



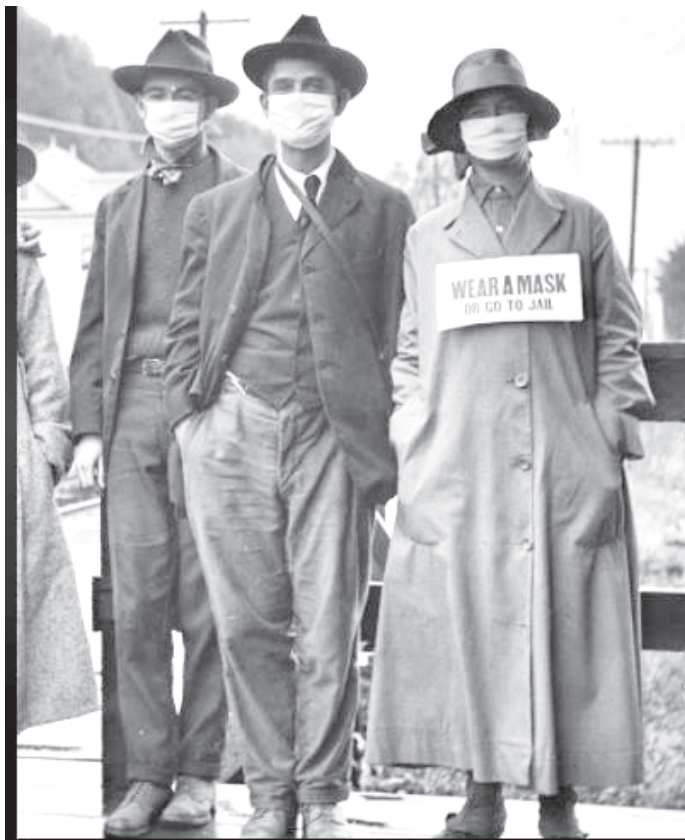
No. 347
January 2022



Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

1918 Pandemic Hits Huntsville, Alabama



Quoting from a Huntsville Times report of that period, "In a related incident, there was a shooting on Monte Sano when a family, fleeing the illness in the city, tried to set up a campsite on private property. Scores of families are reported to be camping on the mountain in the belief that it is a healthier site. Some of the property owners, armed with guns, are said to be patrolling their property, and a sign has been erected warning all people to stay away."

As careful as doctors were in 1918, many of them contracted the Spanish Flu and died from its pneumonia complications. That left the city in dire conditions with a great need and even fewer health professionals, including nurses and assistants, to treat the sick.

Also in this issue: Scandal on Randolph Avenue; Baseball Hero Kyle Wright; Civil War Shell Found; Historical New Market; Early Life on Monte Sano; The Alabama Stone; Southern Snacks; Cat Tips and much more!

Lewter's Hardware Store



In 1928 our great-grandfather, D.A. Lewter, and our grandfather, J.M. Lewter, started the family business in a small store on Washington Street. They believed in offering fair prices, treating each customer with special respect and hiring great employees.

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Domie Lewter
Mac Lewter

1918 Pandemic Hits Huntsville, Alabama

by M. D. Smith, IV

The Spanish Flu didn't start in Spain. However, Spain was a neutral country and not in WWI, so they widely reported the current influenza of 1918 and its spread. All of the armies involved with the fighting of WWI carried and spread the Flu. Many died, but similar to battle casualties, neither side of the war reported it for security and strategic reasons.

Because of so much news from Spain, it was simply dubbed "The Spanish Flu". The truth is, there were as many recorded cases in the U.S., centered around Kansas, as there were in other world population centers in Europe.

World War I claimed an estimated 16 million lives. According to the CDC website, it is estimated that about 500 million people or one-third of the world's population became infected with this virus. The number of deaths was es-

timated to be at least 50 million worldwide.

As of the end of 2021, there will be about 750,000 Americans dead from Covid. In the 1918-1919 epidemic, 675,000 died. However, the population of the U.S. then was 103 million and today it's 376 million. On a scale to people, it was over three times as deadly to citizens in 1918.

A U.S. Army Camp in Kansas reported the first U.S. case in March of 1918. In Alabama, most sources agree the first cases were reported in September in Huntsville.

1918 Influenza in Alabama Timeline

September 28, 1918: Huntsville is given credit with the first reported Alabama case of Spanish Flu and the quickest to rise. It spread rapidly in other cities of the state. Dr. C. A. Grote, Health Officer of Madison County, advised the State Board of Health on the 28th that 11 cases had appeared in the northern Madison County. He further said Huntsville's first case came from Philadelphia.

October 5, 1918 - The Flu was deadly and spread so rapidly in Huntsville. By October 5th, more than 1,100 cases were reported in Huntsville, barely a week later. Dr. Grote further said there had been 300 cases and seven deaths in the previous 24 hours.

October 7, 1918 - Governor Orders Closing of Public Places

"We don't like to refer to it as gossiping. We simply consider it 'sharing our opinions about other peoples' life choices.'"

Nan Phillip, Arab



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October 13, 1918 - Huntsville Left with One Pharmacist and No Physicians

A desperate situation exists in Huntsville growing out of the Spanish influenza epidemic. All druggists, physicians, and prescription clerks, except one, have been stricken with the disease, and a distressing appeal reached Montgomery last night in telegrams for immediate help for the stricken city. (Source: "All But One Pharmacist and All Physicians Stricken with Flu." Birmingham News, 13 October 1918.)

October 15, 1918 - City of Huntsville Curtails Businesses' Hours of Operation

Businesses are ordered to curtail hours of operation as postal service is limited and power company employees out of work due to flu epidemic. (Source: "Huntsville: Business Demoralized, USPS Crippled, and Alabama Power Having Difficulty Finding Employees." Montgomery Advertiser.)

Many residents panicked. Schools, restaurants, theatres, public places closed. City leaders proposed that the Hunts-

ville city limits be closed and guards posted to prevent sick people from coming into town.

Quoting from a news article in Old Huntsville Magazine, reproduced from a Huntsville Times report of that period, "In a related incident, there was a shooting on Monte Sano when a family, fleeing the illness in the city, tried to set up a campsite on private property. Scores of families are reported to be camping on the mountain in the belief that it is a healthier site. Some of the property owners, armed with guns, are said to be patrolling their property, and a sign has been erected warning all people to stay away."

As careful as doctors were in 1918, many of them contracted the Spanish Flu and died from its pneumonia complications. That left the city in dire conditions with a great need and even fewer health professionals, including nurses and assistants, to treat the sick.

It was such a problem that when city leaders successfully attracted new doctors to come to Huntsville to live and practice, the newspaper wrote a

particular column detailing the news.

Two Good New Doctors Locate in Huntsville: Dr. M. M. Duncan, an eminent physician of Birmingham, and his family will move here in a few days to make their home. Dr. Duncan will make his office in the Milligan building over Anderson's Drug Store and at once will step into a splendid practice.

Also, in connection with this good news, it is interesting to state that Dr. John M. Cullom, one of the eminent physicians of Fayetteville, Tennessee, has been induced to come to Huntsville with his family and will also make his offices in the Milligan building. He will move his family here about the first of the year and will occupy the offices formerly used by the



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lamented Dr. W. B. England over Anderson's Drug Store.

The coming of these reputable and well known doctors to Huntsville will be welcome news in the face of the great scarcity of physicians here due to the army draft and the loss of several during the recent influenza epidemic.

Masks, as you will note, were highly recommended in 1919 as they have been recently. It seems strange that even in 2020, there were people of note saying that masks did no good, and that simply is not true. The U.S. doctors knew it a hundred years ago. What could people today think has changed? The one thing stressed more in 2020 was hand washing and sanitizing since so much of the virus was transmitted by direct contact, but certainly through the air as micro-droplets. Trapping much of it from leaving infected people with masks is far more effective than blocking it from being inhaled into healthy people. However, both ways lower the risk of transmitting the virus. It does seem odd that today, there is resistance to children wearing masks in schools. They were required to do so in 1918.

October 20, 1918 - The Grippe and Treatment - Huntsville Times

Coverage in the local Huntsville paper of October continued to run flu articles inside the editions, while continuing war news and impending victory dominated the front page. A report from the October 20 issue, page 5, headlined: "Spanish Influenza - What it is and how it should be treated." The sub-

headline said, "Nothing new. Simply the Grip or la Grippe. Similar to the War Epidemic of 1889-90, only then it came from Russia by way of France. This time by way of Spain." As noted earlier, Spain, neutral in the war, was the only country to report the new outbreak of the Flu, thus given the incorrect label as to where the Flu came from - and it stuck.

Ways to treat the Spanish Flu was no different than any flu treatment of the times. The advice was "Go to Bed and Stay Quiet - Take a Laxative - Eat Plenty of Nourishing Food - Keep up your Strength - Nature is the Only Cure - Always Call A Doctor - No Occasion for Panic." Additional suggestions for "The Grippe" continued.

Later in the long article, it said the reason to go to bed was to prevent spreading the disease to others. Again suggested taking a "Purgative, eat nourishing food and to remain perfectly quiet and don't worry.. Nature herself will throw off the attack if you only keep up your strength... the chief danger is the complications which may arise." The article talked about pneu-

monia or bronchitis, which was the primary diagnosis for cause of death in those times. It advised to stay in bed for two days after the fever had left you, but if you were over 50 or not strong, to stay in bed for four days or more according to the severity of the attack. At the end, it suggests the new treatment, Ben Gay, was an excellent combination of ingredients to rub on the neck and chest for congestion. Such was the medical knowledge of 1918.

Another news report of the problems came from Florence, Alabama. Dr. J.D. Washburn, who served in a medical unit in Alabama at the time: "We worked like dogs from about seven in the morning until the last patient of the day had been checked in or out - usually about 10 o'clock that night. The men died like flies, and several times we ran out of boxes to bury them in and had to put their bodies in cold storage until more boxes were shipped in. It was horrible."

In Florence, Bellamy Planing Mill, later renamed Acme Lumber Co., was running

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“three full shifts a day to build enough coffins for the countless numbers of deceased workers since the lumberyard was located across the river from the camps of the workers building Wilson Dam” according to Auburn University. “The majority of the deceased were Cuban immigrant workers buried in common graves, and most had no known immediate relatives or survivors.”

November 1, 1918 - Lyric Theatre - A Thoroughly Clean House

People were returning to theatres by November and an ad for the Lyric emphasized that it was “thoroughly clean” along with what was playing and the prices “6 and 15 cents.”

December 15, 1918 - Reports of Flu Minimized

By December of 1918, the Flu was not even mentioned in the Sunday, December 15th edition of The Huntsville Daily Times. Christmas ads filled over half of the newspaper. The front page was dominated by the Times report of their annual Christmas party, and the rest contained a lot of short headlined articles about the conclusion of WWI. One was about the German Armistice and its extension to January 17, 1919. Another was about the famine feared in Germany and that Switzerland, acting for the Germans, asked the United States to help.

While there must have still been cases of the Spanish Flu occurring in Huntsville, there was no mention of it in the first six pages of this edition of the local paper. Another factor was that so close to Christmas and all the local businesses placing ads of various sizes in the newspaper, the editorial department likely didn't want to dampen the season's spirits for the readers or the money-generating advertisers.


The Montgomery Advertiser printed an article on December 7 with a report of nine doctors recommending the closing of schools and severely curtailing businesses there. Still, it didn't seem popular with the school board or city leaders. Matt Whitfield, a school board member, said, “There is no use to allow 6,500 school children to run at will about the city in crowds and in flu-infected places when they are being given every possible protection in the way of ventilation and warmth at the schools.”

While cases of the Flu continued well into 1919 in “waves” as it was called, citizens of North Alabama seemed to accept it as old news and it did not appear to dominate newspapers as it did in 2020 and 2021.

Our modern vaccines, approved for children in early November, have contributed to the lowering of concern by today's citizens, as it would appear from reports of the 1918 flu pandemic.

If the flu strain in 1918 had been the more deadly Covid-19, there is no telling what size the catastrophe would have been.

from Early 1918 Newspaper



To Prevent Influenza!

Do not take any person's breath.
 Keep the mouth and teeth clean.
 Avoid those that cough and sneeze.
 Don't visit poorly ventilated places.
 Keep warm, get fresh air and sunshine.
 Don't use common drinking cups, towels, etc.
 Cover your mouth when you cough and sneeze.
 Avoid Worry, Fear and Fatigue.
 Stay at home if you have a cold.
 Walk to your work or office.
 In sick rooms wear a gauze mask like in illustration.



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Tips from Earlene

- To really sharpen your scissors, simply cut a few times through sandpaper. Stick needles through sandpaper to sharpen them as well.

- A good jewelry cleaner you make yourself - mix 1/2 cup ammonia and 1/2 cup water, place in glass container and cover.

- Whole milk can heal a minor burn. Just soak a washcloth in the milk and leave it on for 15 minutes. Do it every 2-6 hours as needed for pain.

- Cranberry juice concentrate, mixed with water, is one of the best things you can do to clear up a urinary tract infection. Drink 16 ounces per day to stave off the problem. As real cranberry juice can be tart, mix it with a little apple juice for good taste.

- If you have a hard mattress and find it uncomfortable but don't want to have to buy a new one, just buy one of those foam egg crate bed covers that go right on top of the mattress. You'll still have the firmness but the softness of the foam cover will astound you.

- Want to remove chewing gum from clothes or hair? Rub

ice over it and it should just roll off.

- Worried about baldness? Mix a jigger of vodka with 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper and rub it on the scalp. The blood supply feeds the hair, the pepper and vodka stimulate the blood supply. If this doesn't work, however, look at the bright side. Bald people don't have dandruff.


