour
  - 1/3 c. white sugar
  - 1/2 t. vanilla extract
  - 1 t. butter
  - 1/3 c. milk

Mix all well and drop dumplings by teaspoon into boiling sugar mixture. Put all into a sprayed baking dish and bake about 20 minutes at 425 degrees. Pour extra sauce over the dumplings 5 minutes before taking from the oven. Serve warm.

Ed and Joyce Bernstein

### French Coconut Pie

- 1/2 stick butter
- 3 eggs
- 1 t. vanilla extract
- 1-1/2c. sugar
- 1/4 c. buttermilk
- 2 c. shredded coconut
- Unbaked pie shell

Blend together and pour into an unbaked pie shell. Bake for 45 minutes at 325 degrees.

Jean Graves

### Hot Apple Cider

- 1 quart. apple cider
- 1 c. brown sugar
- Cloves
- 1 lemon, sliced

Bring cider and brown sugar to a boil and simmer 5 minutes. Put a clove in the center of each lemon slice and place 1 slice in each cup. Pour hot cider over lemon and serve.

Mrs. W. A. Cobb



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# A Sense of Place - Paint Rock, Alabama

by B. J. "Red" Flanagan

The Paint Rock of the 30s and 40s that I grew up in was basically a "wide place in the road." Paint Rock was a thriving little community until, in 1932, a tornado blew the town to Kingdom come.

The town was situated on the 2-lane U.S. Highway 72 and, at one time, actually had a caution light that slowed the traffic passing through "downtown" Paint Rock.

I was born in 1930 during the Great Depression and was at a very impressionable age during World War II. Also, I remember well the post-war period.

With the opening of the Huntsville Arsenal during the war, folks in North Alabama earned income that lifted them out of the Depression into an emerging economy that made life a lot more tolerable.

In the little town of Paint Rock, I witnessed soldiers who returned from the war and, because of the G.I. Bill, went on to college and found jobs that

put a few extra dollars in their pockets. With this money they could buy and build a house, buy a car and on occasion go on a vacation.

As I think back, I feel like I grew up in the best of times, mainly because of where I grew up. The Paint Rock that I knew as a boy had most everything for kids, especially kids like us. Without any "store-bought" toys, we used our imaginations and created our own fun activities. We were familiar with every secret place, cove and "nook and cranny" from the top of Keel Mountain to the bottom of Paint Rock river. We made our own wagons out of scrap lumber from the O'Neal Chair Factory that we used to coast down the red clay hillside next to the mountain graveyard.

Like any small community, there was always a gathering place. That place in Paint Rock was the Rousseau Store. The pot-bellied stove was located in the back of the store and this was where the locals mastered the art of loafing. The stove sat on a 4-foot elevated platform that was filled with large coal cinders. These cinders helped prevent fires and took care of those "uncouth" folks who



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spit tobacco juice towards the stove. The large plate glass window in the front of the store that looked out onto Highway 72 was also a gathering place for people who came to the Post Office for their mail and just to stop in for a quick chat.

Even before I started in the first grade, the Paint Rock School was an old building. The ceilings were high, the wooden floors were oiled and the bell in the steeple was rung by the Principal at the beginning of school, recess, lunch and finally at the end of the school day.

In cold weather, every room was heated with a pot-bellied stove. The cloakroom, a long narrow room next to one wall was open at both ends. It was separated from the main classroom, having hooks for our coats and shelves for our lunch pails. Our drinking water came from two faucets, three feet high from the ground. Since there was no indoor plumbing we also had outhouses instead of bathrooms. The girls outhouse was on one side of the campus and the boys on the other. Of course, the boys outhouse had holes at eye level so smokers could watch out for the Principal. The school had eight grades and the teachers taught two grades in each room. Each room had "cooperative learning" regardless of the grade, we all helped each other.

Our janitor Uncle Felix used "Tom Sawyer" and "Whitewashing the Fence" as a method to get the boys to bring in the coal and keep the stove full for the day. Of course, he used the same method for getting the girls to sweep the floors. At our age, we gladly volunteered and considered it a privilege to take on this heavy responsibility.

Paint Rock was the only stop along the Southern Railroad between Memphis and Chattanooga that had both a water tank and a coal chute. Since all trains had to stop to fill up with water and coal, many events of my boyhood evolved around those trains. I'll never forget one Sunday morning during World War II when a troop train stopped by for water and cola. The soldiers got off the train and gathered in a field between the coal chute and the Baptist church. As a rule the soldiers were not permitted to get off

the trains. But this Sunday morning, someone in authority had decided to have religious services in that field. Those services were not only Protestant, but Catholic and Jewish, too. Since none of us kids had ever heard a Catholic or Jewish service, we left our Sunday School class at the Baptist church and walked across the road to the field and listened with wide-eyed quiet fascination. This was the outside world.

During the summer when we were not in school, we kids would hang around town or the Paint Rock river, which was right below the depot. When we would hear a train coming and realize it was a troop train, we'd hustle back to the tracks. The soldiers would hang out the windows and give us money to run to the store and buy them candy and cold drinks. We were proud of the nickel or dime they would give us, but our main purpose was to get that candy and cold drink back to the soldiers before the train pulled out. After all, they were on their way to fight the War.

The Huntsville Times, the newspaper that I delivered in Paint Rock, came in from Huntsville on Train #36. Since the train was late at times, I would stand



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and wait to hear, "36 in block. Paint Rock." To this day, when I drive down U.S. Highway 72 and see that the light along the track is red, I can picture Mr. Roberts with his headphones on calling to the other stations, "36 in block. Paint Rock."

Later when I was in high school and became more interested in my appearance, I became aware of the shower at the coal chute. Since we didn't have indoor plumbing, our bathing consisted of either going to the river in the summertime with a bar of soap, or bathing in a washtub in front of the fireplace in the winter. There was hot water in the shower at the Coal Chute and since "Hot" Chandler was the head operator there, I asked him if I could take showers there and pay him. When I think back on it, I'm sure the only reason he charged me a quarter a month was to make me feel better about it. After a hot shower in the cold winter, I would proudly walk home knowing that I would not have to take a bath in that washtub.

Since we all grew up in the Bible Belt, attending church, studying our Bibles and having a strong Christian heritage were deeply embedded in all of us. Mamma saw that all four attended Sunday school and church every Sunday. Before Sunday school even started, I already had a full morning of delivering papers, getting dressed for church and heading for the basketball court in the pasture by the church.

**"A woman has got to love a bad man once or twice in her life to be thankful for a good one."**

**Mae West**

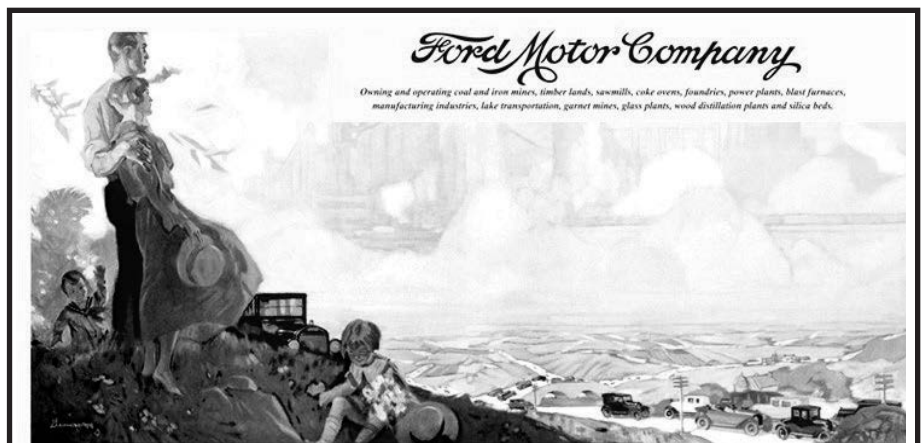
For us boys the Sunday morning ritual was to gather at the court and play ball until we heard the church bell ring. Then we'd dash to the back seat by the window in hopes of little breeze. I'm sure our thoughts were about the game rather than what the preacher had to say. Of course we listened carefully for the rattle of change in Mr. O'Neal's pocket when he prayed and we always watched Mr. Thrower in case he fell forward as he rocked back and forth while praying the benediction. We knew after his prayer we were headed to the river.

