



No. 351  
May 2022



# Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

## THE LAST CHEROKEE

When Polly Sharp died in 1902, there was nothing to distinguish her from thousands of other people in North Alabama.

She worked her garden, kept to herself and seldom talked about the old days.

Even today, in the history books, there is no mention of her.

There should be.  
She was the last Cherokee.



*Also in this issue:* Dallas Village Friends; Her First Mother's Day; A Week at Camp Cha-La-Kee; Making Music in Huntsville; Spring's Child; Monte Sano Hotel; Latham UMC Desserts and much more!

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*Domie Lewter*

*Mac Lewter*

# The Last Cherokee

by Tom Carney

In 1902, in a small cove located in the northwest corner of Madison County, Polly Sharp was laid to rest. No marker was placed on her grave and no obituary appeared in the newspapers.

Polly's death at the age of 92 signaled the end to an era. According to family history, she was the last full-blooded Cherokee Indian living in Madison County.

Contrary to what many historians claim, the land in what was known as "The Big Bend" (of the Tennessee River) was already populated with many settlements when John Hunt arrived at the Big Spring. Although the area had been claimed by the Creek and Chickasaw Indians, it was the arrival of the Cherokees that marked the formation of permanent settlements.

The Cherokees' traditional homeland was the Great Smoky Mountains. Here, for hundreds of years, they had lived in peace and harmony with nature until the outbreak of the Revolutionary War. White settlers had begun moving onto Indian lands

and with the outbreak of war, the British seized upon this issue to win the Cherokees to their side.

By promising to protect their ancestral homelands and by supplying guns, the British won a powerful ally against the rebellious colonies.

Unfortunately, as the winds of war shifted against the British, the Indians were often forced to fight alone. In a series of bloody battles, most of the Indian settlements in and around the Smoky Mountains were devastated by the colonists, many of whom immediately took possession of the land.

Though most of the Cherokees were forced to surrender, a large pro-British contingent led by Dragging Canoe, escaped. Desiring to get as far away from the white man as possible, the Indians followed the Tennessee River to the present day location of Chattanooga. Here they founded eleven new Cherokee towns. It wasn't long before these towns had grown into thriving communities. They also became the focal point of the pro-British factions, a factor which did not escape the colonists' attention.

Unfortunately, the villages were left without defenders frequently as most of the warriors were in Georgia fighting alongside the British troops.

On an early spring morning in 1779, a large American Army led by Colonel Evan Shelby surrounded the villages. A horrible slaughter took place, made even worse by the colonists' refusals to

**"I've found that if you tuck one pant leg into your sock, people expect less of you."**

**Jed Thomas, Gurley**



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take prisoners or to discriminate between warriors and women and children. One account relates how many of the soldiers, in an effort to save ammunition, used heavy sticks to club the women and children to death.

The survivors were forced to hide in the hills until the warriors returned. After a hurried conference, Dragging Canoe made the decision to move even further south, away from the white man.

Cherokees had already been living in Jackson County since 1750 when they defeated the Creeks in a major battle on Long Island (near Scottsboro). A few years later, they defeated the Chickasaws at Hobbs Island. The outcome of these battles effectively gave the Cherokees control of much of what is now Madison and Jackson counties.

The area into which Dragging Canoe moved his people was largely devoid of white people. In 1777, a group of settlers, led by Thomas Hutchens, had passed through Madison County and settled near the Shoals area but were effectively expelled within a short time by Indian warriors.

It appeared as if the remnants of the Cherokees had found a safe haven. Within the next few years they established many new towns in the Tennessee Valley which became thriving centers of Cherokee culture. The years proved to be prosperous for the Cherokees. They developed routes of commerce stretching for hundreds of miles into all the neighboring states and territories. The settlements began to take on the look of "traditional" towns with log houses, plantations, fields and meeting houses.

Ironically, the oldest home in North Alabama is a house built by Cherokees, Daniel and Molly Ross, in 1790, at the present day location of Fort Payne.

At the end of the Revolutionary War the tribe realized they could no longer fight the white man. There were just too many of them. The most they could hope

for now was a peaceful coexistence. Dragging Canoe was an old man by now and no longer possessed the youth and vigor to lead young warriors into battle. The mantle of leadership fell to Chief Black Fox.

Despite all their attempts to emulate and cooperate with the white man, the Cherokees began feeling increasing pressure from the settlers moving into the Tennessee Valley. John Hunt had settled at the Big Spring and the Criners (more early settlers) had settled near New Market. Every week brought more settlers flooding into the area.

Reluctantly Chief Black Fox agreed to negotiate with the United States government.

By giving up part of their lands, the Indians were undoubtedly hoping to gain the help of the government in protecting the rest of their lands.

In Indian history, the decades that followed would become known as, "The time of broken promises."

On January 7, 1806 the Cherokee Nation signed a treaty with the United States government, giving up their rights to the land

in Madison, Lauderdale and Limestone counties. Chief Black Fox was to receive \$100 a year for life and the tribe received \$2000.00 with another \$2000.00 to be paid every year for 4 years.