- To make a homemade heating pad, fill a tube sock with uncooked rice, knot the top, then microwave on high for a minute at a time til warm enough. This will create a pad that will mold easily around any painful joint and hold its heat without risk of burns.

- For stretch marks after having a baby, after a shower rub sesame oil all over - it helps to get rid of them.

- The yolk of eggs binds pie crusts much better than the whites. Apply to the edges with a brush.

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Backyard Memories

by Lawrence Hillis



I have so many great childhood memories, it is hard to write about only one. So, I will talk about the great times that I had in my grandparents' back yard at 600 Ward Avenue back in the 1950s. This happens to be my backyard now. I bought the house when my grandmother Hattie Baucom died in 1977. She and my grandfather Robert Hurley Warren purchased these two lots in 1919 and moved to a four-room dwelling from downtown Huntsville where the old YMCA building is now.

At the time they rented a house on the 1000 block of Humes Avenue and had one son, Robert Warren. My Mother, Edith Warren was born the next year in our house. My Grandfather died in 1924 and Grandmother married Troy Baucom who added a bedroom and two bathrooms to the house.

My sister Beverly and I lived across the street. As children, we spent a lot of time playing in Papa and Momma's backyard. Papa had a red barn at the back of the yard which also served as a cow barn and chicken coop during the 1920s and 1930s. It had a large sliding door on the front and a window on the back-alley side which was opened as coal was delivered. Due to its age, I had to take it down in 1982 and then built a two-story garage/work shop. Before Papa added the bathrooms to the house, there was an outhouse next to the big Bodock tree. When the tree developed bag worms in



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the 1980s, I asked the horticulturist from the Auburn Co-Op extension to come by and look at it, and he give me a suggestion on how to get rid of the worms. He said its category name is Osage Orange and he said it was one of the largest trees in the city. He measured the circumference of the tree 5 feet from the ground it was over 16 feet around. It has always been a great shade tree. Papa would sit up saw horses under the tree while building things.

His son Buford Baucom owned a juke box machine company and slot machine business and would drop off old slot machines when they were not repairable. Papa would disassemble the machines and use the wood to build cabinets, shelves and tables for people in the neighborhood. Also, he would set up a grill and cook all types of meats for holidays and other special occasions. Throughout the years we had fruit trees and vegetable gardens.

Papa noticed David and Ted London and me playing basketball on a 9' goal in the London's small driveway on the other side of Dement Street. So, he bought two basketball goals and two poles and set them up in his backyard. This gave us a full court which was possibly the only backyard full court in the city at that time. It became a meeting place for kids from the neighborhood as far away as Lincoln Village to play basketball. Several rivalries would develop between my friends at Huntsville Junior High and Lee Junior High.

During the winter, when we would have snow, kids in the neighborhood would meet in the back yard to play football. This is an old southern tradition. We would see football games being played in the snow on TV. Since it does not snow much in Huntsville, whenever it did snow, the first thing that the neighborhood boys would do is play tackle in the snow. The game would usually turn into a snow ball fight. We would then have to go inside to dry off and change into warm clothes.

I think my daughters have a lot of good memories in our back yard. Ever since Lauren and Lindsey were one year old, Karen and I have hosted a large Easter dinner and Easter egg hunt in the back yard with 40

to 50 relatives and friends. We had a trampoline for many years, and it lasted until we were remodeling the house in 2018 when some of the carpenters decided to jump on it and broke it. My first two daughters Lauren and Lindsey were presented their first car in the backyard. My youngest daughter Kala and I played many hours of soccer and softball in the backyard. When my grandchildren Rowan and Emerson visit Huntsville, we play in the back yard. Hopefully they will have many fond memories playing there also.

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“I have a condition that prevents me from dieting. It’s called BFH - Being Freakin’ Hungry!”

Aunty Acid

My Grandfather, Neal Robert French

by Robert B. French, Jr. PC

This is a little story about my grandfather Neal Robert French. A bit of background - my second cousin is William Sibley who writes regularly for Old Huntsville. He had never heard this story about my grandfather and I knew he would enjoy it. I wanted to share it with you as well!

About a month before my grandfather died, we were visiting him and my grandmother. Aunt Eloise and her sons Bill and Tom Hasty were living with them as she was going through a divorce. They were living in the old Gurley school house.

It was a Sunday after church, in late January, and it was raining. We were listening to my grandmother play songs on a quilting loom where she had tied 50-odd randomly-filled milk of magnesia bottles. Using

xylophone mallets, she could play unbelievable songs. She explained that each bottle had a different amount of water making different notes, resulting in the sounds she was able to develop into music.

My aunt came into the room very excited saying, "There is a man out back with a pistol and he said he has come to kill Brother French. Someone needs to go for the sheriff!"

My grandfather, very calmly said, "I'll handle this."

I don't remember where my father was at the time. He had gone somewhere. The women and children all ran to the windows to see what was going to happen. I went to the back-screen door and watched as Grandfather went out in the rain and faced a pointed gun. In no uncertain terms, he instructed the man, "Put that gun down. Go home, or you will catch your death of cold in this weather."

He turned, climbed the steps and came back into the building. The man, standing in the rain, looked at his pistol, put it in his pocket and walked away.

I asked who the man was and Grandfather said, "Around Gurley they call him Torpedo, and he isn't half bright."

My grandfather was almost

right about catching a death of cold. He was in a weakened physical condition and from that visit in the rain, he caught a serious bad cold that killed him when it turned into pneumonia in February.

I told my dad that Grandfather sure was a brave man to face down a gun. He reminded me that his father ran away from home at age 7 and grew up as a cowboy in Texas. "There wasn't much he was afraid of."

Anyway, thanks for the memory. I can still see the loom with the blue bottles, and hear "Nearer My God to Thee," in my mind's eye.

Places that Need to Stay Lost

From 1897 Newspaper

The Scottsboro Citizen says that "Snatch'em" is the name of a business place between Larkin and Princeton. Brother, we can do you better'n that.

We have a business place between Gurley and Maysville called "Who-would-a-thought-that," and another, six miles from Gurley, called "Pulltight"

Old Huntsville Magazine Locations

This is a partial list of locations - all magazines sell for \$1 at honor boxes & machines. They go through checkout at Walmart, Mapco, Dollar General, Walgreens.

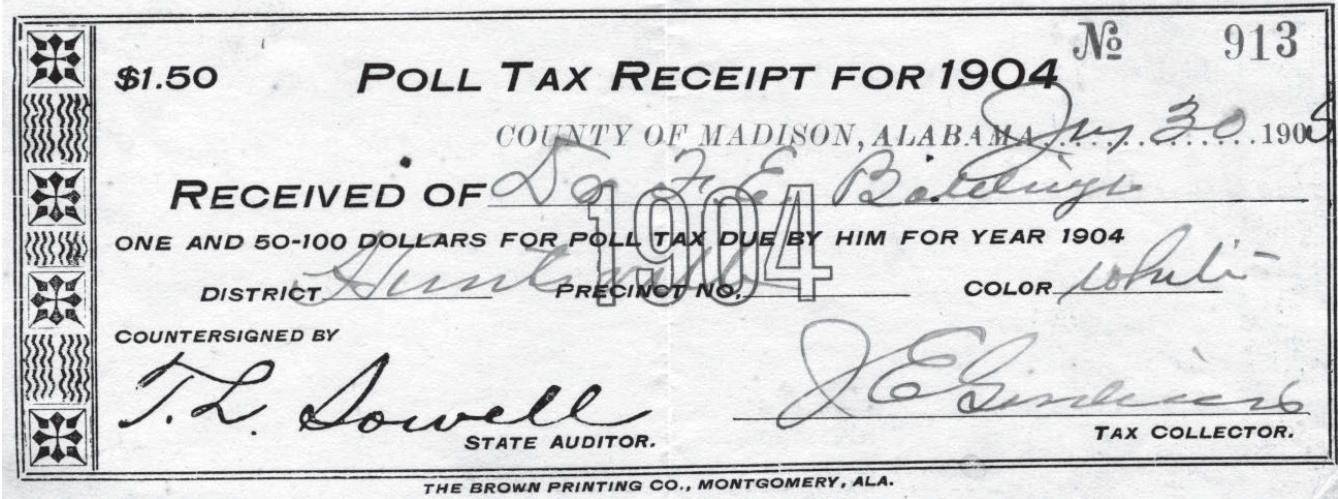
Cities Served: Huntsville, Gurley, New Market, New Hope, Hazel Green, Harvest, Madison, Hampton Cove, Ryland, Meridianville,

All Mapco's, all Walgreens, most Dollar Generals. Walmarts: Drake & Parkway, So. Hobbs & Parkway So., Bailey Cove, University & Explorer, Hazel Green, Winchester Rd.

Restaurants: Rolo's, Old Heidelberg, Po Boys, Stanlieos - (Gov. Drive, Jordan Lane), Big Springs Cafe, Blue Plate/Gov Dr., Atlanta Bread, City Cafe on Drake, Mexican Takeout, Ole Dad's - Hazel Green, Honey's - Fayetteville, Mandarin/Hampton Cove; S Gen/Hampton Cove, Redstone Arsenal - Commissary, CVS Drugs/Cecil Ashburn, Hsv Courthouse-inside, Texaco at Hwy 72 & Nance,

5 Points & downtown - Star Market, Propst Drugs, Sunoco Gas, Harrison Brothers, Lewters, CT Garvins, Texaco, Hsv Library, SGen on Andrew Jackson, Medical Mall/Pkwy side, Ayers Frmsr Mrkt

Misc. - Huntsville Public Library, Packard's Antiques - So Pkwy, Pharmacy First/Madison St., Waters Sunoco, Charity Lane Quick Stop, Redstone Fed Credit Union - 231/431 No., Star Market/Meridianville, Dot's in New Hope, Texaco Gas/Bob Wallace, Exxon/Hampton Cove



HUNTSVILLE IN 1904

by Ann Francis

At a Rotary party some time ago, when you learned I was born and reared in Huntsville, you expressed some interest in any old family papers I might have. Enclosed are receipts in the name of my grandfather, Dr. Felix E. Baldrige, who died during the flu epidemic in World War I.

With his father, Dr. Milton Columbus Baldrige and family, he lived in the house (built in 1825/1835) on the corner of Clinton and Church Street. The property extended to the Huntsville Spring Branch and became known as the Clemens House for a previous owner, Senator Jeremiah Clemens. This house was moved in recent years from downtown to Dallas Avenue.

"OK" Stables

There were few cars in Huntsville in 1904. Horses were boarded. The stable was in the same block as their home.

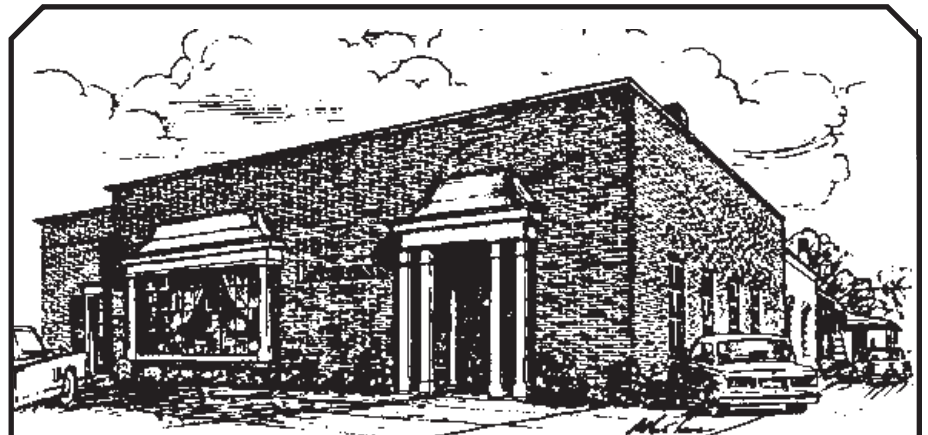
Mrs. Weatherly

Sold food items from their large farm "way out in the country". That area still bears the family name. Delivery of

fresh butter, sausage, beef and lard was convenient, but rabbits, tripe and backbone do not really appeal to me.

Alabama Poll Tax

This was still collected when I registered to vote in 1952. I had to produce a known registered voter to vouch for me. This was a bit inconvenient for the hundreds of people moving to Huntsville in that era from various states who might not have known anyone living here.



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HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Just as we thought the Delta virus was getting behind us, along comes the Omicron strain. Like the common flu, we get shots every year because the effects don't last much past six to nine months, and there are new flu strains each year. Same for the Covid virus. It's going to continue to mutate, and there will be a need to get a new one every year, and if there is a significant breakout, then a booster on top of that. But, since my husband and I have been getting flu shots every September for over twenty years, it won't make a big difference.

Masks do help. They help more from a sick person trapping infection in their masks than masks do, keeping the virus away from you, but it still helps. That's why everyone should wear a mask inside in gatherings and shopping, and outside as well if in a crowd. For the past year, it's been tragic reading of people's dying last words, "I sure wish I'd gotten the shots."

Please, get your shots and boosters. Do your part. Life is what you make it, now do your part and protect others and yourself.

It's a new and better year. It's 2022, and I want to tell you a story that I hope will help with your resolutions. For some of you, I will be preaching to the choir and then some. We lost a 24-year-

old beautiful girl and a member of our extended family during the holidays. The drunk driver was going over a hundred miles an hour on the wrong side of the 4-lane I565 divided highway hitting two cars. The wreck left two dead and sent five to the hospital. The driver wasn't hurt badly and went home after a couple of days. The collision happened on Chapman Mountain, east of the Oakwood road on-ramp going out of town.