My wife said that I will al-

ways have a purpose in my life as I continue my fascination with the daily arrival of the mail and newspaper. I inherited this trait from my Mom, whose highlight of each day seemed to be her walk to town to pick up her mail.

She would stop and chat with Roy Whitaker and other folks in the Post Office. Then she'd go into Rousseau's store to see Katherine Rousseau. I can still see her sitting in her rocking chair on the porch reading the Huntsville Times.

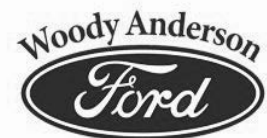
Mama and Lila Mae Whitaker taught for over 40 years at the Paint Rock school. It was said that the "powers that be" on the Jackson County School Board waited until Mama and Lila Mae



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retired before they decided to close the school. Mama was a guiding light in the lives of many folks in both Paint Rock and Paint Rock Valley.

The biggest social event of the year was the black folks July 4th BBQ and baseball game. My Dad would let me stay all night with the men while they would BBQ the meat. I would get my friend, Roebuck Hunt, to stay with me and we would manage to "find" 2 or 3 chickens and some ears of corn and barbecue our food right alongside the men.

Since the river ran through the pasture, Roebuck and I would cool off in the river every two or three hours during those hot July nights. This was definitely a highlight of each summer for me.

Since baseball was one of my loves, I would attend the Sunday afternoon games. I will never forget how Charlie Lovelace patiently worked with me and taught me how to throw a curve ball that helped me get a college scholarship. After the games, about 6 pm most every Sunday night, I would slip in the back pew of the black church near Roy Whitaker's and listen to their wonderful gospel music.

Since my family didn't own a car, my transportation was "hitch-hiking." This was how I discovered Huntsville. On some Saturdays, whenever I had a dollar, I would hitch-hike to Huntsville and could see three movies, eat popcorn and get a hamburger and a Coke at Little Gems Pool room on the Square. After a full fun day and with a nickel change in my pocket, the big decision was whether to buy another Coke and walk the mile to Highway 72 or to use my nickel to catch the bus to Rison School by Highway 72.

During my high school days Mr. W. O. Woolley was our Principal. Because three of our coaches had been drafted into the Armed Forces, Mr. Woolley was forced to coach Varsity football and basketball. During these days, we were looking for both sports

heroes and war heroes and, even though we didn't know it, we had one right in our school. Mr. Woolley, with all of his responsibilities, never had a losing season during this time.

The old gym we played in was a WPA gym with 4 pot-bellied stoves for heat. Because the dressing room and showers were always cold, the procedure was to undress, shower, brush off excess water, towel down with the threadbare towel and dress as fast as possible. All this time I'd be thinking about walking the half mile in the cold winter weather in time to catch a ride home with the Huntsville Arsenal traffic. Those were the days, my friend.

Growing up in Paint Rock was a glorious absence of sophistication but was a great sense of place.

## OUR WRITERS

**"Old Huntsville" Magazine wants to say Thank You to our writers and contributors for the stories and articles you send to us. Our readers tell us how much they enjoy them. We couldn't do it without you!**



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**"I refuse to think of them as chin hairs. They are stray eyebrows."**

*Eunice Brown, age 73*

# Wilson's Snipe

by Barry Key



I read with interest and a chuckle "My Adventures In Snipe Hunting" by Gwendolyn Joop, September issue of OLD HUNTSVILLE. I guess the old joke of setting someone out in the woods with a tow sack waiting to catch a snipe is about as old as the old prank of planting someone with a gun in a watermelon patch. In either case, the pranksters get a big laugh and the jokee has to endure a lot of teasing from his peers.

In the story, Eric, tells Gwendolyn that there is no such thing as a "snipe". It's amazing how many people are aware of the "snipe" gag but doesn't know that there is such a sporting bird as a snipe. Snipes look very similar to a Killdeer, but with a longer beak and long skinny legs for wading shallow, marsh, water.

In the fall seasons of the 1940s and 50s we hunted snipe in the bottom lands of the Paint Rock and Flint rivers. Anyone that has hunted quail and snipe will tell you that snipe are a much more

sporting bird than quail. Quail will flush and, more often than not, fly straight away... where as, when a snipe flushes, he will zig zag in all directions.

A lot of people don't like the taste of snipe because they are a dark meat similar to a dove or a wild duck. Quail is a white meat similar to a chicken breast. I like them both, but would choose snipe (or dove) if given a choice.

In any case, just wanted to let Gwendolyn know that there is a "real snipe"... and I can imagine that hunting them with a tow sack at night is a much more competitive sporting method than using a gun.

Also, Gwendolyn, I can say, I have never hunted snipe at night with a sack, but I did run out of a watermelon patch one night (hearing gun fire) expecting to be shot in the back at any instance.

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Bob Hope

# October on Capshaw Mountain

by Elizabeth Wharry



Each month has its own unique beauty. I'm sure everyone has their favorite month as well. I think October is the loveliest month of all.

It's as if Mother Nature is sending us her best colors before winter sets in. Is it possible that she is giving us beautiful memories to sustain us until spring?

The sky seems to change to a more intense shade of blue, while the leaves are gradually changing.

From my back yard, I can see the top half of Capshaw Mountain. Here, the evergreens are mixed in with the deciduous trees.

During September, the leaves of the deciduous trees turn a lighter shade of green. Once October rolls around with its cooler temperatures, those pale green leaves start turning to beautiful shades of gold and red.

Set against the field of dark green, and the October blue sky, it is

a sight to see. The colors seem to change almost on a daily basis. Trying to describe the changes doesn't come close to seeing this with one's own eyes.

By the end of October, the reds and yellows have faded to brown, and the leaves are falling off the trees. The evergreens stand like silent sentinels.

I have never been on Capshaw Mountain. I've looked for roads leading to its summit, but to no avail. I've asked long term residents about it, however, very few people seem to know much.

I have looked on-line for information. What I found was rather minimal.

Season after season, year after year, it stands quietly, keeping watch over the Harvest, Alabama area.

Steadfast, but always changing.



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# THE LOVE OF MY LIFE - HOW I MET FRED SIMPSON

by Peggy Simpson



I had graduated from Pisgah High School in Pisgah, AL in 1958. I was working at the Southern Bell Telephone company and so was my twin sister Patty. She will play an important role in my life always, but she played a huge role in how I met Fred Simpson, who was a Birmingham policeman at the time.

Patty and I had both started working nights as operators only because the pay was a little better for the night time workers. The first whole night I was working, a fellow telephone operator invited me to go to breakfast with her at 3:00 am, at Thompson's on 20th Street in Birmingham.

She and I just arrived to eat as two policemen were walking out. I remember that they saw us on their way out and really stared at us. I had said to my friend I hope those policemen got a good eyeful of us. Little did I know that they had to call the telephone operators every hour, that's why they were leaving.

I was always so afraid of police. Just knew I would get a ticket for doing something I wasn't supposed to do. I remember Fred was riding a motorcycle so I must have been looking at them as they left.

At that time the only way policemen could contact headquarters was to call in through the telephone operators.

Well, ironically when Fred called in to the operator, he was connected to my twin sister Patty. He asked "Who do you have working there eating at Thompson's now with a white dress on?"

Patty thought since the police was inquiring about a girl with a white dress on, some-

thing bad might have happened to me. She told him my name and what kind of car I was driving. Where I was from, all probing questions from Fred. He came back into Thompson's, walked over to where we were eating and started a conversation like he knew me.

Long story short, we started dating that weekend. We married after he graduated from Howard College. He was such a hard worker - he worked nights as a policeman, went to school mornings, slept afternoons. He became a lawyer and set up practice when we moved to Huntsville in May 1964. Our first home was a 2 bed, 1 bath home in Hillendale. It was on Linwood Drive. Homes were very scarce back then but my brother Amos Holloway was a carpenter here in Huntsville and found it for us.

We were married for 53 years. Fred and I had 3 wonderful children; Bryan Simpson (graduate of Auburn), Cindy S. Howard (graduate of Samford) and Derek Simpson, (graduate of Univ. of Alabama). We have seven grandchildren and 3 great-grandkids.

Fred is buried at Maple Hill. With my age now 80, I will join him in a few years. I'm so grateful I lived my life with Fred.