Please don't let your friends or family members drive drunk. So many people are terribly sad and hurting today and for many years to come because of this young man's stupid mistake to drink and then drive. How many of you have made New Year's resolutions? How many of you plan to keep them? Make them reasonable and measurable, and don't miss a day if it's a daily plan, like how much you eat. Two of the best resolutions for you are losing weight and exercising. Set a small walking goal of only five minutes EVERY DAY. The routine is what's essential, not how far you go. Go longer, whatever you feel like, on lovely days, but walk every day. If you blow the diet for a single meal, don't stop for a week or two, or completely. Get right back on healthy eating the very next meal – same principles for all the other resolutions.

Guess I'd better just be reasonable and start off slow and figure out what I can keep. Since I have fallen really hard in the past forty-eight hours, I can attest that the older one gets, the harder one falls, so folks slow down and watch where you are going. Seniors, I'm one of you, and we all know what I'm talking about. So watch where you are walking and don't be in a hurry.

Have a safe and healthy New Year, bring joy to all you come in contact with this year. Write someone who doesn't do email. Just a smile and hello can make someone's day.

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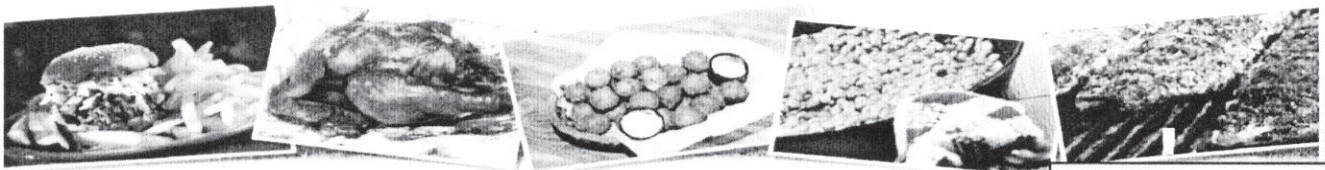
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An Amazing Man

by Malcolm Miller



Sitting high on a shelf among the tonics and hair dressings in Jerry and Bill's Barber Shop on Governors Drive is a large painting of three clowns. At the bottom of the painting are the names of the men depicted as the three clowns. There is Jerry Brazier and Bill Tipton, the shop owners, and the other clown bears my name, Malcolm Miller. This painting has been on this wall for twenty-something years and it stands there as a reminder of the artist that did this handiwork. This multitalented man was none other than my friend, the late Dick Sasnett, one of the most controversial and interesting people I have ever known.

Just about every morning a group of men gathered at the Big Spring Cafe on Governors Drive and occupied the only table in the place. The regulars were Avery Lee "Abe" Daniel, Jerry Brazier, Louis Robinet, Ray Owens, Dick Sasnett and yours truly.

Every morning we covered every subject from world peace to politics to religion and usually the center of all the controversy was Dick Sasnett. He loved a good argument and he and I usually disagreed on almost every thing. In fact a few times he made me so mad that I would get up and leave. When this happened he would always make up by bringing me a gift of some kind to the barber shop. You just couldn't stay mad at him.

Dick passed away in nineteen eighty nine at the age of 81 and it really hurt me. Dick was Irish to the bone and loved to sing "Danny Boy" in that high tenor voice of his and before he passed away he requested that I play "Danny Boy" on the harmonica at his funeral.

I stood out front and played "Danny Boy" on the harmonica while Susan, his step daughter, and Tony Myers, a friend that sang with him when he was living, sang behind the curtain.

Dick also wrote his own eulogy and had our friend Ray Owen read it. Dick told so



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Maxine

many stories of things that he had done in his life time that I used to laugh at him and tell him that if he did all the things that he claimed he did he would be over three hundred years old.

He said he was once a world putt-putt champion and a golden gloves boxing champion. He painted signs for Ringling Brother's circus and held over three hundred jobs in his lifetime. I only wish Dick were alive today because I owe him an apology, You see a few weeks back I was talking to my next door neighbor Wayne Smith and he mentioned Dick Sasnett.

I was totally shocked. I said did you know Dick and he told me that Dick was his wife Susan's stepfather and furthermore he confirmed that all those tales that Dick had told me over the years were true. He said that he and Dick were going to play a game of putt-putt and Dick gave him ten points and Wayne being pretty good at the game took him up on the bet. He said that Dick soundly defeated him using the neck of a Dr. Pepper bottle for a putter.

Susan told me that Dick had really lived a rough life growing up, having to quit school in the first grade and go to work picking cotton to help the family of eight children survive after his Mother left them and their father. The eight children all shared a bed with Dick in the middle, making it very crowded, but cozy.

Susan also told me that Dick spent some time as a hobo riding the rails. To be perfectly honest Dick still looked like a hobo with his long hair and scruffy beard, but he was far from it. When the movie "The Ravensers" was filmed in Huntsville Dick had a part as a cave man. Dick and his wife Marge had a very successful sign painting business when he passed away. Marge went to work with Dick in the sign painting business and Dick taught her how to paint signs and together they operated a very successful business. Marge also played on the putt-putt circuit with him.

The old saying "you can't judge a book by its cover" was

"I told my wife the truth. I told her I was seeing a therapist. Then she told me the truth: she's seeing a therapist, two plumbers and a bartender."

Rodney Dangerfield

certainly proven true by my friend Dick Sasnett. He looked like a hobo, however inside was a heart of gold and more talent than I ever imagined. Knowing Dick enriched my life.

I will always remember the talented, controversial, interesting, successful, man, husband, father and business owner.

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A SURPRISE FOR MOM

by Elizabeth Wharry



My mother's birthday was in early January. Once in a while, she would sigh and say how nice it would be to have a birthday party. Christmas and New Year's day usually made sure we were all shopped and partied out.

One year, I got hold of my mom's friends, my siblings and my friends that I grew up with. Everyone was sworn to secrecy. I invited my parents over for cake and conversation. Both were a bit puzzled at the odd time of day.

They showed up about an hour after everyone had gathered. SURPRISE!!! Mom got a huge grin on her face. The presence of her friends and family was gift enough for her. It was her 75th birthday. We toasted her with sparkling apple cider instead of champagne.

Her cake was a half sheet cake; half vanilla, half chocolate. The frosting was a traditional butter cream white frosting. The message read "Happy birthday to a wonderful woman, wife, mother, grandmother and friend".

At that time, my husband and I lived in a starter home in Madison, Ohio. I'm not quite sure how we accommodated everyone. If I remember correctly, we had about 20 people!

A few months later, my folks moved to St. Augustine, Florida. About a year after that, my mother passed away rather unexpectedly. I was so glad that I was able to give her the party she always wanted.

Memory eternal, mom.

For some reason, the full moon has a direct effect on diabetics. Check your calendar and when you see that there is to be a full moon, be EXTRA careful and conscientious with your diet and medication during this time.



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A Genealogical Nightmare

1874 newspaper

One of the most sensational cases ever to appear before our court system is due to go to trial next week in Judge Ramsay's court.

Mr. Allan Dement, a 72 year old resident of this city, is charged with the crime of marrying his granddaughter. According to reports, Mr. Dement returned from the war to find his home burned and family scattered to the four winds. Finally after much difficulty he was able to locate his granddaughter, who was at the time living in Jackson all alone, but for her four children. She too had become separated from her family.

The couple soon set up house together and began living a life as man and wife along with her children who were his great grandchildren but were now his stepchildren, making them their mother's uncles by marriage.

After the granddaughter/wife sensed signs of approaching motherhood, a quick visit before a justice of the peace was arranged. When the child was born it became the mother's son/great uncle, the father's son/great grandson and the half brother and great great uncle of the other children.

Soon, however, her eldest son (the great grandson of its stepfather and the great nephew of his half brother) began a correspondence with his aunt who was also Dement's granddaughter. The aunt/granddaughter, upon hearing the news immediately notified her great uncle who was also Dement's brother, so he paid a personal visit to his great nephew who was his brother's stepson. The great nephew/stepson and brother/great uncle then notified the judge (no kin) who issued a writ for the arrest of the grandfather/husband and granddaughter/wife.

The child has been placed in care of its half brother who is also his nephew and his mother's uncle by marriage.

The trial is sure to attract a lot of near-by relatives.

"I am enclosing two tickets to the first night of my new play; bring a friend, if you have one."

George Bernard Shaw to Winston Churchill

"Cannot possibly attend first night, will attend second... if there is one."

Winston Churchill, in response



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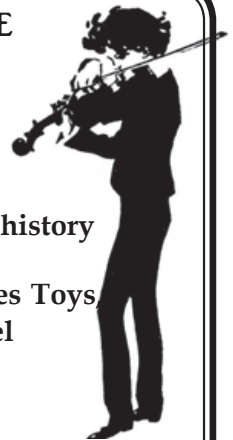
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Heard On the Street

by *Cathey Carney*



Mary Lanier was our winner of the hidden whiskey bottle that I put on page 35, top left picture. It's on the far left bottom of the picture, in front of the lady's arm. Do you see it? I had alot fewer calls this month because I just out-did myself with my hiding ability. But Mary was first to call and she spotted it after hours of searching with her lighted magnifying glass. She is retired, loves to spend time with her 9 grandchildren and one great grandson who lives in Memphis and is 8 years old. Congratulations to you Mary - you get a free \$40 year of Old Huntsville!

Then the Photo of the Month was that of M.D. Smith IV. We had lots of calls on that one but most people called thinking it was Robert Reeves! Definitely M.D., though, of Channel 31 and

WAAY-TV fame. The first caller for that was Bill Loveday of Estill Fork, Al. He works at Valhalla Funeral Home and remembers alot of the people and places featured in each issue of Old Huntsville.

I know Huntsville and our area has had its share of damaging tornadoes, some that devastated our area and caused death. Watching the events unfold with the December 10th tornadoes that hit Kentucky and Illinois and 4 other states was just heartbreaking. In Mayfield, KY where they had just renovated their historic downtown and was covered in Christmas lights, then to have everything gone the next day. Just incomprehensible. Right now they're asking for blood donations and monetary donations - please consider helping them. I know Huntsville Utilities sent crews there to help, like they do with every weather disaster.

Susie Mae Jennings spent over forty years working in the hospitality and caregiving industries. She enjoyed working in the Huntsville Hospital cafeteria, the Russell Erskine Hotel in downtown Huntsville and as a home health companion for the elderly. In her retirement years, she worked at Costco giving out snacks and meeting people.

An avid line dancer in her day, Sue could also be found taking long walks in her neighborhood, being a companion to those who needed company. She stayed busy all the time. Sue passed away on

Nov. 4th at the age of 91.

She is survived by Terri Lee (daughter), Randy Lee (son-in-law), Greg Jennings (son), Linda Joiner (daughter-in-law), Jessica Carlton (granddaughter), Wendy Bennett (granddaughter), Beth Joiner (granddaughter), as well as loving great grandchildren whom she cherished. She will be so missed.

Happy 70th birthday to our friend Lee Lanier of Navarre, FL. You look like you're 50 not 70! Sending love to you.

Even though we've had a pretty mild fall/winter, ice is due to come. I put this tip in the magazine each year but generally shoes and boots will NOT do well if you're walking on ice. If you HAVE to go up steps or walk on any icy area, do this. Pull a pair of heavy socks or legwarmers OVER the tops of your shoes, to the heel. So the whole bottom will be covered in sock. When I go up icy steps this has saved me every time and I can't believe there isn't something out there just marketed for knit material over shoes. Remember you heard it here first.

Have you ever wanted to

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 little guy went on to become one of the most generous and active proponents for the underprivileged and homeless of our city, through his mission.



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search old, archived back issues of "Old Huntsville" magazine? Well thanks to **Deane Dayton**, now you can. He has been working on digitizing old copies of the magazine for the past 4 years and it is complete. There is information on this in another area of this issue but the link to go to is Deane's site: www.huntsvillehistorycollection.org. You'll find tons of Huntsville history out there, including issues of Old Huntsville. Since we have so many subscribers and readers who buy the issues monthly, the past year to present issue will NOT be available but all others will be. Check it out!

This is a tip I got from **Judy Smith**. You never know what can happen while you're out driving and in case you are involved in an accident the first responders will try to find out who you are. I know there are apps on our phones but the easiest might be just to put a piece of paper in your wallet with contact information for family or friends. Oftentimes police tell us that if this information is not immediately available it could take hours to be able to call family in case of a bad accident. It's something you hope will never be used but very helpful if needed.

Many of you are interested in history and one of the best and most entertaining sites I've found is **Nashville Retrospect**. It offers a monthly newspaper online devoted to stories about the city's past. You'll see old maps out there too. The articles are fascinating and come from old newspaper stories. Editor and host **Allen Forkum** does podcasts on the site and you will love it - take a look. The site to Google is www.nashvilleretrospect.com - free history to your email!

One of my pet peeves is a towel that doesn't dry me off quickly, specially in the winter. Do this - put a load of towels into your wash, regular soap but NO fabric softener. That actually repels water and has an oil base. Just add a cup of white vinegar with your soap and wash/dry as normal. I was amazed at the difference - the towels became so absorbent and just dried me off in no time!

Our favorite lady at Truist Bank on Church Street (used to be BB&T) **Ianthia Bridges** is such a kid, she is turning 52 on Jan. 10th. Must be nice to still be a youngster! Happy Birthday to you

Ianthia. Also **Susan Coulter** who works there too and is super-sweet wants to wish her daughter **Brie Clark** a happy birthday on Jan. 16th!

In memory of loved ones we have lost this past year, I have hidden a **tiny heart** somewhere in this issue.

Even though it's January, there are lots of events that are going on you might find interesting. At the Von Braun Center, 700 Monroe Street, some of the events are: "Steel Magnolias", Saturday Jan 22 from 2-4 pm; and "Cats" musical, Sun 1-5 pm Jan. 30th.

On Jan. 8 the 2022 Fashion Industry Conference will be held at Jaguar of Huntsville, 3800 University Dr. from 9:30 am - 2 pm Saturday.

Stovehouse on Governors Drive hosts "Monday Movies at Stovehouse" on the Leisure Lawn big screen (not held if rainy) every Monday from 1-4pm, 3414 Governors Dr. SW

The Oak Ridge Boys will perform at the Mark C. Smith Concert Hall on Jan. 27, Thursday from 7:30-11:30 pm.

The Wine Cellar at 2304 Whitesburg Dr. will host "Charcuterie Class & Wine Pairing" Jan 8, Saturday at 5 pm.

Be sure to Google Lowe Mill Entertainment Center, Botanical Gardens, Huntsville Museum of Art, as well as many downtown restaurants and bars. Lots to do in Huntsville any time of year.

Just drove by Huntsville Middle School on California and Bluefield and the young lady working as school crossing guard was doing such a great job stopping the cars at a very busy time, and getting the kids across the street safely. So thank you to all **school crossing guards** for a dangerous job that takes lots of work!

Happy New Year to all of us, we certainly need it.



Cynthia Tippet Masucci

We had to say good-bye to a beautiful young Mom, daughter, sister and friend. Cynthia was only 54 years old when she passed away on November 14, 2021. She had the ability to make you feel happy just being around her. She didn't like spare time and loved to stay creative and busy.

Cynthia managed activities at the Historic Lowry House, was Treasurer of the City of Huntsville Beautification Board, member of the Huntsville Symphony Guild, taught Sunday school at First United Methodist Church and much more. Her family was everything to her.

Many knew Cynthia through all her activities and remember her energy, positive outlook and love for her family and friends. Her passing has left a void in the lives of many.

Cynthia's mom and dad are Jane & Louie Tippet, and her daughter Celia were all with her, holding her close.

Survivors include daughter, Celia Wettstein (Jake); her parents, Louie and Jane Tippet; Celia's father, Robbie Masucci; sisters, Angela Malone (Richie), and Pamela Henderson; nephews, William Henderson (Jacy), Nathan Henderson, Bret Malone, Drew Malone (Nicholle), Brock Malone; nieces, Mary Katherine Bracken, Melissa Bracken; great-niece, Nellie Henderson; and special friend, Steve Elrod.



Eating Southern Style

Marinated Vegetables

- Broccoli
- Cauliflower
- Squash
- White mushrooms
- Carrots
- Red and Yellow Peppers

1 large bottle Kraft Zesty Italian dressing

In a large bowl, break up the washed vegetables into bite-sized pieces. Pour the whole bottle of dressing over the vegetables and mix well. Seal and let set overnight in fridge, turning at least once. Drain and serve with toothpicks.

Savory Ranch Mix

- Pretzels
- Pecans
- Cheerios
- Rice Chex
- Corn Chex
- Cheese-its

1 envelope Hidden Valley Ranch dressing mix (dry)

1/2 bottle Orville R.'s popcorn buttery oil

In a large bowl, mix about two cups each of the cereals, pretzels,

Cheese-its and nuts. Pour the 1/2 bottle of oil over the mixture and stir well. Sprinkle half the dressing mix (dry) over the mixture and stir well. Add the remaining mix and toss well. Serve immediately or store in Ziploc freezer bags.

Baked Cheesy Bites

- 2 sticks butter
- 2 c. self-rising flour
- 2 c. grated sharp Cheddar cheese
- 2 c. Rice Krispies
- 1 t. cayenne pepper
- 1/2 t. garlic powder

Mix all ingredients together well, batter will be very stiff. Roll the mixture into small balls - about the size of a whole pecan - and flatten gently. Bake on greased cookie sheets at 300 degrees for 30 minutes or so. These are good warm but also freeze very well.

Deviled Mushrooms

- 2 lb. mushroom caps (no stem)
- 8 oz. pkg. cream cheese
- 6-1/2 oz. can deviled ham
- 2 t. garlic powder

Mix the cream cheese, ham

and garlic powder. Grease a casserole dish with butter and place mushroom caps in. Spoon the cheese mixture into the caps and bake at 350 degrees for 20-30 minutes.

Rolled Tortilla Bites

- 8 oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened
- 4 oz. can chopped green chilies, drained
- 4 oz jar chopped pimento, drained
- 1/2 c. chopped ripe olives
- 10 6-inch flour tortillas
- Salsa

In a small bowl combine the first four ingredients and mix well. Spread a heaping tablespoon on each tortilla and roll it up. Place, seam side down, on a plate. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours. Cut each roll into 6 1-inch pieces and serve with salsa and toothpicks.

Mini Cheesecakes

- 3 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened
- 5 eggs
- 1 c. sugar

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2 t. vanilla

Mix the above ingredients til smooth and pour into foil cupcake liners that have been placed in the cupcake tins. Fill the liners 3/4 full and bake at 325 degrees for 25 minutes.

Cheesecake topping:

1 8-oz. carton sour cream
1/4 c. sugar
1 t. vanilla
Marachino cherries

Mix together and put 1 teaspoon of the mixture on each cupcake while hot and put back in oven for 3-5 minutes. Top each with maraschino cherry half.

Barb's Hot Shrimp Dip

1 large onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, crushed
3 banana peppers, chopped
2 jalapeno peppers, chopped
2 tomatoes, chopped
2 lbs. cream cheese, cubed
1/2 lb. shrimp, cooked and cut small

Salt and pepper to taste

In a large crock or stew pot, put the vegetables. Add the cheese and slowly heat til the cheese is melted, mix well. Let simmer for a few minutes, then add the shrimp at the last minute. Stir well and serve with hot crispy tortilla chips. Delicious!

Artichoke Dip

1 c. mayonnaise
1 can artichoke hearts, drained and chopped

12 oz. skim milk mozzarella cheese, grated
1 c. Parmesan cheese, grated
Triscuits

Mix all except crackers and pour in a baking/serving dish. Bake at 325 degrees for 25 minutes. Serve hot with Triscuits.

Cucumber Sauce

2 medium cucumbers
1 t. horseradish
1/2 t. salt
1/2 c. sour cream
1 c. mayonnaise
2 t. minced onion
Dash cayenne pepper

Peel cucumbers, cut in half, remove seeds, chop or grate. Mix with remaining ingredients, adding cream last. Keep refrigerated in a covered jar. This is delicious on any seafood or meat.

Lemon Kiss Pie

4 egg yolks
1/2 c. sugar
3 T. lemon juice
1/8 t. salt
1 c. heavy cream, whipped

Cook first 4 ingredients in double boiler til thick. When slightly cool, fold cream whipped into the mixture. Pour into prepared shell and top with whipped cream.

Fried Fresh Corn

Place about 4 tablespoons butter in a large frying pan and let

melt. Pour fresh sliced corn over the butter and let cook over low heat about 30 minutes. When ready to serve, use a metal spatula to flip the corn onto a plate, with brown, crusty side facing up. Season with salt and pepper and enjoy!

Yum Yums

1/2 lb. melted butter
1 box light brown sugar
1 c. white sugar
4 egg yolks
2 c. flour
2 t. baking powder
1/2 t. salt
1 c. chopped pecans
4 beaten egg whites

Mix the butter, sugars and egg yolks together. In a separate bowl mix the flour, baking powder and salt. Add the liquid ingredients to the flour mixture. Add the pecans and fold in the beaten egg whites.

Cook in greased and floured 9x13 pan, spreading thin, for about 20 minutes at 350 degrees. Cut in squares while warm, and sprinkle with powdered sugar.

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My Grandson, Kyle Wright

by Bill Wright



When my grandson Kyle was eight years old, he told me he wanted someday to play for the Atlanta Braves, "if they would have him." This statement was not unusual for an eight year-old boy to make because so many at that age desire to become a professional athlete. However, with Kyle, I knew it could be possible because he had shown exceptional athletic talent since he was five years old. At a young age he would excel in other sports like football, basketball and soccer, but baseball was his favorite sport. He was always fully supported by his Dad and Mom - Roger and Belinda - and brothers Mitchell and Trey.

As Kyle grew older, he excelled at all levels of baseball which included Little League, Travel Baseball, Middle School Baseball and High School baseball. While playing High School Baseball for his father at Buckhorn High School he would earn "All- State" honors twice. I noticed he always pitched best when the situation was intense. The more nervous I became watching a game, the better he pitched. He thrived on pitching out of tough situations.

During high school playing days he was offered baseball scholarships from many colleges. He signed with Vanderbilt University, perhaps the most elite college baseball program in America. However, his dream to play professional baseball continued although he was committed to play three years for Vanderbilt. During his three years at Vanderbilt, he would be selected All Southeastern Conference, All America and after his sophomore year named to the prestigious Team USA. He would represent USA pitching in Japan, Taiwan and Cuba.

In June, 2017 the annual professional baseball draft was held and the Atlanta Braves would have the fifth selection. Kyle was hoping he would not be selected by any of the first four selecting teams. He was not selected by any of the first four teams and on the fifth selection the Atlanta Braves announced they were selecting Kyle from Vanderbilt University and Huntsville, Alabama. A childhood dream was

"Now that I've finally gotten it all together, I forgot where I put it."
Janet Brinkerhff, Huntsville



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beginning to become a reality. Kyle would move thru the Minor Baseball Leagues with much success. However, when the Braves gave him brief opportunities with the Braves Major League Team, he had mixed results. The players were older, more talented and experienced. Perhaps he was being rushed thru the system too fast.

Therefore, in year 2021 the Braves management decided to keep him in their AAA affiliated team, the Gwinnett Stripers, for further development. At season's end Kyle was regarded by many as the best Pitcher in the AAA League. Kyle was now hopeful he would be added to the Braves roster as they prepared for the playoffs: first playing the Milwaukee Brewers and later the Los Angeles Dodgers. He was not added to the roster as the Braves defeated both Milwaukee and Los Angeles. The Atlanta Braves would now play the Houston Astros in the Baseball World Series.

Kyle had become discouraged. He had not been selected to play for the Braves in the playoffs. Chances to be added to the Braves roster for the World Series were not looking good. Dansby Swanson, shortstop for the Braves and a former Vanderbilt team mate of Kyle's met with the Braves' Team Manager and General Manager and encouraged them to add Kyle to the Braves World Series roster of 26 players. Dansby told them he has seen what Kyle had done pitching at Vanderbilt and he could do the same for the Braves in the World Series.

The Braves management decided to add Kyle to the 26-player roster for the World Series. This decision possibly changed the outcome of the 2021 Baseball World Series. Kyle became the only player from the State of Alabama to play in the 2021 World Series. He would become an excellent representative for both the City of Huntsville and the State of Alabama.

Kyle would pitch the eighth inning of the second World Series game. He threw

12 pitches and struck out all 3 Astro batters he faced. In the fourth game of the World Series, he replaced the Braves starting pitcher in the first inning with the bases loaded. He minimized the damage and would pitch five innings. The Braves would win this game 3-2 in late innings of the game. The Braves Manager would later say, "Kyle won this game for us."

The fourth game of the World Series was the pivotal game of the 2021 World Series. It was extremely important for either team to win this game. Had the Braves lost this game they would have to return to play and win two games in Houston, Texas, no easy task. His outstanding performance in this game was watched by his parents, other relatives and friends. In post-game interviews with the news media, Kyle took no credit for his performance, but instead complimented the effort of his Atlanta Braves' team mates. Kyle's childhood dream of someday playing and having success for the Atlanta Braves had come true.

On November 2, 2021 Kyle Hardy Wright earned a Baseball World Series Ring as a member of the Atlanta Braves. On November 13, 2021 he received another ring as he and lovely Shelby Nicole Ballentine of Huntsville, Alabama exchanged marital vows.

"Last week I went to see my psychiatrist and told him I keep thinking I'm a dog. He told me to get off his couch."

Rodney Dangerfield



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GOING TO TOWN: MEMORIES OF MRS. LOLA HANEY



Julia Haney. Mrs. Haney's great, great granddaughter, recorded these remembrances in 1995.

I was born in 1898, in a two-room log cabin near Paint Rock. My Daddy grew cotton and tobacco. One of my earliest memories is my Mother carrying me to the fields and placing me on a blanket in the shade of a tree while she helped Daddy in the fields.

By the time I was 6 or 7 years old, I had to help in the fields, too. Daddy made me a cotton picking sack out of old pillow cases and I helped pick cotton. My other job was fetching water for the field hands. My cousin and I were both expected to pick a certain amount of cotton each day. One day, realizing we didn't have enough, we decided to put some heavy rocks in our bags to make them weigh more.

When Daddy got home from the gin he took a belt to both of us. We learned later that the rocks had tore the gin up.

Daddy also raised honey bees. After he robbed the hives every fall he would take the honey to Huntsville where he would trade it with Mr. Harrison (Harrison Brothers Hardware). We

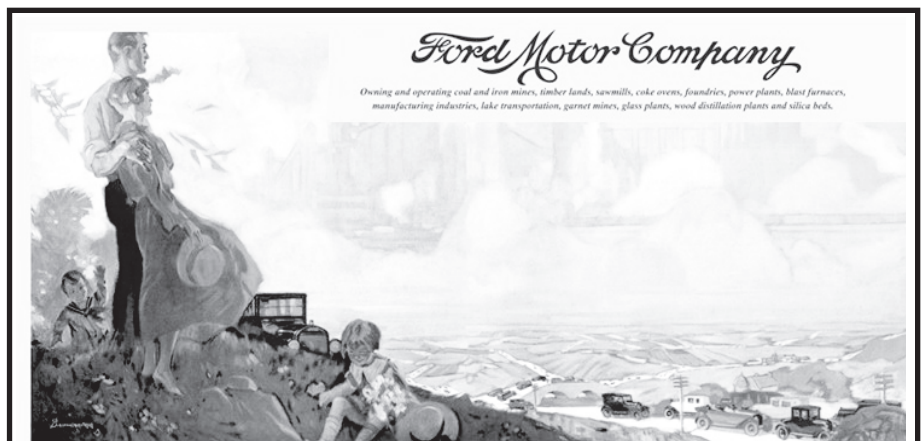
also dug ginseng to trade in town.