I now live at Fleming Farms, a new retirement community and enjoy it here very much.



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# An Unexpected Find

by Ernest Goens

I grew up in Lincoln Mill Village in Huntsville in the 1940s and 50s. I had a paper route delivered on bicycle. The paper cost a nickel. Both of my parents worked in the Lincoln Cotton Mill. Mother worked from 6 am to 2 pm and Daddy worked from 2 pm to 10 pm.

Every Friday Mother would send me to the store to get her check cashed. She would always give me a nickel tip. Across from the store was an ice cream store that sold homemade ice cream. It was owned by Mr. & Mrs. Stofel. He was a retired Admiral during World War II.

I always bought a homemade popsicle made in a 4 ounce cup and it cost a nickel. Meridian Street was called Florida Short Route. People were always stopping and buying ice cream from them.

One day I bought a popsicle as usual. Mr. Stofel said "I have something you might like to have".

"What is it?" I asked. He reached in his pocket and pulled out a half dollar. He held it up for me to see. I could not believe the face on the coin, it was none other than Booker T. Washington.

I had never seen one before. On the reverse was written "From Slave Cabin to Hall of Fame." There was a picture of a log cabin. I had to have it.

I asked him how much he wanted for it. He replied, "Fifty Cents."

"Mark it sold," I replied.

I still have it but it is not for sale. The date on it is 1951. Over the years, I have shown it to many people and most people have never seen one.

It's probably worth about \$75.00 today, or more.

I wouldn't part with it.

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*Taken from a local job performance evaluation*

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*Linda Mann, Scottsboro*

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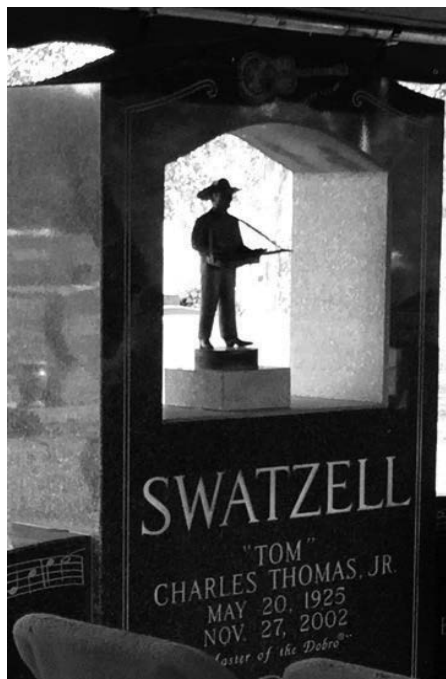
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# Catfish, Hushpuppies and Music

by Jim McBride



Tom Swatzell was born in Decatur, Alabama. Even in his early years, he was an accomplished musician playing on local radio shows and on stage with local bands and later Grand Ole Opry member Hank Snow. Tom was also a well known music teacher in Huntsville. Starting in 1971, the Don and Faye Irwin family began taking lessons from him.

Don took banjo lessons, son Donald took guitar, son Craig dobro, daughter Kelly banjo and son Phillip mandolin. This speaks to both the versatility of Tom Swatzell having mastered several different instruments as well as the Irwin's love of music. During this

time, they became friends with Tom and his wife Bertha.

Faye Irwin was known to be a really good cook. When Tom and Bertha had company from out of town, they would often ask if the Irwins would like to have them and their company out for a meal. The Irwins always said yes.

One of the people Don and Faye met through the Swatzells was a man named Ed Doperya. Ed and his brothers, John and Rudy immigrated to America from Czechoslovakia in the early 1920s. The brothers were already gifted violin and guitar makers by the time they opened their instrument shop in California. Brother John was asked by a vaudeville entertainer to build him a guitar with greater amplification than a normal acoustic guitar. He incorporated a metal resonator inside the guitar box and thus was born the resonator guitar, better known as the Dobro, a contraction of Doperya Brothers. It also means "good" in their native Slavic language.

The brothers continued to build and improve the Dobro as it became more and more popular. It may seem strange that a musical instrument as earthy sounding as the Dobro was invented by immigrants from Czechoslovakia. In fact, folk and bluegrass music has

been and continues to be very popular in Czechoslovakia with festivals throughout the country every year. In 2020, The International Bluegrass Music Association's Album of the Year by Bluegrass Hall of Fame member Doyle Lawson and Quicksilver, was recorded there and is titled "Live In Prague."

The Dobro can be heard on many famous studio recordings by pop, country, bluegrass, folk and blues artists. Eric Clapton, Fleetwood Mac, Dolly Parton, Mark Knopler of Dire Straights and The Allman Brothers Band are a few of the aforementioned artists. In the 1920s and 30s, artists like Blind Boy Fuller, Son House and Bukka White introduced the resophonic guitar to Blues Music.

Josh Graves of the Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs Band did much to popularize the instrument. Bashful Brother Oswald of the Roy Acuff Band was the first to introduce the Dobro to country music.

Don Irwin would sometimes take Ed Doperyo and Tom Swatzell fishing when Ed came to town. After tasting Faye's fish and hushpuppies, they became favorites of a man unaccustomed to southern cooking. When the meal was over, it was time for some "pickin' and grinnin'."

Tom Swatzell was the official

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**Tony Guthrie, Owner**

promoter for the Dobro, spreading the sound all across the United States. He played a lot of music festivals over the years and Don and Faye often drove him to those "gigs". One of their sons has a Dobro autographed by Mr. Ed Doperya. Tom has a Dobro model named for him. His Dobro lessons were published by the famous Mel Bay Publishing Company, both high honors. Listen for the Dobro the next time you hear "Lookin' Out My Backdoor" by Creedence Clearwater Revival, "Lola" by The Kinks and "Curtis Lowe" by Lynyrd Skynyrd.

Another visitor to the Irwin home via the Swatzells was a lady named Elsie McWilliams. She was not a household name in those days and most people these days certainly do not recognize her name or know of her contributions to the history of country music.

Elsie McWilliams was born in Meridian, MS, the birthplace of Jimmie Rodgers, the man widely recognized as the Father of Country Music. Rodgers influenced young singers like Ernest Tubbs. Ernest Tubbs and Jimmie Rodgers influenced Merle Haggard who is

a hero to countless famous recording artists including Garth Brooks, Alan Jackson and George Strait.

Later in life, Elsie became Jimmie's sister-in-law. However, that's not Elsie's claim to fame. McWilliams wrote or co-wrote many of Jimmie's legendary songs. She is credited as writer or co-writer on 20 of Jimmie's songs, though she actually wrote or co-wrote 39 songs with him. She was the daughter of a Methodist minister and did not wish to be credited as a writer on some of Jimmie's rowdier songs.

In 1997, Bob Dylan did a tribute album to Jimmie Rodgers featuring Bono, Van Morrison, Willie Nelson, Jerry Garcia, John Mellencamp and Dickie Betts among others. In 1979, Elsie was inducted into the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame, a rare feat especially for a female in the early days of the NaSHOF.

It had to be a real treat for the Irwin Family to sing and play along with Elsie, Tom and Ed during their visits. There's a definite connection from the visitors to their home and some of the most popular music ever made.

**"I drink to make other people as interesting as me."**

**Fred Mattis, Gurley**

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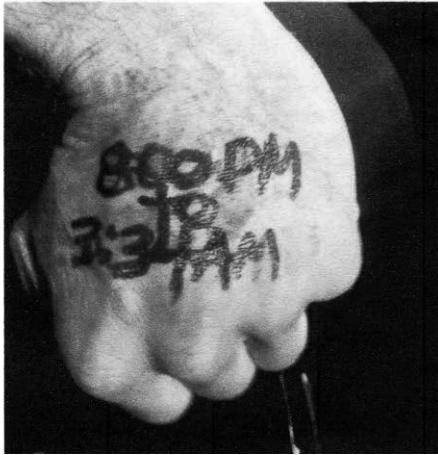
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# Almost Deadly Fishing Trip

As told to M.D. Smith by Owen Smith



The story began with Owen leaving the beach house at Mariner's Lane in Mary Esther, FL, heading for Navarre beach and a fishing tournament at 5:30 pm on Saturday, August 28, 2021, on the eve of Hurricane Ida a hundred miles away. But, unfortunately, storm surge to the East reaches a long way.