Going to town was always a big event for us. The night before Daddy would load the wagon with crock jars full of honey packed with straw so they wouldn't break. The next morning we would get up before daylight, and after Daddy had hitched the wagon up, we would start for town. Mother always placed a quilt behind the wagon seat and I would curl up back there listening to all the honey jars rattle.

About lunch time we would stop at a creek to eat

our biscuits Mother had prepared the night before. Sometimes there would be other families stopped there and it was always a good time to visit with them. There was a wooden box nailed to a tree next to the creek where people would leave messages for other people. Lots of time people would leave a note asking you to pick up something in town.

Late in the afternoon we would get to Huntsville Mountain (Chapman Mountain). The road going up the mountain was washed out most of the lime and very steep. There was a double-hitch station at the foot of the mountain where people could rent another set of



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The Ford Motor Company views its situation today less with pride in great achievement than with sincere and sober realization of new and larger opportunities for service to mankind.

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mules to help pull their wagons up the mountain. Our wagon wasn't that heavy and we always made it up with our own mules.

Our first stop in town was at the Big Spring. All the people from out in the county camped out there when they went to town. Daddy had a piece of canvas he would make a tent out of, and that's where we spent the night. It was always great fun with all the campfires and everyone visiting back and forth.

One night it came up a terrible storm and Daddy took me and Mother to the hotel to spend the night. He had to go back and stay with the wagon to make sure the honey wasn't stolen. Once someone stole a dog from someone camped next to us and there was almost a shooting before it got resolved.

The next morning we would hitch the wagon and take the honey up to Harrison's (Harrison Brothers). Daddy and the man who had the store would always argue and shout for what seemed like hours and finally they would make a deal. We got paid in half cash and half trade out. Next we would look up a man by the name of Foster, who always bought our ginseng. He didn't have a store or an office, but was always hanging around the Courthouse Square. He would look at it real carefully and if he liked it, we would go to another place where they would weigh it. I think we got paid by the ounce and it was always in cash money. While Daddy got supplies from Mr. Harrison, Mother and I would go shopping at the other stores. I still remember the first store-bought dress I ever had. Before that they were always made from flour sacks.

When we got done we would meet Daddy in the Courthouse yard. He had already taken the wagon and mules back to the Big Spring and he would always spend the rest of the day talking to the other men who

were also waiting for their families to finish shopping. I never knew for sure but I always suspected the men were drinking whiskey.

Someone later told me they had deer in the Courthouse yard back then but I don't remember it. The only thing I remember about any animals there was stepping in mule droppings and Mother washing my shoes under the pump. There were lots of pigeons, too. I remember you could throw a piece of bread on the ground and hundreds of pigeons would fight over it.

Once Daddy took us to a hotel for dinner and we had oysters. Daddy liked them but Mother and I got sick. A large piece of peach cobbler made me feel much better, though. Most times, however, we just ate at the Spring, whatever Mother cooked.

The next morning, before the sun came up, we would start for home. On the way we always stopped at the creek again and had crackers and cheese that Mother had purchased in town for lunch. Going to town was fun but after being gone for three days, it was always good to be back home.

It's hard to believe, but now you can make the same trip in a couple of hours.

"Men never like to admit to any imperfection. My husband forgot the code to turn off our home alarm. When the police came, he wouldn't admit he'd forgotten the code, he just turned himself in."

Rita Rudner



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OSCAR LLERENA, WITH LOVE TO THE HUNTSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 1966

"I'm in no rush to fall in love. I'm finding fourth grade hard enough."

Robbie Johnson, Madison

Sledding in the Fifties

by Bill Alkire



The weather was perfect for sledding. We had been recipients of a decent snow fall last night and there was to be a full moon. The talk was about getting a group together for a night sledding party. The sled trail was in great shape, and fast.

The Jones family were at the top of my list of decent people. They had an extremely cute 12-year-old tomboy daughter, whom I knew would like to sled. I felt I had gained their confidence and trust and they knew I would take care of her. I was concerned about that trust. I asked Ms. Jones if Sue could participate if I promised to take care of her and not let her suffer any injury in any way. Ms. Jones indicated it was okay but be sure to bring Sue home if she began to get too cold.

The snow last night had made the sled trail quite fast. The trail we sledded was normally a wide path that ran parallel with a rocky back road - however in winter no one used this road because it became treacherously slick and being very steep made it even more dangerous. One absolutely could not drive on this road-

way after a hard rain or snow. However, there was a good path to walk to the top of the hill along the sledding trail.

The neighborhood kids had planned to meet at dark that evening for the sledding activity. There were town streetlights that lined the sled trail that made for great night sledding. After numerous trips, the trail began to really get fast and slick.

Everyone had made at least four runs and it was exciting. I indicated to Sue that we would make one last run - I had promised her mom that I would get her home if it began to get colder and chilly air was beginning to blow. We started the run. Sue's sled was in front of mine. She was sitting on her sled, as well as I and others were, in lieu of being in the prone position. The trail had gotten too slick to lie down.

She and I waited until those sled riders in front of us had gotten enough of a lead. We were off. Like I said, the trail was fast. Sue's sled must have hit a rock - she and her sled skewed a little left. She lost control because of the fast track. She and her sled headed toward a retaining wall drop-off. She disappeared over the wall. I immediately rolled off my sled and began sliding toward the retaining wall. My body stopped short of the wall.

I jumped to my feet to check out the situation and jumped from the wall. Oh No! Sue had landed headfirst into the ground and was bleeding from her mouth and nose. She was crying and screaming. She was scared and hurting. I had failed to take care of her! I ran to help her - someone had some tissues. I tried to stop the bleeding -I felt so helpless!

I gathered Sue and her sled together. We started to her house. A thousand excuses ran rapidly through my brain...it was useless...I had failed the Jones big time. Sue's dad met us at the door.

I attempted to make excuses and to tell him I was sorry, Mr. Jones stopped me...he was okay with everything. "It was an accident, relax she will be okay. Did you have an enjoyable time?" he asked Sue. Sue had quit crying as her mom was checking out the damage. Sue's parents made light of the situation.

Sue's lip was a little swollen but was better in just a couple of days. I was upset at myself. I kissed her on the cheek...to make her feel better. I felt responsible for Sue and did not want to see her hurt. I had failed the Jones' trust. Sue healed quickly and the Jones' did not blame me like I feared they would.

We did not sled ride at night anymore that winter, lack of adequate snowfall. The sled trail got too slick and more dangerous as the night got colder.

This happened a long time ago - however this situation was traumatic to me at the time. There are events that stick with you. Forever.

"I had plenty of pimples as a kid. One day I fell asleep at the library. When I woke up, a blind man was reading my face."

Rodney Dangerfield

CIVIL WAR SHELL CAUSES EXCITEMENT IN NEW HOPE

From 1891 Newspaper

From a very reliable source, a Mercury reporter was informed that on last Saturday at a point in the vicinity of New Hope, but on the Marshall County side of the river, an explosion occurred that has recalled the war. It nearly scared the life out of an honest old gent.

It seems that the old man was burning logs for the purpose of clearing up and he had set fire to a heap which ignited a large dead tree. Suddenly a most terrific explosion occurred, one that was heard for miles, and the old tree was slivered and scattered to the winds. The man, who was a hundred yards distant, took his departure hastily without troubling himself with an investigation.

A party who finally visited the spot where the tree once stood and made an investigation, found from the surroundings every evidence that the explosion was that of a bombshell that had been imbedded in the tree during the war.

It is known that there was a good deal of firing from cannon loaded with shell at this point during the war. A point that commanded the river.

The circumstances can admit of two theories, one that the shell became im-

bedded in the tree by being fired from a cannon and failed to explode.

The other theory is that it had been left in the hollow, if there was any in the tree, as a sort of keepsake, hoping at some future day that it would get in its work. The first theory, however, is the most probable. The report was heard far into Madison County and occasioned considerable wonder.

It is said the old man will burn no more brush in that neighborhood.

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UNDERSTANDING PAST EVENTS

by Clarence Potter



As a very young child I truly loved listening to my elders describing past events. True events that they had experienced. The more details, the more engrossed in their story I became. A little later I added to my enjoyment of tales of olden days with western and pioneering movies. No, not the gun fights, nor the slaughter of native Americans. Not even the staged events such as rodeo's, card games or even horse racing. More of their way of living. Details of harnesses on the horses as they plowed. How large the fields the pioneers could manage to cultivate. The way they laid out the farms, barns and what trees they cut. Why they cleared the areas they cleared.

Not only those recent events but also Roman times. Times when Jesus walked among men. Not only the religious aspect. The why's, when's and reasons for their actions. The curiosity about the knights Templar lead me to join the Masonic lodge. A decision that I never regretted. Gained so much insight into life that I will take proudly to my grave.

Watching some of the educational shows on television, such as the Alaskan ways of life, so intrigue me to this day. While watching the natives carry out daily chores I sometimes feel what their next move or actions they will take.

Sometimes I think I feel the cold. As I watch the ice form on whiskers and clothing I start thinking we need to build a fire. As I watch them hunt for food I find myself checking the leaves to see which way they are blowing (so I can see if the animal can smell the scent as we approach).

I know those events are staged, but I also realize events similar have to happen for people to live. I wonder why Newton wrote down about the apple falling. He could not have been the first to see this happen. I wonder why Delilah really betrayed Sampson? I wonder why Henry Ford economically supported Adolf Hitler. All these questions I search for answers in artistic renditions, pictures taken and words written by our ancestors.

I sometimes feel these questions could have been placed in my soul because maybe a part of me could have existed throughout time. I do not believe in reincarnation as such. It is more like my "Soul, Being or (maybe a non existent word) that describes a part of me was there standing on the edge of Creation with God watching as he snapped his fingers and said "LET THERE BE".



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Early Life on Monte Sano

by *Evan Powell*

When we first moved to Huntsville in 1956, we rented a cabin on the mountain until we were able to find a home on Lookout Drive. I remember it had an outhouse but we never used it. Cold Spring was our first discovery on the mountain.

Since the television stations and elementary school had not yet been built, the only commercial place I remember is Mrs. Campbell's store.

I remember my dad shooting a rattlesnake in our front yard with a gun that he had in a holster. This excitement was exceeded only by the mountain lion posse that never found the lion.

One day there was a severe ice storm and we all had to move off the mountain because power stayed out for some time.

Monte Sano Elementary School was built around 1960 and we moved over to the bluff across from the Methodist Church that is there now. We had a vine swing off the bluff and one neighborhood bully swung off and hit a tree. His mother wouldn't let him play with us for months.

After the swimming pool was built, we all had to sneak over there at night, creep inside and go swimming. The view from that pool was outstanding.

The family moved off the mountain in 1963, but I moved back in '71.

One night a roommate of mine decided to climb one of the thousand-foot TV towers. I even took my camera because I knew no one would believe it.

I took a picture to a local newspaper but they said it was too blurry to use. Oh well, just another Monte Sano adventure.

Although I no longer live on Monte Sano, I can see it clearly from my home downtown. Now I take my son up there and tell him about my life and adventures on "the mountain."

"When you put a hot dog in the microwave for five minutes, you don't want to be there when your Mom sees what's left."

Sammy Evans, Somerville

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Irrefutable Proof My Wife Loves Me

by Al Dean

Leslie Weatherhead, in his book, *The Christian Agnostic*, wrote: "To prove the existence of God is a bit like proving that your wife loves you." He goes on to say that your wife may act the way she does because it's easier or she wants to inherit your money. To which I say, "Pshaw!" My wife will inherit shotguns and fishing tackle; there is no money. And she has never accused me of making life easier for her. I know she loves me and I hereby offer several proofs why this is so.

She accepts my imperfections. It took nearly two weeks of marriage for her to discover she had been duped, and except for the three years her mother lived with us, she's never mentioned it.

She appreciates the practical gifts I give her on special occasions. Less sensitive husbands miss many opportunities to express how they really feel. I overheard her lamenting her weight gain in a conversation with my sister, and astutely recognized that candy for Valentines' Day would send the wrong message, so I'm surprising her with a Weight Watchers membership. It is typical of me to present her with gifts that convey my feelings; the riding mower with the roll bar for last Mothers Day, the replacement ductless under-cabinet range hood for Christmas. Which reminds me of another husbandly characteristic she finds endearing: I'm a DIY kind of guy.

She asked if I would separate two pans, stuck one inside the other. I got enough water in the bottom pan to create steam, set them on the stove with the burner on high, and waited for the pan to bubble free. She was saying something about

steam powered locomotives when the stuck pot launched into the range hood and mangled it. I haven't replaced the cookie jar. Maybe I'll do that for her birthday; either that or the forged-in- fire meat cleaver advertised on TV.

She applauds my choices in wearing apparel. It takes her breath away when I wear my white no-tuck embroidered front Guayabera shirt with the four oversize pockets, and round out the ensemble with complementary black pants. She says it makes me look like Mr. Richard - he's my barber. And if I promise not to wear the western

"I ate a good salad for dinner. Mostly just croutons and tomatoes. Really just one big round crouton - covered with tomato sauce and cheese. OK FINE it was a Pizza - are you happy now??"

Burt Bevins, on a diet

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- Huntsville's historic buildings, districts, markers and cemeteries with pictures, maps, and links to digital walking tours.
- The Huntsville Historical Review, the Historic Huntsville Quarterly, Valley Leaves and the Madison County Bicentennial Bookshelf.
- Audio and other stories by some of Huntsville's best storytellers.
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bolo tie with the bullhead clasp, she insists I wear my fancy cognac colored cowboy boots to church.