Owen stopped and got a free sandwich in Styrofoam so it wouldn't get soggy and drove to Navarre Public Beach access. Parked and headed out with a rod, tackle box, big camera, soft pack cooler, bait, pack-chair, backpack and towels strapped to the pack. He was loaded for the night with a flashlight and headlamp. A couple said to him, "It's double red flags, but it's a beautiful red sunset."

It was about six o'clock and time for the fishing tournament to start. Owen decided not to fish on the pier with many others but walked down the beach further than usual into the area where it's government property and you are not supposed to go, but he'd be by himself. He set up on the edge of the surf, about ten feet from the wet sand to fish. If he caught a large fish, he could land it dragging it out on the sand. From the pier, the line would break trying to haul

it up.

About three football fields down the beach, he unpacked his stuff in the chair seat, then put the PVC pole to hold the rod in dry sand about five feet from wet sand. He shoved it in deep. He spent a few minutes cutting some squid and hooking it and wanted to get bait far out in the water to the third breaker. He was standing in water up to his knees. He slung it hard, and he saw the water suck it all out to sea, almost all of the 300 feet of line pulled out. What an undertow. He stopped it, reeled some in, put the rod in the PVC pipe, and then played some Jimmy Buffet on a portable speaker to relax.

He had his flashlight on dim to see the rod and about twenty feet behind it, and it was not in the water either. Sun was down, but still, some light and lovely sunset of pinks that he admired.

Then he saw his rod bend in half and he knew it had something at 7:20. The PVC pipe had water washing around the pipe. The tide was rising. So, he reeled in and had a giant catfish. Used pliers, threw it back in after a selfie photo, put on a saltwater lure and squid on both hooks and was ready, but a big wave came up to his chair and started to drag it out to sea. It was 7:30. He had to retrieve the chair with his book bag on it for weight.

It was hard to believe the tide came up so fast. So, Owen moved it back halfway between dry sand and the sea oats, about another twenty feet. At this point, he was concerned and wrapped his camera bag in a black plastic garbage bag and knotted it, and did the same thing with his bookbag with all his other stuff, speakers, flashlight, tools, fish weights, and left his tackle box on the ground by the chair.

About five minutes later, a giant wave out of nowhere washed up over Owen, his chair and ripped the top of the tackle box open. He jumped up and grabbed the top, and some stuff inside the top compartments came out.

Owen then said he was very frustrated, and he moved to the sea oats, where he was sure the water could not get that high. He settled, trying to see what was lost and what he still had. He saved most of it. The phone displayed 8:00 and right after that, the final surge came and there was no more sand. He wrote the time on his hand for reference's sake. (See photo illustration) It was hard to believe the water had risen so fast and so far. Everything was underwater up to the sea oats where

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he was now sitting. He was irritated because the sea oats were making him itch.

As he's collecting his thoughts, he'd only lost some hooks and weights—sat there for maybe 20 minutes and realized he couldn't see the ramp, sand, or anything. No moon. His big flashlight had died and he only had a small LED headlamp with AAA batteries in it.

Trying to walk out, he was falling down. The current was strong. A plane came over and Owen shot a flare at the airplane, and it circled, but Owen was in the pitch-black dark. The aircraft flew away. He waited until 8:45, hoping for help. Nothing happened. He saw a light in the distance and thought it might be a car in the public parking area and about 9:15 fired the second of four toward the light that might have been in the parking lot.

He waited another 20 minutes and at 9:35, no one came. He had two waterproof burning flares, and he used electrical tape on driftwood and burned one. It burned for 5 minutes at the top of a hill on sea oats. Then he saw a helicopter and fired the one remaining aerial flare at the chopper. It veered and he shot again almost at his tail, and he did a right and left turn. It appeared they saw him but couldn't land. So he lit the last burning flare.. .waving it at the chopper, which then flew away. He drank all the liquids he had and considered drinking melted cooler water. At that point, waiting for the helicopter to return, it was 10:30.

He used the last of the big battery flashlight, but sea oats were higher than he was and he couldn't see anything. He waited until 11.. .water higher. At midnight he emptied the cooler, put it on his shoulder, along with the bookbag, all in black trash bags, and tied knots in them. Double bagged his \$1,000 canon camera, then tried walking toward where he believed was the parking area would be. He had water shoes, but sand spurs bothered him, getting into the toe area and pressing into the skin when he walked. To walk the 300 yards, he'd come out, but it was hard to walk on sloped sand, knocked down over ten times holding on to the trash bags, some slung around his neck. After two more hours, he saw the blue mat for kayaks and he walked up the blue carpet, knowing where he was. He collapsed to rest a few minutes, covered with sand.

With a new breath, he managed to get over to the parking lot where the showers were. He gulped down water after seven and a half hours, (about 3:00 am) had a tiny travel shampoo and washed-up but no dry towel. He rinsed seawater from the rod and chair with fresh water. He got to the car, and it started. It was dry in the parking lot. He made several trips to the car and got AC working to cool off. Sat in the car for a few minutes....3:34 when he looked at his watch and wrote the time on his hand.

He drove to the closest hotel on the beach, Spring-Hill Suites, Got there at 3:49 am to seek a dry towel—wearing only a bathing suit, having washed his clothes. They asked, "Are you OK?"

He replied, "I wish I could say yes, but I've been lost on the Navarre beach access for the past seven and a half hours."

"Were you the one they were looking for? They saw flares going off but knew the surge was too strong to get to you. They didn't know exactly how far down you were."

Shivering in front of the clerk, she offered him a free dry shirt. And she gave him three towels—could tell he was cold. They also gave him coffee and hot chocolate. She saw how tired, and after conferring with the manager, they asked him if he wanted one of their unoccupied handicap rooms. It'd be free to use it until 8 am and when you get up, get a complimentary breakfast.

"Do you need a card from me?" he asked.

"Trust me, after all you've been through, Absolutely not. It's the least we can do for you. Have a free breakfast in the morning."

They called his room at 8 am to check on him, and that's when he got up.

Owen returned home at 9 am at Mariners Cove, twelve miles away, and told this story while it was fresh.

Besides being thankful for his safe return, the family is grateful to the kindness of Abigail Zaleske and Spring Hill Suites of Navarre and its staff.

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JOHNNY MACK SHEDS SHOES TO VISIT CELEBRITIES DURING HALF

## JOHNNY MACK BROWN AND ALABAMA FOOTBALL

by C. Lee Stewart, Sr.

Dothan native Johnny Mack Brown (1904-1974) gained fame in two very different arenas: college football and Hollywood Westerns. A gifted athlete, he first achieved notoriety as an All-American running back for the University of Alabama for his efforts in a stunning upset of the heavily favored University of Washington Huskies in the 1926 Rose Bowl. The subsequent media attention brought the notice of Hollywood legendary director and producer King Vidor, and Brown went on to a successful career as an actor in film and television.

The University of Alabama played its first football game on November 11, 1892. They played Birmingham High School and won 56-0. This was the beginning of the tradition of winning at Alabama.

In 1923, Alabama's football team overpowered all of its 9 southern opponents. They defeated Union, Birmingham Southern, LSU, Sewanee, Geor-

gia Tech, Mississippi State, Kentucky, Florida and Georgia. Alabama scored 277 points to only 7 points by their opponents only Birmingham Southern scored a touchdown.

Despite Alabama's great season against Southern opponents, the sports writers of the East, North and West football teams had little respect for southern football.

**"No diet will remove all the fat from your body because the brain is entirely made up of fat. Without a brain you would look great, but all you could do is run for office."**

*John Fisk, Arab*



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"The wider world didn't know that football was being played in the south until University of Alabama went to the 1926 Rose Bowl. Alabama President, Dr. George Denny, was against post-season games, but Alabama's governor, Bill Brandon, sent a telegram to the Rose Bowl committee calling its attention to the Tide's 9-0 record. The Tide received a formal invitation to meet Washington in Pasadena on January 1, 1926. Head coach Wallace Wade told his team that "Southern football is not recognized as being anything that it is in the west, east and Midwest. So here's your chance." The odds makers installed Washington as a 2-1 favorite. Cowboy and poet Will Rogers called Alabama "That team from Tuska-Loser."

Alabama made its first Tournament of Roses on New Year's Day in 1926, and the winning tradition continued to carry on as Bama beat the powerful Washington, 20-19. The game did not follow the sports experts pre-arranged script. Alabama 10-0 and Dartmouth 8-0 were named the 1925 National Football champions.

"Sports Editor Zipp Newman, reporting the game in the Birmingham News the following day, had this to say. "Memories of the devastating 1906 earthquake which all but destroyed the city of San Francisco swept through the frenzied minds of the 50,000 spellbound spectators on New Year's Day when the plunging, ruthless Crimson Tide of Alabama hurled the purple tornado of Washington, far out into a dizzy sea."

Alabama's fantastic third quarter assertiveness and the daring antics of "crow-hopping" Johnny Mack Brown, Newman wrote, "As long as there is a survivor of the 1926 Tournament of Roses game, the third period will live on the memory of western and southern fans."

Alabama scored 20 points in seven minutes of the 3rd

quarter to win 20-19. Johnny Mack caught a Grant Gills pass and galloped 60 yards for a touchdown. Washington fumbled and Pooley Hubert hit Brown with a pass for a 25 yard touchdown. Johnny Mack was named the most valuable player of the Rose Bowl. Other honors he received: All American, College Football Hall of Fame and Alabama Hall of Fame.

Johnny Mack Brown didn't return to Alabama with the team. The football hero, the boy from Dothan, Alabama remained in Hollywood to become a cowboy hero. Johnny Mack never forgot the homefolks in Dothan and was the idol of Alabama youngsters for decades.

Johnny Mack turned down a professional football offer and signed a movie contract in 1926 with MGM. He appeared in more than 160 movies between 1927 to 1966. He was also in television shows. He played in a movie with William Haine in 1927. A Film about baseball. He played in a movie with Mary Pickford in her first talking film 1929. He played in movies with John Wayne Wallace Beery, Joan Crawford, Clark Gable, Tex Ridder and Robert Mitchum. He played in a western musical comedy, "Ride 'em Cowboy" with Bud Abbott and Lou Costello. He was MGMs highest paid actor, He went with Universal pictures in 1937. He retired from the Silver Screen with more than 40 years.

He was married to Camellia Foster from 1926 until his death in 1974. The had four children; 3 girls and a boy.

Johnny Mack Brown was a cowboy superstar to millions of young buckaroos but he was a super-hero at the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa.

Sources:

Birmingham News, Zapp Newman - "The Road to the Top; Tom Little - newspaper clippings, internet.

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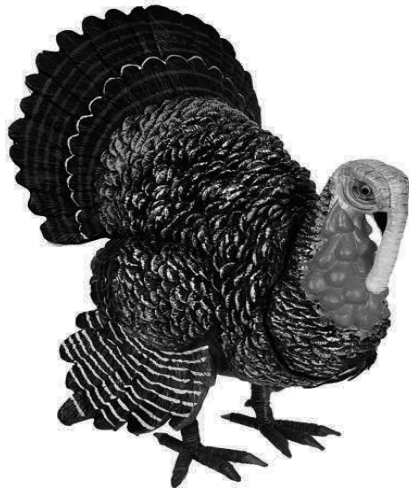
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# The Dairy

by Robert B. French, Jr. PC



When I was perhaps two years old, certainly not more than two and one-half, mother and daddy moved us to my grandfather's dairy on Pulaski Pike, just North of Huntsville. I later learned it was called Bean's Dairy and that my Grandfather, Ira T. Sibley, rented the farm and cattle from Mr. Bean. My grandfather was not a sharecropper. He always had a contract, and a real estate lease. He paid Mr. Bean rent and made a tidy profit for both families.

Times were ugly; deep in the Depression. President Roosevelt was trying everything he knew to bring recovery to the nation. Nothing would work until WWII.

My father left the telephone company and had gone to work on the Southern Railroad Bridge gang. We had moved into one of the four-room tenant houses on the dairy. My grandfather and grandmother lived in the two-story "big house" with my Aunt Mildred, Uncle Ira, Jr., and Uncle Arnold.

My mother, her oldest brother Edgar and older sister Pauline Baker moved their families into the other four-room houses scattered around the dairy property. Other than my dad and Uncle Ed Baker, the men worked the dairy managed by my grandfather.

We had 32 cows that had to be

milked twice a day, seven days a week. Granddaddy had a big, solid black, cantankerous bull named Tommy Toole. He kept the cows happy and constantly produced a spring calf crop. He was said to be descended from Lily Flagg, the most famous cow in American history. She had produced more butter than any cow ever recorded at a world's fair sometime in the distant past.

Later, Tommy Toole was bred to one of Lily Flagg's descendants, owned by the Jones family from Jones Valley. According to what I was later told, a calf of the Jones cow

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## OSCAR LLERENA

won an award at the World's Fair in New York in 1939. The Huntsville-Madison County International Airport is named after Mr. Carl T. Jones.

Later in life, I did business with his sons, and son-in-law Peter Lowe, engineers who dabbled in the mineral business.

One bright summer day when I was approaching three years old, my mother, hanging out clothes on the clothesline, failed to watch me closely. I walked down the hill from our small white clapboard house to the little brown pump house. The smokehouse, another small brown structure, loaded with meat, was located nearby. While childishly exploring the trickle of water runoff from the pump house, a large tom turkey knocked me down, put his foot on my chest and began to closely inspect me. I can still remember his eyes, beak, ugly face and red wattles.

Fortunately, my mother came running in her gingham dress and shooed the bird away. That night, at dinner in the big house, she told the story to the family. My grandmother said that I was very lucky the turkey didn't peck my eyes out. I was pretty happy about that too. The sight of that blue and red-faced bird standing over me has stayed with me all my life. 83 years later, I can still see him in my mind's eye.

It was about this time that I came down with colitis. The childhood strain of this sickness resulted in a right inguinal hernia. That affected my daily life until I had surgery when I was 16 years old. I was consoled by the fact my grandfather had a dual hernia and had to wear a truss every day to prevent strangulation. I also survived diphtheria about this time. The doctor said that I got it from drinking contaminated water. I was told I nearly died from the high fever associated with the illness.

**"One half of our world will never understand the other half, and it doesn't matter which half you're in."**

**Leonard Story**

## Tom Dark's Drugstore (many years ago)

by Jim Latham

A little boy came into Tom Dark's Drugstore on the square. Scotty, the pharmacist, asked what he could do for him. "Momma said she needed 10 cents worth of assfedia."

Scotty got the ill-smelling drug and gave it to the boy and said, "That will be 10 cents."

"Momma said to charge it," the little boy claimed.

"And the name to charge it to?"

"Hunkapillar."

The pharmacist said, "Take it for free. It's not worth a dime for me to try to spell both assfedia and Hunkapillar."

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# SHYSTER LAWYERS PREY ON THE INNOCENT



From 1902 Newspaper

The "raison d'etre" of the shyster lawyer is hard to explain, and, indeed, it is a pity that under those laws, which they affect to know so much about, these harpies of the justice's court cannot be sentenced

to limbo for keeps. The outrageous way in which they prey upon ignorant people and especially upon ignorant unfortunates is enough to make any man righteously indignant.

The shyster is a dangerous beast of prey; the justice's courts are his lair. The quarry he delights to stalk and pounce upon and gorge himself with, is the unfortunate with a fat pocketbook.

If an honest person happens to accumulate any money, he is reasonably sure to be hauled up before a justice's court on one pretext or another and frightened by the majesty of the law.

When his knees are knocking together at thoughts of

the stockade, whither so many people are daily herded, the shyster lawyer steps in after the fashion of some good fairy, gets what money he has and tries to have the case dismissed.

And if he does not succeed, why, what's the difference? The silver is already jingling in his pocket.

I do not mean to be unjust only to the shyster. Even they, I suppose, are entitled to some sort of fee. And, by the bye, I know of one legal firm whose retaining fees have been known to run as low as fifteen cents.

But my gorge will rise at the swindling, bulldozing and extortion constantly being practiced upon innocent gudgeons by these shystering nobodies.

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# PET TIPS FROM ANGEL

## *Superstitions about Dogs*



1. When you're being followed pretty consistently by a strange dog, (especially a black dog) there is considerable bad luck to be had in your near future.

2. If your dog appears angry or defensive around some person for no apparent reason, steer clear. It's a sign that that person has bad character.