She lets me control the TV remote, which has nothing to do with me telling her that it's more fun to watch her do it. She aims it, like a pistol, at arm's length, punches a button, and grimaces. She also appreciates that I mute the sound for Saturday and Sunday ball games. I can tell by the look on her face how impressed she is that I understand what's going on without sportscaster's commentaries.

She approves of my pipe smoking. Upon reading Weber's Guide to Pipes and Pipe Smoking and discovering that an early 1960 surgeon general's report indicated that death rates for pipe smokers was little higher than for non-smokers and upon reaching the decision that a pipe is simply a pacifier for adult males, she created my very own private smoking area.

She bought a yard sale recliner and end table to hold my pipe smoking paraphernalia, and cleared away a spot

between the freezer and the hot water heater in the garage where I enjoy my pipes before cold weather sets in.

She appreciates my enthusiasm for the out of doors, and even though it meant spending most of our waking hours apart, she encouraged me to take up gardening during our at-risk, stay-at-home Covid-19 isolation. I can recall her squeals of delight as I put on my work gloves, loaded my tools in the truck and headed for the perfect spot she had chosen for a garden on the far western reaches of our property.

Action may speak louder than words to express love, but it needs to be said. I never heard either of my parents tell the other they loved them. Then again, I don't remember either of them saying they loved me. I know they did, but it would have been nice to hear them say it. My wife and I have had to say it often during this past year of lockdowns to remind ourselves that the coronavirus pandemic hasn't destroyed 62 years of marriage - at least, not yet.

"I wish I was as thin as I was when I thought I was fat."

Bess Robb, Woodville

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The Great Crack

by Lee D. Harless, Jr.

As a boy growing up in Huntsville, my main Saturday attraction was a trip downtown to see the latest "flick" of Roy Rogers or Gene Autry. . . be it at the Lyric or at the Grand.

On one such visit, after a double feature western and the latest episode of Buck Rogers, I walked out of the dark confines into the brilliant late sunshine, taking a moment for my eyes to adjust to the glare, I encountered a bright, fast-talking little boy who sauntered up to me and said, "Hey! I bet I know about a place you've never been!"

I was somewhat taken aback as I thought that in the 10 or 12 years I had lived that I had pretty well covered all the interesting and wonderful town of Huntsville. But, I was game, so I said, "Okay. Show me."

Well, I was sure he would go down to the Big Spring to look at the people asleep under the stairs or to some other place I had been so many times before. But, no. He said, "It's not far from here. Come on. It's great!"


I stayed a little back, as my mother had always said never to go anywhere with strangers, but she never mentioned anything about kids smaller than me and I felt I could take this kid on if I had to.

So, up Washington Street and down the crowded sidewalk we went (the sidewalks were always crowded on Saturday evenings), making a left onto Randolph. Midway down the block we turned into the alley behind the McClellans store. I hesitated as this looked like it might be a trap... maybe he had 15 or so friends hiding somewhere who would take the 10 cents change I had left from the movie. He could see my hesitation and said, "Come on. Don't worry. It's great!"

Okay. He's up ahead. There's no one behind. A little way up the alley he stopped, just behind the Church of Christ. He said, "Here it is!"

I came up beside him and there between the church and the back of the Elks Theater

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Tony Guthrie, Owner

was this crack...a space about two feet wide between the buildings. The kid said, "Come on. Let's go in. It's great!"

I looked and thought; it was interesting; he was right, I had never seen this place. I said, "Lead the way!"

In we went, standing on a narrow ledge. We had to turn our backs to the theater wall and walk sideways. Below us was a three foot drop reeking of the most awful foul odor I had ever encountered. At the halfway point there was another hazard - a three foot wall blocking our path.

But, did that stop us? Of course not! Not my intrepid new friend and I!

We shimmied up and over the barrier. All the while I was vainly trying to hold my nose and keep my balance at the same time. After a struggling success with this barrier, the passage became much narrower .., maybe 14 inches at most. But, the air was somewhat purer. A narrow slit of blue sky could be seen high above us and the theater's back wall, maybe 70 feet or more. It was not unlike Fat Man's Squeeze at Rock City, but this was more exciting and hazardous, too!

We continued our sideways shuffle until we finally emerged at the foot of the old abandoned Post Office. I looked at my impish friend and said,

"You were right! It was great!"

He then said, "Well, I know something else you might like." And, he pointed to an open basement window of the old Post Office. I thought, well that may be

breaking and entering - something I had never done. I turned to him and said, "I have to go!"

I walked away, never to see my new friend again. But, I made many trips through "The Crack" after that. It was always an exciting climax to any Saturday movie, even if not the nicest scented way home!

Today, very little remains of the "Great Crack". The old theater is gone. Only the back of the church and the lower wall of the theater remains, with a mere suggestion of its former glorious self.

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"I looked up my family tree and found three dogs using it."

Rodney Dangerfield

My Town - Historical New Market, Alabama

by Cathy B. Bridges



For forty-one years, I have lived in the same house in a great rural, small-town community in the Cumberland Plateau of north-east Madison County. The peacefulness and the mountain views, especially when the leaves turn in the fall, are just a few reasons I love my town. In addition, I love knowing my ancestors and many relatives that my husband and I have lived here. We have grandparents and great-grandparents buried here, plus many uncles, aunts and cousins that live here or are buried here. My great-grandfather Frank Cantrell is buried at Rice Cemetery. He is a hero for getting a man out of a well years ago. My great-grandfather went down in the well and was able to help get the other man out, but unfortunately, he never made it out himself.

The history! I love it! New Market residents have had a lot to tell through the years. There are still some historical homes left in the downtown area. Most of them are from the 1800s, early 1900s. The restored homes add to our little town's authenticity, although sadly, some historic homes have not been restored. Some of the houses in the Historic District plus the New Market Presbyterian and Methodist churches are listed in the national registrar of historic

places. Unfortunately, the Presbyterian church was destroyed when much of the downtown area burned during the Civil War. They rebuilt the town. Then In 1885, which was just a few years after the fire, that same church was destroyed

by a tornado. I believe some folks called them cyclones back then. New Market has always been a high-risk area for tornadoes.

Although it is growing away from being the small town most of us enjoy, you still get to see some cotton fields. The few that are left that is. They used to be everywhere, up and down Winchester Road and all over New Market. Now new homes are popping up in their place. It is growing by leaps and bounds. I don't mean to sound selfish, but I am not ready to give up the small-town feeling yet. I like New Market just the way it is.

I love the memories! We spent Christmas with my grandparents Earman and Theo Cantrell Hillis,

Uncles, Aunts and cousins. The 4th of July was fun. There was always plenty of watermelons and other good food. Easter Sunday was usually spent down the road at my great-grandparents Squire and Sarah Hillis' home. There was always so much food to eat because it was a big family. My mom had six brothers and lots of cousins. We kids had terrific egg hunts in the woods nearby. My twin uncles Larry and Garry Hillis and my cousin Bubba would run us girls off when we came down to the creek where they were. Family members built a pavilion close to that same creek and reunions have been held there for years. My great-grandparent's old house is still standing, or it was the last time I was there.

I loved the summers when school was out because my brother and I enjoyed staying with Uncle Junior, Aunt Polly and my cousins Audrey (Bubba), Pat, Deb and Sandy in the big white two-story house on New Market Road. The upstairs was a storage area mainly, so we girls were allowed to play "house" in a few rooms. I was born and raised in Huntsville, so I enjoyed going to the "country" for many years. I loved being outside. We could always find something to do if it was only killing flies on the front porch or naming the automobiles that went by. Sometimes my uncle would pay us a little to chop the



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weeds around the cotton. We would take our shoes off and the cool morning dirt felt good between our toes. Mostly playing is what we did and not much chopping.

I loved it when we would go up on the mountain where some of my uncle's cows were. We had terrific picnics under walnut trees near an old house that was only partially standing. I believe only the chimney was left and not much else. Not too far away were the cows. There was a clear, cool spring nearby and we kids were allowed to have a drink.

When I was a girl, we would go to church with my grandparents Earman and Theo Hillis at Mountain Fork Baptist Church. My wonderful God-fearing grandmother loved the Lord and was not ashamed to pat her Bible while she walked around praising him. Baptisms would be done down the road at the creek before they built the baptistry. My mom said that she was baptized in a nearby creek back in the day.

Speaking of Mountain Fork, the area is full of deer, coyotes, bobcats and no telling what else. But, living on that road would give you fantastic mountain views. The Echota Cherokee Indian tribe was in North-east Alabama, not far from New Market. They were descendants of those that escaped the Trail of Tears by hiding out in the mountains or fleeing while on the sorrowful path.

The 250-acre Sharon Johnston Park is nearby, where you can camp, grill out, fish, walk and swim. There is also a shooting range. Family members can rent a pavilion for gatherings such as reunions, weddings, and the like. It also hosts other events such as rodeos, car shows and re-enactments. There is also a playground that my granddaughter enjoyed quite a few times when she was younger. My grandfather loved to fish and sometimes we went with him to the 10-12-acre fishing lake at the park or the Madison County Lake.

The McCrary farm is said to be the oldest in the state. Its 300 plus acres were purchased in 1809 and have stayed in the family for years. Back in the day, the Buckhorn Tavern sat nearby. The battle of the Buckhorn Tavern took place in 1863. A brief skirmish took place with no injuries or casualties. The school got named after the Buckhorn

Tavern, which was nearby during the Civil War. Many of the dignitaries would stop there on their way through Alabama. It was a favorite of General Andrew Jackson when he went to fight the Creek Indians. Unfortunately, they demolished it in 1955. The Buck that adorned the tavern is now in a particular place at the school.

There are many cemeteries in New Market. Established in 1835, Rice Cemetery is on Winchester Road. It is the resting place of many relatives of both my husband and me. One day it will be my last stopping place also. Cochran Cemetery is where some of my other relatives are. Not sure about the date of establishment. We have parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents buried at both.

Miller Cemetery, established in 1841, is another resting place of relatives. Finally, the Mt. Paran Cemetery is the resting place of many original settlers. The earliest surviving gravestone is dated 1826. Revolutionary war veteran Samuel Davis donated the land for the cemetery and is buried there. John Miller, who erected a gristmill and sawmill in 1819, is buried there. Isaac Criner rests in a spot there also. He was possibly the first settler, along with his brother Joseph. With the decline of its use, it became known as "Graveyard Hill." The residents of New Market have always been proud of their town. Back in the day, it was called the "Garden Spot of the World." Watercress was grown here for years because of the fertile land. I believe they grow Arugula now. I am proud to be a resident of New Market and will live here until I die.

I have just skimmed the surface of the great history of our town. There is lots more to add, but I will stop here for now. There are so many more reasons why I love my town. Now is a great time to take a drive out this way to enjoy the colorful fall leaves. Unfortunately, they will be gone soon.

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THE ALABAMA STONE

by Kenneth D. Willis



One of the mysteries of the last 200 years is a 202-pound cone shaped smoothed sandstone boulder that was found along the banks of the Black Warrior River in 1817. Quite a few learned scholars have speculated the true origins of the Stone and some of the questions are just now being answered. Without a doubt the Stone's geological composition is of Tuscaloosa County, Alabama. In fact, its birth was at the Tuscaloosa Falls at Tuscaloosa and for thousands of years the harsh edges were tumbled smooth in the waters of the river.

The same type of sandstone is found from the location of the Falls and has been used in the construction of buildings, locks and dams and has even been used for memorial headstones in the Tuscaloosa area.

One of the perplexing things about the stone is an inscription of HISPAN. ET. IND. REX 1232 clearly seen as if it was chiseled by an untrained amateur stone carver. It's not like anything seen in Alabama or in the South. And the number 1232. Is the number 1232 a measurement in distance, a date, or copied from some other relic or coin?

Its mystery has been debated from the streets of Tuscaloosa to Massachusetts and Canada. Is it the most intelligent knockoff hoax ever perpetrated upon the frontier

town of Tuscaloosa and the State? The Stone has been carried miles by beast of burden to Tuscaloosa, then to Mobile, AL, shipped around Florida and up to Massachusetts, by airplane back to Alabama and by Alabama National Guard, delivered to Montgomery, AL, and dollied to the Halls of the Alabama State Archives. It has been touched by the curious in all walks of life from frontier farmers, to Governors and Politicians, to Anthropologists, Archaeologists, Geologists, Professors and even school children on a field trip. Specialists peering through magnifying glasses to study the inscription.

What is it about this stone that captivates, yet is scorned, beloved, yet dismissed as illegitimate? It is The Alabama Stone.

The year is 1540 in November and winter is coming on. Hernado De Soto's Expedition has fought one of most horrific battles in North America. A battle with the Great Chief Tuscaloosa at Mauvilla and his chiefdom, in which the City of Tuscaloosa is named. After the battle nothing else is known of the fate of Chief Tuscaloosa, his body never found. It is believed he escaped with his loyal head men and left the horrific carnage.

Reeling from exhaustion of the battle and the many killed and wounded, the baggage and supplies destroyed in the fires of the fort, Desoto is forced to face reality. Troubled, he ignores the message that ships are waiting in Pensacola Bay and he makes the decision to go back north away from the waiting ships and home. Sending no news of himself to the ships he wanted to keep the information quiet among the expedition until he had found some rich country. At this moment, still hoping of a glorious return to Spain with treasures untold, he dreads that the expedition would be viewed as a failure and no man would want to come here.