3. Meeting a black and white spotted dog on the way to a business meeting is good luck! You might just close the deal.

4. A greyhound with a white spot on her forehead brings good fortune, wherever she may go.

5. A dog walking between a courting couple indicates a quarrel will soon take place.

6. A howling dog outside the house of a sick person was once thought to be an omen that they would die, especially if the dog was driven away and returned to howl again.

7. If you have your new-born baby licked by a dog, your baby will be a quick healer.

8. To keep a new dog, measure its tail with a cornstalk and bury the latter under the front step.

9. When a dog is staring intently, at nothing, for no apparent reason, look between the dog's ears and you'll see a ghost.

10. Meeting a dog is always good luck especially if you meet a Dalmatian.

11. Germans say the only way to have a well behaved dog is to have a tired dog.

12. When the howl of a dog breaks the silence of night, it's an omen of death.

13. If a dog howls for no reason, it means he sees unseen spirits.

14. If a dog snarls at a stranger, you will have a break-in that night. If the dog

licks the hand of a stranger, that person will be in your life in future years.

15. If a dog howls at a crossroads, it means the goddess Hecate is near (and that is rarely a good thing).

16. If a dog howls an odd number of times (for example, 1 long howl or 3 howls), he is marking the death of a person nearby.

17. If a dog howls four times while under the front porch, it is a harbinger of death.

18. Trust your dog more than a stranger

19. There's a common belief that dogs are great judges of a person's character. Some believe that a dog can see through the facade of a smile and identify untrustworthy people. If your friendly dog starts barking at a stranger for no apparent reason, think twice about trusting him.

### **The Healing Power of Dogs**

- Some people believe that a dog's saliva has healing powers. This is why people believe that a dog's mouth is cleaner than a human's. People who believe this myth think that this is why dogs lick their wounds – to heal faster.

### **If you Step in Dog Poop = good luck**

- This one is a more light-hearted, humorous myth found in French tradition. This superstition states that if you step in dog poop with your left foot, you'll receive good luck, but when stepping with your right, bad luck will come. This myth is so widespread that there are several places in Paris where you can purchase a prank souvenir cup filled with "lucky dog poop" (a plastic replica of course).

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# The Courthouse

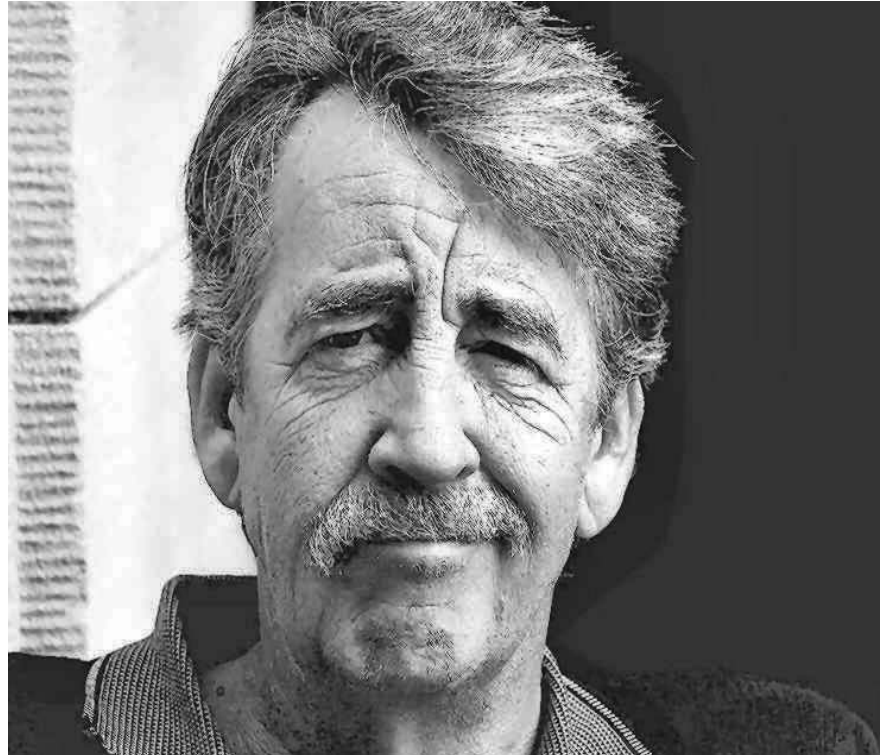
by Tom Carney

When Huntsville's early settlers first started arriving, they discovered a large mound of stones directly above the Big Spring. This mound of stones was infested with rattlesnakes and was considered worthless.

In 1809, the Mississippi territorial government decreed that Madison County was to have a system of circuit and county courts and that the appropriate buildings be erected. This mound of stones, known as the public square, was deeded to the local government and in 1811 the first courthouse was built. The first floor was used as offices and courtrooms. The basement was also completed and was open on the north side. The first city market was located in the basement. A small wooden jail and pillory was constructed on the northeast corner of the public square.

The incomplete Courthouse became the nucleus for civic, religious and commercial activity. In 1817, arrangements were made to complete the building of the first courthouse. Arrangements were also made for a more substantial jail and pillory to be built on the east side of the Square.

During the 1820s and the prosperous 1830s, Huntsville and Madison County continued to grow. By 1835, it was evident that a new courthouse was needed. Plans were drawn up and the firm of Mitchell and



Wilson was hired to construct the new courthouse at an approximate cost of \$31,000. The building was built in the popular Greek Temple style, being constructed of brick and stone and having two full stories in addition to a full basement. The old courthouse was sold at auction for \$494.

After it was removed, the ten-foot elevation it sat on was graded down and the rock was

used to pave the surrounding square. As work progressed, changes and additions were made to the original plans, necessitating additional revenue. In 1840, the commissioners, in an attempt to raise more money for the building of the courthouse, ordered taxation on a variety of things including land, town property, slaves, free males, horses, watches, clocks, playing cards and bil-

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liard tables.

The new courthouse was completed in 1840 and provisions were made for a new jail in 1846. The new jail was a brick structure located at the northeast corner of Washington and Clinton Streets. During this time the Square began to take on the appearance of a thriving business center. The yard in front of the courthouse became a place where cotton could be bought or sold and punishment would be administered by flogging or even sometimes hanging.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, when it was realized that the courthouse might be occupied by Yankee troops, most of the public records were removed and sent to Blount County for safekeeping. When indeed Huntsville was occupied by federal troops in 1862, the courthouse was taken over by military officials. A blanket of depression and hardship descended upon Huntsville during the occupation.

From the courthouse, signed passes and loyalty oaths were extracted from any citizen entering or leaving town, buying supplies from the commissary, or when protection was needed by Union troops.

After the war, the grounds of the courthouse had deteriorated badly due to lack of money and upkeep. Many newspaper articles of that time spoke of the "overgrown courthouse yard."

One of the more interesting stories of the late 1800s concerns that of pet deer kept in the courthouse yard. No one today is sure where they came from, but for years they were a common sight to anyone having business downtown. According to one old-timer, the deer were taken from a bootlegger when he was arrested. The sheriff, not knowing what else to do

with them, turned them loose in the courthouse yard. When the courthouse was torn down, they were moved to the McCormick estate on Meridian Street.

The original plans had called for that courthouse to be remodeled, but when work began it was found to be in much worse shape than anyone had expected, and had to be torn down.

The third courthouse was completed in 1914. Certain items were retained, such as the town clock, the massive "Doric" columns, the D.A.R. plaque listing the names of all the Revolutionary soldiers buried in Madison County, and the statue of the Confederate soldier, which was a memorial to the Confederate dead.

As Huntsville continued to grow, the third courthouse was renovated in 1940 to help accommodate this growth, but during the boom of the 1960s

it was found to be woefully inadequate.

In 1964, \$37,050 was awarded to the Bama Wrecking Company to demolish the old (third) courthouse which had stood for fifty years. The contents of the 1914 cornerstone were saved and the twenty massive stone columns were salvaged to be used elsewhere. The weather vane atop the old dome was transferred to the First Alabama Bank on the west side of the square.

The current courthouse was completed in 1967 at the approximate cost \$5,301,500. For the first time since 1846 the jail was located on the Square.