Desoto decides to head north into West Central Alabama. Scouters were sent in all directions and to the falls of Tuscaloosa. A smooth cone shaped sandstone weighing 202 pounds was found and brought to Big Creek and the Black Warrior River. Here is where the Alabama Stone will stay for the next 277 years. While here the expedition's celestial navigators made star sightings and made calculations as they would at sea, determined the distance from that place on the

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Black Warrior River to their home in Spain and the Port of Sanlucar de Barrameda. The stone is engraved with the inscription HISPAN.ET.IND.REX 1232.

By celestial shots at stars and referring to charts, a tabulation could be made of the distance from Big Creek to Sanlucar de Barrameda. This is a great circle distance of 3879 modern nautical miles. By dividing the Alabama Stone Spanish Nautical League number of 1232 into the miles 3879, the answer is 3.14853. This is almost exactly to the accepted Spanish Nautical League 3.1876 modern nautical miles. Only with modern GPS, distances can be verified today, and we have been able to decipher the number 1232 on the Alabama Stone. Unless an experienced celestial navigator could do the tabulation from the night sky's or from an eclipse, and with a knowledge of the science, measurements and instruments of DeSoto's day could we have been able to decipher the number 1232 on the Alabama Stone.

Writings by the Alabama Historical Society, July 1, 1876 told of the discovery of the Alabama Stone. It is the year 1817 and a 17-year-old Thomas Scales is clearing land with his father at Big Creek and the Black Warrior River. On the peninsula is a huge Popular tree. At the base of the tree is a half-buried stone, conical in shape, smooth sandstone boulder about 202 pounds.

Upon inspecting the stone he sees engraved writing. He has no idea what it says. These are the days when the State of Alabama is just being settled, pioneers from every state are coming to the new lands opened by treaties with the Southern Tribes. Tuscaloosa is not even a town yet, and barely any civilized connections are established. The area is still the land of the bear, wolf, panther, the deer and the elk. The State of Alabama just two years from Statehood is a part of the Mississippi Territory and is still a wilderness country. Tuscaloosa a small town of a few 100 people doesn't have a government yet.

So, the stone more than likely was with the Scales family until sometime in 1822 when Levin Powell was elected

to the State Senate. He was also the postmaster and Justice of the Peace for Tuscaloosa. Powell kept the Alabama Stone as a large door stop and as a conversation piece for a couple more years.

In 1824 the Stone was given to knowledgeable cultivated Silas Dinsmoor of New Hampshire who had been the Cherokee and Choctaw Agent and was now a Surveyor for the Government. He had it shipped to Mobile, Al and then to the American Antiquarian Society in Massachusetts. In 1963 the Stone is returned to Alabama care of the Alabama National Guard and has been at the Alabama State Archives ever since.

The Stone is written about many times over two hundred years but always with no definitive answers to its origins or purpose. It will remain a mystery until modern Global Positioning System or GPS confirms the number is a measurement. The tree where Mr. Thomas Scales discovered the Stone is still alive and evaluated by the Alabama Forest Commission to be the second largest poplar tree in Alabama.

Now two hundred years later, The Alabama Stone can finally take its rightful place as a true artifact of the Desoto Expedition in the State of Alabama.



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A MONTE SANO ROMANCE

From a 1897 newspaper



Among the visitors at the famed Monte Sano Hotel above the town of Huntsville was James S. Porter, a young man whose wealthy parents lived in Birmingham. Porter had been roughing it on the mountain since the latter part of May. One of the first objects to catch his eye was a mountain lass, who lived two miles or so from the hotel.

The young people became acquainted casually, but the girl's fair cheeks and

ankles were too much for Porter, and he visited the home of his sweetheart time and again.

Unfortunately for him, Porter's knowledge in games led the girl's mother, an old lady whose Bible and spectacles were her Sunday companions year in and year out, to suspect that he was a gambler. The girl refused to believe anything was bad of Porter and in the face of her mother's opposition, she continued to receive her lover's attentions.

Last week she agreed to quit her home and to go with Porter to accompany him to Boston as his wife. They left the girl's house together, on foot, and took a wagon a quarter of a mile down the road. When a few minutes after they had started,

the bride's father missed his daughter, he set out in hot haste and in anger to stop the runaways. He came upon them at a point where the road was steep and rocky, and when they whipped up their horses, he gave his animal such a furious cut that he was thrown from his wagon down the mountain side.

The mad horse ran past the lovers and they knew that their pursuer had been injured. They then went back, found him, took him home and restored him to consciousness. Subsequently, the young man won the confidence of the mountaineer couple and they gave their consent to the marriage.

Mr. Porter has not forsaken his games of chance but his new mother-in-law is holding her tongue.

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like eye contact, so will almost always go to the person who's not looking at them. This also is the answer to the age-old mystery of why cats always seem to go to the one person in the room who doesn't like cats. It's because she may be the only one not staring.

* Cats Love Running Water

Cats find cool, running water to be very appealing. They tend to always be dehydrated and many health problems for cats can be dispelled by lots of water. Look for a pet drinking fountain, your kitty will love it!

* Cat Allergies

While no cat is guaranteed to not be an allergy trigger — and people with life-threatening reactions are better off without a cat — it's possible to pick a pet who might be less of a problem. Black, un-neutered males are purported the worst choice for people with allergies, since they typically have higher levels in their saliva of a protein that triggers sneezing and wheezing.

Some breeds of cat, most notably the Siberian, have a high number of individual animals with low levels of the protein. If you're paying for a "hypo-aller genie" cat, insist on saliva testing, if you're choosing a kitten, choose a light-colored female and get her spayed.

* Cat Food

Veterinarians will recommend feeding canned cat food over dry. Canned foods have a higher percentage of protein and fat than dry foods and are significantly higher in water content than kibble (70 percent vs. 10 percent). Also, canned foods tend to be more palatable to cats that are finicky, elderly or have dental problems. Better health for your cat can start by feeding measured amounts of a good canned food. Talk to your veterinarian.

* Want a Cat to Love You? Look Away

What can you do to get a cat to come to you? Avoid eye contact. Cats don't

* Cats in Pain

Chronic pain is not uncommon in cats, especially as they age. Cat lovers miss the signs of a pet in pain because cats are good at hiding it. Any cat observed as being hesitant to jump up or climb, not using the litter box, not able to groom themselves as well, more aggressive or more withdrawn needs to see the veterinarian.

* Cats Favorite Litter

Forget the people-pleasing scents. Forget special formulas or alternative ingredients. Your cat is more likely to prefer unscented clumping litter, according to preference tests. And if you want to keep your cat using the bathroom be sure to keep it clean, place it in a quiet, cat-friendly place and don't use any liners in the box - cats don't like them. None of these changes will address a cat who has stopped using the box because of illness. Urinary tract infections and other health issues need to be addressed by your veterinarian before box re-training can commence.

* Your Cat's Scratching Post

When a post starts looking worn is when a cat starts liking it best. Get a new one and your cat may switch to the arm of the couch. Instead, refresh your cat's post by adding some coils of fresh sisal rope - it's cheap, easy to add and cats love to dig their claws into it.

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Across from Books A Million

Scandal on Randolph Avenue

by Tom Carney

When John C. and Emeline were married on Christmas Eve, 1829, no one would have predicted the unhappy and scandalous end their union would see. Emeline was many years younger than John, a prosperous and distinguished land owner, who had come to Huntsville with his parents in 1807. He was the ideal husband for the young Emeline, or so everyone thought.

Emeline was barely 18 when they married, and was considered by many to be lighthearted and girlish. She possessed a trim figure and an extremely romantic and imaginative mind. In this last characteristic, she and her husband were totally different.

The couple were married in Courtland and moved to Huntsville after the wedding. They began their married life in the home of his mother, about a mile or so outside of Huntsville. Living with them were John's two sisters, older ladies who had never married. Both spinsters took an immediate liking to the bright and flirtatious young woman, and the three soon became good friends.

When his mother died in 1831, John and Emeline moved to the brick home at the corner of Greene and Randolph.

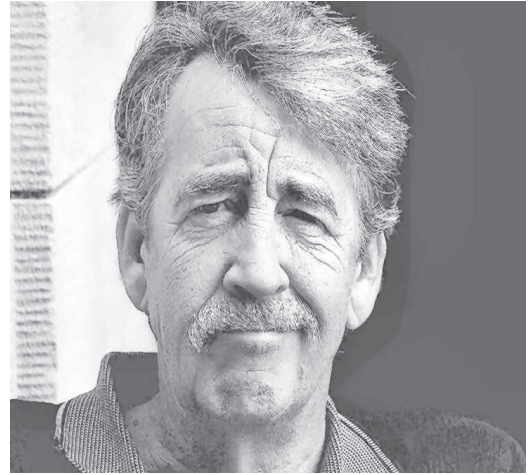
On August 9, 1836 the trouble began. There was a high board fence that surrounded the home and on that day a handbill was dropped over it.

It announced that a certain Henry Riley, "stage manager of many of the principal theaters in the Union," would present an entertainment consisting of recitals, imitations and songs.

This handbill was found in the garden by Emeline's best friend Ann, and plans were made to attend. John however, was not a theatergoer and chose to stay home that night and read. So Emeline, with anticipation of a good time, set off for the event with her friend.

Arriving at the theater, Emeline went directly to the choice seats always reserved for the ladies at the front. The first act was horribly boring to Emeline, and she fidgeted badly. But the second act was one she would remember forever.

When Henry Riley first entered the stage, Emeline was struck. Here was her ideal of



a man. As he began to give imitations of "celebrated performers," his glance fell often on Emeline who was sitting on the first row. Riley was intrigued by the young and flirtatious girl.

Although Riley had no chance to speak to Emeline that night, the whole city was soon aware of the looks exchanged between the two.

In a few days, a note from Emeline came to Henry. He didn't respond, as he had asked a few questions of the tavern owner and had found out that Emeline was married to a powerful man in the community.

Another note was delivered in two days.

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"Henry, if you will come down to the theater this evening, I will go there and tell you where you may see me. Let no one know of this, not for your life. Mr. C. is in the country, I am all alone. Your Emeline."

In no time this innocent flirtation exploded into a full blown affair. Almost everyone in town was talking about it by now, except for John, who remained unaware.

Emeline now thought of Henry every waking moment. Even though she was acting cheerful at home with her husband, and as if nothing bothered her, she knew her heart belonged to Henry. Infatuated with her new love, Emeline wrote in her diary every day. "My heart wanders like a drop from the ocean which cannot meet its kindred drop, like a voice which in all Nature finds no echo. Keep that ring I sent you in remembrance of me. One who loves you. Farewell. Farewell."

A few days later, Henry met Emeline again in the garden behind her home. The garden adjoined the lot where the theater was located and there was a fence between the two lots. They spent more time together than they had planned, talking in whispers. When they separated and Emeline ran toward the house, John stepped out the back door, anger clouding his face.

For several weeks John had ignored the whispers and gossip he had heard around him. But now, before he could stop, he found himself accusing

Emeline of meeting someone in the dark. She remained silent. He demanded to know where she had been for so long but she still refused to answer. Once inside the house, John's rage exploded as he began shaking her violently, while shouting all kinds of accusations. Emeline remained strangely unemotional, not bothering to reply to John.

Hours later, unable to sleep, Emeline was torn between loyalty to John and love for Henry. She thought of telling John everything, but she knew if she did John would kill Henry.

On September 19, the actor was preparing to depart Huntsville when Emeline brought him another note. It said that Emeline's husband had missed a favorite picture of her, the one that Emeline had given to Henry. She had to get it back

and in the note told him not to write her again.

She didn't hear from Henry for some time. He was now in Tuscumbia appearing in another production. Emeline, missing him terribly, sent word, "Come to Huntsville to see me. I was once a bright jewel, but you have robbed me of its luster."

Whatever hope John had in saving their marriage now seemed to crumble. Since August, he had been anything but a happy man. When his mind was not on the severe problems he had in his business, he brooded often about the ugly and malicious rumors about his wife that had originated among the neighbors. Disturbing stories had been brought to him directly by his sisters, who by now had had a falling out with Emeline.

A wife can often surprise her husband on their wedding anniversary by merely mentioning it.

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A familiar face emerged around the middle of December, that of Henry Riley. Rumors traveled rapidly: Why was he here, without his theatrical company, unannounced, and without any business?

Then, around 2 o'clock on the afternoon of December 19, two men "minding their own business" saw Riley walking along Randolph, from the direction of the square. As the actor passed Emeline's home, the two men saw the blinds of a window in the second story cautiously open and a piece of paper drop to Riley's feet. He hastily looked around him, picked up the paper, and quickly walked back toward the courthouse.

The two men could not keep information of this type to themselves, so they quickly went to the office of their friend, attorney James W. McClung and told him what they had seen. McClung was a friend of John's, so he immediately rushed to the land office with the story. After hearing McClung's secondhand version, John C. sat back in his chair with a resigned look on his face. He said that, if there was enough evidence to prove that Emeline was unfaithful, he would proceed with a divorce.

The two men accosted Henry Riley a few minutes later in front of the Bell Tavern, and aided by a few curious bystanders, wrestled him to the ground. After a short struggle,

they managed to pry the piece of paper out of the actor's hand.

"I am so much pleased to see you here once more, but it is impossible for me to speak to you. I am still the same and ever shall be. Return home, Henry, and forget me, if you please, but if it is ever in my power to become the bride of H., with honor I will, and as soon as I can, you shall know it. Keep my secret. Never betray me so long as you live."

"Write a letter this evening, and tonight, after tea, slip it through the window blinds of the arch. I will be there playing the piano. Adieu, Henry, Yours."

John was still not satisfied with this latest proof, so he summoned his very best friend, Samuel Crusoe. He insisted that they should go to the tavern where Henry was staying and inquire as to whether or not Riley had any luggage with him. When the tavern keeper

indicated that he did indeed have a trunk upstairs, John and Samuel insisted on searching the actor's room, over much protest from the tavern keeper.