There is one interesting footnote. One of the things that all of the courthouses have in common is that none of them were ever completed in time allowed by the contract, and they all cost more than originally thought.

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# Halloween (1955)

by Bill Alkire

Halloween had always been an interesting, exciting time of year for me. At 14 it did not take a whole lot to get excited about. Part of this story of course is true; part myth, and part perhaps not quite true. It has been told so many times by others, and myself I am not sure anymore. I know however from experience that the main part of this story is true because it happened to me.

The event, which unfolds here, like I said did happen. Kids had been pulling pranks and this had been going on all week. Electrical power boxes had been turned OFF, leaves then thrown on occupants when they went to investigate, etc. This, however, was THE night, Halloween...the ghostly of nights.

It was 28-30 degrees; winds blowing from the Northeast around 10-15 miles an hour, and the clouds obscured the full moon. It felt bitterly cold! It was not the kind of night a person would want to be out alone. The weather conditions alone made it a little scary...okay, big time scary.

Don Ware and I were making our way south from my house and doing quite well on the treat side. We had just passed Mr. Emory Row's house; his wife always gave homemade treats. We passed up Mr. Spidel Moore's house. He was a strange man and the meanest of the mean. It was said he always cursed and spit on anyone who went and knocked at his door. This night was no exception...Spidel was sitting in a rocker on his front porch, in the shadows where he could not be seen. As a child stepped onto his porch he would jump out and scare them...and then laugh his mean laugh... well I am regressing here.

The word had spread quickly that some older boys had caught Mr. Moore sitting in his outhouse (he kept his homemade Elderberry wine out there); on what he called his throne and turned it over with him inside. This of course made us all chuckle and wish we had been a part of the celebrated event.

If truth be known Don and I would have been afraid to do anything like that. Mostly out of fear of being caught and we just were not that kind of kids. Still...

it was funny.

The evening grew late, the clouds thickened; it began a misty rain and get colder. Don, some other guys and I decided to go home. As we made our way down the alley behind Spidel's house, one of the guys' screamed "Watch out!" Spidel had a gun and was aiming it right at us. We took off running as fast as our young legs could carry us. In haste I dropped my bag of goodies... stopped to pick it up... Kerr-Boom!

There were dogs that began barking far away. I felt something knock me flat to the ground. I grabbed my bag...Kerr-Boom...Dirt flew at my ankles and flew all over my jeans. I ran as though the devil was after my soul. My shoulder was burning, stinging, my jacket was torn...something was not quite right. Don was concerned about my injuries and offered to help... I just wanted to get out of range. My pride was hurting as well...what was I going to say...I had done nothing. In the wrong place at the wrong time...painful lesson!

When I got to the house my Grandfather McDonald was standing on the back porch. "What's wrong laddie?\*" I tried to tell him my story through the tears ...he did not want to hear my story.

He never said a word, cleaned the rock salt from my shoulder, and poured peroxide in the wounds. He motioned me to go home.

Grandfather never told anyone. Neither did I. When questioned about my torn jacket...! shrugged... no truth was ever requested. No comment was ever made.... until now.

This story was repeated however many times, but my name was left out, I could not ask any more than that.



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# HOME TIPS YOU CAN USE

\* If you're a gardener, the fall is the time to check to see what survived the very dry weather. Verbena, lantana, salvia, dahlia, hibiscus - plant those again next year for a low maintenance but still beautiful garden.

\* Items you own such as computers, tools, TVs, printers etc. can be engraved with your name, birth date or other form of ID in case of theft. Many items are recovered but unless you have some sort of identification on it the authorities have no way of connecting it with you and getting it back to you.

\* Heat up leftover pizza in a non-stick skillet on top of the stove, set heat to medium low and heat 'til hot. This keeps the crust crispy and no more soggy microwave pizza!

\* Before you pour sticky substances into your measuring cup, rinse it out with hot water and don't dry. Your ingredient, like peanut butter, will slide right out!

\* Use baking soda with a damp rag to remove kid's crayon marks from your walls.

\* To prevent fires from occurring in your clothes dryer, take the filter out and wash it with hot soapy water occasionally. The dryer cloths you use are sealing the filter (prove it by pouring water into your filter) and could catch fire.

\* After shopping and you get into your car, immediately lock your door. If someone comes up to you and wants to talk to you or ask you something, just shake your head and go home. There's

no need to take unnecessary chances.

\* Put cooked egg yolks in a Zip lock bag. Seal, mash 'til they are broken up. Add the rest of your ingredients for deviled eggs to the bag, mash some more. Cut a small corner off the bag and just squeeze the yolk mixture into your egg halves.

\* Make your own iced Green tea. Just brew about 8 teabags for 2 quarts, pour into your container with Crystal Lite lemonade (about half the container or to your taste) and fill with water. It's delicious and no sugar overload.

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## Iggy

Hello, my name is Iggy. I am 5 years old. I first came to the Ark Animal Shelter in 2016. I had been living outside at a trailer park with some of my buddies and the people there fed us and looked out for us. But then the trailer park was closed down and some nice people brought us to the Ark. We got to live inside and got fed good food everyday and we didn't have to be scared living outside. Later I was adopted by a kind lady but was brought back to the shelter in April because she couldn't take care of me anymore. Everyone is kind to me here but I sure would like a family of my own. I am very friendly to everyone and will sit on your lap and let you pet me. I live here with another cat and we get along very well so I'm sure I could get along in your family if you have another cat. Please come to the Ark and see me. I would love to see you and would love to be your cat.

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Sara Bradley, Athens

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# Ed Hewlett, Gurley Grocer

by William Sibley

Thomas Edwin "Ed" Hewlett was born in Gurley, Alabama, in 1910 and was the youngest of four sons born to Mr. and Mrs. W.R. Hewlett. Ed was born in a two-story home located two miles from Gurley Grammar (Elementary) School, where he received his earliest schooling. Ed's home was heated by a fireplace and lighted by lamps.

Ed had farm chores to do each day before walking two miles to school, where he and another boy were janitors. Their duties included building fires each day in the four classrooms during the winter and bringing coal into the building to keep the heaters going. They also swept all of the classrooms each day. Their pay was \$7.50 per month.

When Ed reached high school at Gurley's Madison County High School, he had a strong interest in sports. He played some baseball, but he had a special interest in basketball and football. He was very fond of Tom Sneed, his football coach, and played his heart out as quarterback on Coach Sneed's teams.

MCHS had some very good football teams in the 1920s, 30s and 40s, defeating some teams they were not expected to defeat, including Scottsboro and some teams from Huntsville schools.

I am quite sure that the team traveled by train when playing on Scottsboro's home field. On a humorous note, I was told by the daughter of a MCHS student who played football on the 1914, 1915 and 1916 teams, that the Gurley teams traveled by train to Scottsboro when they played at Scottsboro. One year the Gurley boys took one football to Scottsboro, but when they returned to Gurley, they had two footballs. I was not told if the mystery was solved.

After high school, Ed and his brother, Roy, opened a cafe in Gurley and had pool tables in the establishment. The also had slot machines in the back of the business, but they removed them when they became illegal.

In 1936, Ed married Myrtle Payne of Scottsboro. In that same year, he and his brother Roy bought a grocery store in Gurley from Ben F. Giles, who served as sheriff of Madison County from 1931 to 1935. Business was booming in Gurley in the 1930s and 1940s. The town boasted four grocery stores, a bank, a drug store, a movie theater and other businesses. Gurley also served

as a train stop for people who were traveling to Huntsville, Scottsboro and Chattanooga.

In 1942, twin girls Joan and Janet were born to Mr. and Mrs. Hewlett. While this was a happy occasion for the Hewlett family, a sad event occurred that same year when Ed's brother Roy passed away. As a result of Roy's death, Ed became the sole owner of Hewletts' Store. Ed renamed the store Hewlett's Grocery. He also sold dry goods, including work pants, shirts, overalls, shoes made by a local cobbler and cloth for making garments.

One day I was in Hewlett's Grocery and I recognized a local lady who was grinding sausage. I was disappointed when she told me the sausage was not for sale, but was for one of Mr. Hewlett's customers.

Many of Ed's customers were farmers who bought items on credit until harvest time. Ed proudly reported that nearly all of the farmers paid their debts in full.

When Ed's customers came into his store on Saturday afternoons in the fall, they could usually hear the University of Alabama football games on the radio.