Up until this moment, John still did not believe that Emeline had been unfaithful to him. He remembered the early days of their marriage when every day was happy. He knew it could be like that again, if he would just be patient. But upon opening the trunk and gazing at its contents, John knew there was no more hope. He felt his heart sink within his chest, and tried to fight back tears of rage.

The trunk contained very little, just a few clothes, a hat, and a large bundle wrapped in a theater program. When they opened the bundle, a small miniature of Emeline fell out. There was a picture of her in it, one that John had made the day after their wedding. Letters, all in Emeline's handwriting, made up most of the bundle.

"Take every birthday with a grain of salt. This works much better if the salt accompanies a large margarita."

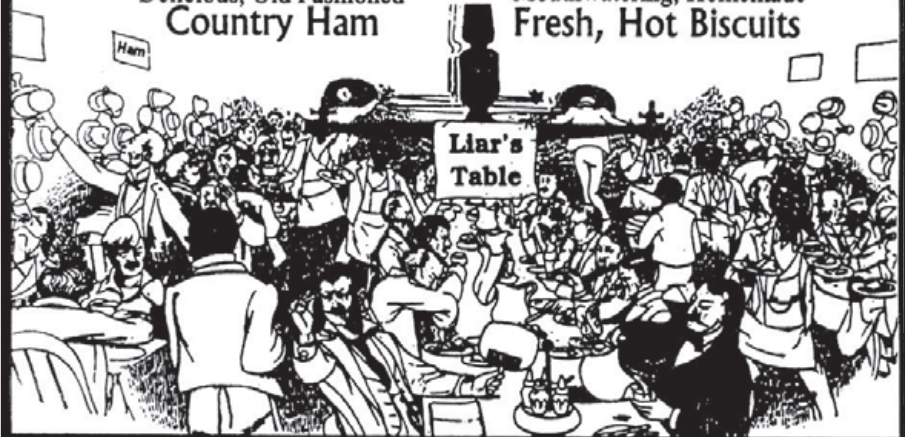
Maxine

Old Ad run in Old Huntsville magazine 1996

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John did not have to read many of them to know the real truth about Henry and Emeline.

That night, after a long and painful deliberation, John called his wife into the parlor of their home. Emeline could tell by the look on his face that her secret romance had been discovered. Without any sort of preamble, John told her that she had to leave. Their marriage was over.

When Emeline began to weep, John announced that she would be sent back to her father's home on the very next stage out. He had already purchased a ticket for her. Late that night, in the midst of a blinding rainstorm, Emeline boarded the stage to leave Huntsville forever. There was no one to see her off.

John sued for divorce the following March. The trial did not come up until October, and after reviewing all of the evidence for two days, Judge George W. Lane ruled in favor of the plaintiff.

Emeline's only comment about the decision was that she believed that John's associates had approached her under the guise of friendship and really desired to destroy his happiness and her reputation.

Saying thus, Emeline was forever driven away from the home on the corner which still stands as a monument to her ill-fated romance.

“Would a flight attendant please bring me a double martini? And keep them coming.”

What you don't want to hear from your pilot on a long flight

Three-Layer Pie

Crust:

- 1 stick butter
- 1 c. plain flour
- 2 T. confectioners sugar
- 1 c. nuts (chopped fine)

Melt margarine, mix with flour and sugar. Add nuts. Spread on bottom of buttered pan and bake for 20 min. in 350° oven.

Filling:

- 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese (room temp)
 - 1 c. confectioners sugar
 - 1 sml. container Cool Whip
- Mix cheese and sugar. Add Cool Whip. Pour on top of crust.

Topping:

- 1 large instant chocolate pudding mix
 - 2-1/2 c. cold milk
 - 1/2 c. chopped nuts
- Mix pudding and milk, add chopped nuts. Pour on top of cheese filling. Refrigerate at least 2 hours before serving.

Dolly

Hello, my name is Dolly. I have been at the Ark Shelter since May 2021. I was lost in a neighborhood and some kind people took me in for a couple weeks while trying to find my owners, but then brought me to the Shelter because they couldn't keep me. They said I'm housebroken and used a doggie door for them.



I have a sweet disposition, am very playful and love children that are kind to me. The vet thinks I am about a year old and am a hound mix. I'm smart, I love attention and know how to shake my paw and how to sit. I'm a very happy dog who would like to have a nice family that would love me and keep me forever. Please come and ask to see me, I'm Dolly.

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Christmas Special Upsets Cash; Vows He is Ending TV Career

*From the Dec. 8, 1976
Nashville Banner*

Johnny Cash has labeled his Monday night network special as the "worst in the history of television" and vowed he is ending his TV career. The singer, upset over the outcome of the CBS Christmas program, also said the show projected a false image of himself.

"I'm through with television. I've had it," Cash said in his Hendersonville office. "Did you see the show? I didn't want to watch it at all. And I'm sure nobody else did, either," he said. "I knew 10 minutes after it started it was all wrong," he said.

Cash said the Johnny Cash Christmas Special was "not Johnny Cash."

Since the show aired locally at 8 p.m. Monday night on WTVF-TV, 5, it has received much criticism. Most complaints center around the fact a minimum of Christmas songs were included on the program.

"The last half hour was better than the first," said Cash. "But by that time I don't think anyone was watching it. Do you know how I can tell? When people begin changing the channel you're watching, your picture begins getting brighter and brighter. Twenty minutes after that show started, my set got so bright I almost had to leave the room."

The special was taped the first week in November in Hendersonville, at Opryland and at the Cash farm in Bon Aqua. Guests included Tony Orlando, the Rev. Billy Graham, Roy Clark, Barbara Mandrell, Merle Travis and the Cash family.

Reba Cash Hancock, Cash's sister, does not agree with brother John.

"I didn't think it (the show) was that bad. But I'll say this.

I was very disappointed in the final editing. "They cut out the best parts," she said. "I know Johnny's very upset about the whole thing. He's especially concerned they cut some of the closing hymn - "Silent Night" - and the part where most of the family was introduced."

(Tennessee State Library and Archives)

Editor's note: The Johnny Cash Christmas Special (1976) is available to watch on YouTube. This article appeared in the December 2018 issue of The Nashville Retrospect. Check out their very interesting web-site: nashvilleretrospect.com

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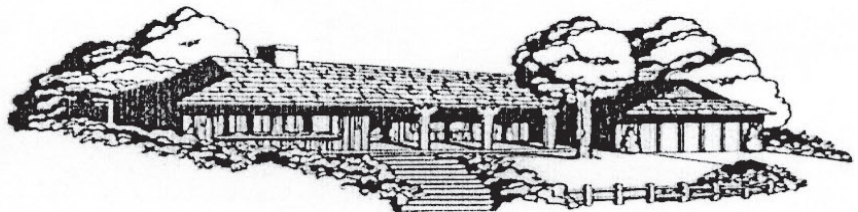
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A Deserting Husband Gets Rotten Eggs for Slandering His Wife

From 1881 newspaper



A man living near Gurley has had something of a sensation.

A year ago Abraham Meyers, a tailor, left the town, deserting his wife and little son. Recently he returned, accompanied by a lawyer and announced his intention to secure possession of his boy and take him to another State.

The deserted wife bears an unblemished reputation and when Meyers and the attorney were heard questioning her chastity, they soon found themselves surrounded by a crowd of determined men armed with some antiquated eggs.

The lawyer pleaded so hard that he was not molested after he promised to leave the town. Meyers, however, became the very unwilling target for the eggs and was a sorry sight when he got on board a passenger train to leave. The conductor at once put him off, out of consideration for the other passengers who immediately began to complain of the smell.

Meyers escaped by the aid of a brakeman on a freight train, who loaded him in a box car and hauled him out of town. There was no attempt made to arrest any of the participants in the mob, and their work is generally approved in the town and vicinity.

“My doctor refused to give me a prescription for Viagra. He said it would be like putting a new flagpole on a condemned building.”

Ezra Vinson, age 87

“My mother said the only reason men exist is lawn care and vehicle maintenance.”

Tim Allen

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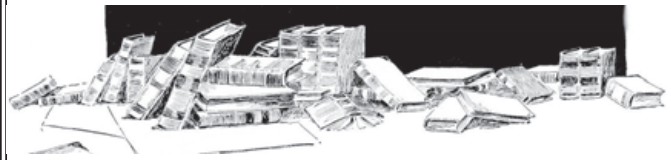
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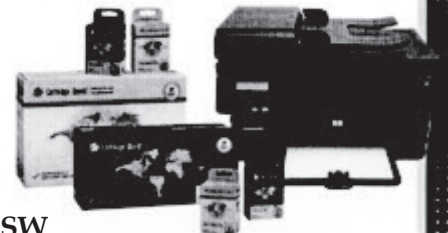
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Incidents in 1888



*He Thought it Was a Squirrel
From 1888 newspaper*

A curious accidental shooting occurred about a mile north of New Market. Oscar Kroger, living at that village, started out squirrel hunting and while passing through the woods noticed an object in a tree. He thought it was a squirrel and let go a load from his shotgun.

To his surprise, down came a human form, which proved to be Clifford Seward, aged 20 years, who had climbed the tree in search of a bird's nest. Upon examination it was found that he had received the full load of shot in the face and will lose the sight of one eye, besides being badly disfigured for life.

*A Young Alabama Lady Goes Insane from Bleaching Her Hair
Blond Hair Lands Her In the Insane Asylum
From 1888 newspaper*

In Birmingham, Gertrude Palmer, a good looking German girl, apparently about seventeen years of age, passed through this city, Sunday afternoon, en route to Tuscaloosa. She was under guard, being accompanied by her two brothers and Dr. J.D. Thompson, a prominent physician of the above named place.

The unfortunate girl was a raving maniac, and was on her way to the state insane asylum at Tuscaloosa.

Her insanity was caused by the excessive use of blondine, a chemical preparation which she used to dye her hair. She had used such a quantity of the stuff that it worked through her skull and affected the brain. Her mind was completely deranged, and she became so violent that it was necessary to confine her in a room to keep her from attacking and injuring any members of her family.

She had lived near Cullman.

Kentucky Pound Cake

- 2-1/2 c. self-rising flour
- 1-1/4 c. cooking oil
- 2 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 c. chopped pecans
- 2 c. sugar
- 4 eggs, separated
- 2 Tbsp. hot water
- 1 can crushed pineapple drained

Mix sugar and cooking oil. Add egg yolks, cinnamon and water. Then add flour, pecans and pineapple. Beat egg whites and fold in last. Bake at 325° for about 1 hour and 10 minutes. Then, mix 1 cup powdered sugar and juice from pineapple and pour on top while hot.

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Middle School Crushes

by Gwendolyn Joop

One day in 8th grade it had been pouring down rain all day. Most of the students on the bus ride home were drenched. I proceeded to my usual seat by Dale.

One of my classmates named Daniel Pepper always sat behind us and usually would laugh and joke around.

This particular rainy day was an exception to the rule. Unbeknownst to me, Daniel began pulling my hair, which came down to my waist. The first time I said politely, stop pulling my hair. He giggled and pulled it again. That's when I SCREAMED if you pull my hair again I'm beating your butt. Dale tried to warn him. You are peeving her off. Daniel did not heed to Dale's warning and he pulled it a third time.

I jumped over my seat like a kangaroo, landing in Daniel's lap and proceeded to literally box his ears.

Mr. Holland, the bus driver, paid no attention. However, he hit a large bump and Daniel and I landed in the aisle with me on top. Proceeded beating his butt as previously warned.

Sadly, for Daniel, he had on a white T-shirt and jeans. When I pushed myself off him I planted my foot in his chest. Index finger pointed at him. Never pull my hair again. Extended my hand and helped yank him up.

By this time we were only a couple houses from his home. Daniel was not a latchkey kid like me. Once I arrived home I had plenty of time to change clothes. My eldest sister, Pat, arrived.

I explained the entire event of my ride home. She said, "That means Daniel has a crush on you." Say What?!! That is one of the dumbest things I have ever heard. Do not tell Mother. I'll get in trouble for fighting again.

My sister did not snitch on me. However, Mr. Pepper had phoned the Principal Mr. Hargrove for a Student Conference. He phoned my Mom. Great, here we go.

Mother was livid she would be late for work. Gwendolyn, if you don't stop fighting boys, I'm going to beat your BUTT. But Daniel pulled my hair. Don't care the excuse.

Next morning we arrived at school. Trust me. Only 10 miles, felt like a 110 mile ride. Mr. Pepper and Daniel were already in Mr. Hargrove's office. Mr. Hargrove apologized to my Mother knowing she would be late. Defending my case, I said "Mr. Hargrove, Daniel pulled my hair. Not once three times." My Mom said, "Gwendolyn do not speak." Mr. Pepper, addressed My Mother. "Mrs. Wales, sorry for interrupting your schedule. Daniel never explained he was beat up by a girl." Mother informed him, "I've tried to make a young lady out of Gwendolyn. She's not happy unless she has a sporting ball in her hand."

Mr. Hargrove sent Daniel and I back to class. We laughed and I apologized for blackening his eye. Daniel, you may want to inform your male classmates. If you like a girl, write her a letter do NOT pull her hair.

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



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The NASA Marshall Retirees Association is creating a Space Exploration Memorial (pictured on the left) which will capture the history of what has been done by all of the space explorers in the Huntsville area.

If you or a family member worked for the Marshall Space Flight Center or for a contractor working with MSFC, go online to the www.marshallretirees.org website and add their names and their stories of space

exploration to the database so that Huntsville's space history can be known.

Also, make a contribution to help create the Space Exploration Memorial through the website and the Space Explorers Huntsville Facebook page or the "Build the Space Exploration Memorial" GoFundMe page. Total contributions to date exceed \$120,000.

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