After being in the grocery business for 53 years, Ed sold his store. Ed spent his entire life in Gurley, and in his latter years, he said of his hometown, "No better place to live."

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# It Was That Door

by Ernestine Moody

Growing up, my family lived in a very modest bungalow, in a very modest neighborhood. We loved our neighbors and a big source of entertainment seemed to come in the waning hours of the day. After supper, some nearby friends would gather on their front porch. Relaxing in their large wooden swing, perhaps the families would review their day's activities.

The kids had the responsibility of entertaining themselves. Many chose to play Hide and Seek. The extremely high and very full hydrangea bushes, located nearby, were the popular spots for the little ones to conceal themselves as they "spied" on the visiting adults. The youngsters thought they were completely out of sight and convinced themselves, "We are so smart." Perhaps in their eyes they were like little Sherlock Holmes.

Giggling sounds did quickly notify the families that little ears were "listening in."

To me, there was one feature in our home that was unusual. It was a rule, a heavily enforced rule. No one was to go into the living and dining room areas of our residence unless it was a special occasion. Thus, Thanksgiving and Christmas are the dates that immediately come to my mind. That part of our home was a sanctuary of neatness. It stayed prepared for the holidays and visitations by any of my parent's adult friends.

For this reason and economical reasons, that door stayed closed. The family considered heat as non-essential in these two rarely-visited rooms.

What a momentous time of year for the youngsters when we could open that door. Then, we would venture inside to help set the dining room table in preparation for a big Thanksgiving meal. Mom would unpack the special dishes (many acquired by coupons connected to grocery store purchases).

Oh, and I remember the aroma from the plumply stuffed turkey slowly baking in the oven. After filling our tummies with the various available desserts, everyone carefully took their special dish to the kitchen so that they might be packed away for the couple of weeks preceding Christmas.

**"Try to stay in the middle of the air. Do not go near the edges of it. The edges of the air can be recognized by the appearance of ground, bridges, buildings, sea, trees and interstellar space. It is much more difficult to fly there."**

*Seen in Pilot's Handbook*

The rooms were heated incredibly early on the morning of December 25th. We quickly formed a straight line down our hallway, and THAT DOOR WAS OPENED again.

Happiness was everywhere as we each crept in to see what Santa had delivered.

I know now how much those two rooms meant to my folks. They were a symbol of pride and success for them. My parents worked so hard to achieve normal daily lives for themselves and their children and now they had this area as a special domain. Behind that door was their fulfilled dreams where they could experience special family celebrations.

Today most kids have no such boundaries, but for me these special rooms will always hold a soft spot in my heart, especially when remembering the excitement of OPENING THAT DOOR!

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# PLAYING DEAD

by Dena Harris



The cat collapses on the kitchen floor at my feet. Her eyes roll back in her head and her breath comes in short, shallow gasps. Her chest flutters with the effort of breathing as she raises one small paw in a final salute to life and all that is true and good in this world. Having mustered her last bit of strength for this poignant gesture, her head falls back against the floor and her body goes limp, every bit of energy spent in her Final, Fatalistic farewell.

A faint "meow" lingers on the air.

"Move it," I say, stepping over her for the twentieth time that day. "You're not fooling anyone, you know."

The cat glares at me but pulls herself up and, dripping dignity, saunters down the hall.

"Dead Cat" is the new game of choice around our home. I don't

know who started it, but I'm ready for it to end. It's becoming dangerous to even walk around the house. At any given moment a cat or kitten may fling herself at our feet and collapse.

We've analyzed the cats' behavior and have noticed "dead cat syndrome" is most likely to occur when we're ignoring them; the definition of "ignore" being that we have gone more than fifteen seconds without acknowledging their existence.

For example, we returned the other day from a forty-minute trip to the grocery store and decide to take a quick nap. I greet her so I can get one full shoulder on the bed. The kitten digs her claws into our bedspread and goes completely limp. The I'm-a-dead-cat feint adds a good ten pounds, making her almost impossible to move. I tap the kitten with my foot.

"Hey, scoot over", I whisper. She pretends not to hear me. I sit up and scratch her ears, trying to charm her into moving. That doesn't work so I attempt to lift her. She counters by acting as if the life force has drained out of her and, if possible, goes even more limp. I retaliate the only way I know how. I kick and thrash my legs under the covers in the hopes of scaring her away.

**"With hurricanes, tornadoes, fires, mud slides, flooding, severe thunderstorms and terrorist attacks - are we sure this is the right time to take God out of the Pledge of Allegiance?"**

**Jay Leno**

13. Publication Title <i>Old Huntsville Magazine</i>		14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below <i>Sep. 15, 2021</i>	
15. Extent and Nature of Circulation <i>local history + stories</i>		Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)		<i>740</i>	<i>752</i>
b. Paid Circulation (By Mail and Outside the Mail)	(1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	<i>210</i>	<i>195</i>
	(2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	<i>350</i>	<i>337</i>
	(3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS®	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
	(4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail®)	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
c. Total Paid Distribution (Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), and (4))		<i>560</i>	<i>532</i>
d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (By Mail and Outside the Mail)	(1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies included on PS Form 3541	<i>50</i>	<i>60</i>
	(2) Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies included on PS Form 3541	<i>110</i>	<i>120</i>
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e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3) and (4))		<i>160</i>	<i>180</i>
f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15e)		<i>710</i>	<i>712</i>
g. Copies not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers #4 (page #3))		<i>30</i>	<i>40</i>
h. Total (Sum of 15f and g)		<i>740</i>	<i>752</i>
i. Percent Paid (15c divided by 15f times 100)		<i>77.46%</i>	<i>74.72%</i>

\* If you are claiming electronic copies, go to line 16 on page 3. If you are not claiming electronic copies, skip to line 17 on page 3.

"Ow, ow, ow!" says my husband.  
 "Why are you kicking me?"

"Sorry I was trying to frighten the kitten," I say

'Talk to her about global warming," he suggests. "Or offer to cook something for her. Hey-ow!"

I'm at a loss. I simply can't pay attention to the cats 24/7. But seeing dead cats lying around the house distresses me. Don't my girls realize how much I love them? How truly distraught I would be were something to ever actually happen to them?

I decide it's a matter of miscommunication. Surely if I show the cats how upsetting it is to see someone they love "dead", they will stop this awful charade.

I talk to my husband and we plan our fake demise. That night at dinner, both of us fall out of our chairs and onto the floor in front of the cats.

The cats walk by with nary a glance in our direction. The only thing they seem distressed about is having to maneuver around us to get to their food dishes. Once they finish eating, they retreat to their favorite napping spots in the library. They plod across our lifeless bodies to take the most direct route possible.

Apparently "dead human" isn't anywhere near as upsetting as "dead cat." I should have known.

## Be Careful of Wednesdays

A study at the University of Iowa determined that couples have more spats on Wednesdays than any other day of the week.

500 people took part in the project. The researcher isn't really sure why this is, but he speculates that it might be because Wednesday is mid-week, equally distant from both weekends.

Good news, though - Thursdays are peaceful, probably because the air was cleared on Wednesday.



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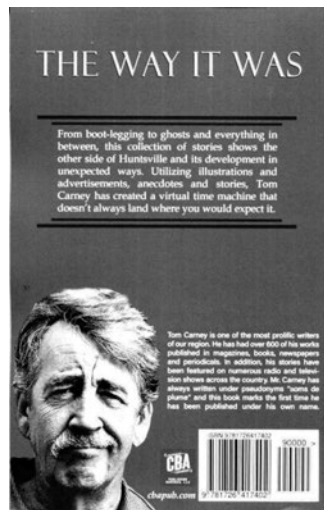
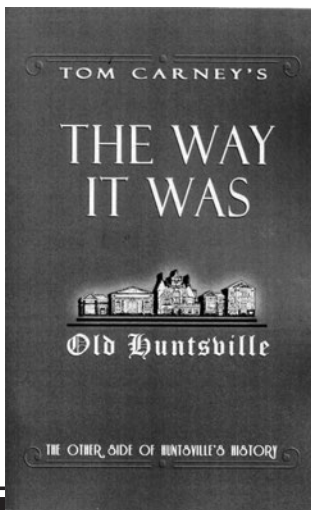
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