In addition the tribe received a grist mill and "a machine to clean cotton."

If the Cherokees had hoped that this treaty would put an end to their conflicts with the white man, they were soon disappointed. Within three years Thomas Freeman, in a report to the President, stated that hundreds of settlers and their families had moved onto Indian lands. Though soldiers were sent to remove the squatters, popular sentiment was against the Indians. Regardless of how many treaties were signed, land grabbers in Washington always demanded another one.

It was the era of Andrew Jackson, a popular General who was the darling of the aristocratic South. Though strongly professing to be a friend of the Indian, he was a staunch advocate of their total removal to another land. In perhaps the strongest indication of his duplicity, Jackson took in a young Indian orphan, named



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Lincoya, bragging to one and all that the lad was to be his adopted son. A few years later, Jackson, at the height of his power, apprenticed his "adopted son" to a saddle maker, where the boy died of pneumonia at an early age.

Under mounting pressure, the Cherokees signed another treaty in 1816 giving up their rights to Morgan, Colbert, Franklin, Winston, Cullman and Blount counties. Less than a year later they were forced to cede parts of Limestone and Lauderdale county.

Regardless of how much land the Indians ceded, it seemed as if there was always more white settlers who demanded more land.

By the time the Indians gave up title to the rest of Madison, Marshall and Jackson counties in 1819, the once powerful Cherokee tribe had been reduced to a shadow of its former glory. Though still powerful in North Carolina and Georgia, the Indians in North Alabama had been, for the most part, forced to assimilate into the white man's culture with no protection under his laws.

Indians, under the racial laws of Alabama, could not vote, hold office, nor sue for relief in district courts. Though many Indians owned slaves, strangely enough they enjoyed less protection from the courts than their slaves did.


A strong indication of this injustice may be gleaned from the fact that many Indians were sold into slavery here in Madison County. Judge Lane, a noted jurist here in Huntsville, kept a young Cherokee girl as a slave because, "she was a good cook." When she made an attempt to escape and join her tribe Lane, "Hit her in the head with a piece of firewood and locked her into the kitchen."

By 1820, Indians in Madison County had become so rare that a visit to Huntsville by Chief Mad Wolf and twenty of his braves, to purchase blankets, was treated as a notable news item by the local newspaper.

With the prevailing public sentiment against the Indians, the removal of the Cherokees was a foregone conclusion. Many of the chiefs in Georgia had already agreed to it and for the remnants of the tribes in Madison and Jackson counties there was no choice.

In the summer of 1836, under the command of General Benjamin Patterson of Huntsville, the military began gathering the Cherokees together in preparation for the trek west. In Fort Payne, a dirt cellar was used to hold the Indians while others were kept in a ditch under armed guard. Indians living in Marshall County were gathered into a large stockade on the banks of the Tennessee River while Indians in Madison County were herded together at Three Forks of Flint. Anyone possessing as little as 1/8 Indian blood was liable for expulsion.


Squads of soldiers were sent into every hamlet, valley and



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**Barry Jemison, Arab**

cove in search of Indian families. Oftentimes the families were torn from their homes with nothing more than the clothes on their backs. One soldier, who later fought in many battles during the Civil War, stated that the Cherokee removal was the saddest event he had ever witnessed. On file in Nashville, Tennessee is an account of the Indians passing through Huntsville, herded by soldiers through the narrow streets as the townspeople gathered to watch. The writer recalled almost a half century later the looks of helplessness on the Indians' faces.

Not all of the Indians went willingly. Early histories are full of accounts of Indians escaping into the mountains and hiding out. In Jackson County as many as 60 families are supposed to have hidden out. Oftentimes escape was much easier. It was simply a matter of getting a white neighbor or friend to testify that the subject was also white.

Polly Sharp was 33 years old when the soldiers came after her family. Though we have no way of knowing for sure, we can imagine her family sitting around the fireplace at night trying to decide what to do. Paint Rock Valley was their home and to move west to an unknown land was almost inconceivable.

In the end, the Sharp family, like many others, chose to hide in the mountains. Though we don't know for sure, we can imagine them looking down from the airy heights and watching the soldiers march their kin out of the valley.

For the Indians left behind, it was the beginning of the time of their being nonpersons. Officially, there were no Indians left in North Alabama, except for a few families who were allowed to remain on private reservations. All other Indians were subject to prosecution and expulsion.

It was a time of deadly hide and seek for the families hiding in the hills. Soldiers and militia were constantly on the prowl for stray Indians. Oftentimes they were aided by the white settlers, who, by informing on their ex-neighbors, hoped to gain possession of their belongings.

In perhaps one of the cruelest examples, an account in Georgia tells of how white settlers, for sport, hunted the Indians with dogs.

After several years of hiding, the Sharp family, like many others, chose to pass as white. Polly's husband got a job as a farm laborer and

they settled into a small cabin. Probably everyone knew they were Indians, but then as now, the desire for cheap labor overruled people's desires to enforce the laws.

The few Indians left, fearful of being exposed, gave up their native customs. Legends that had been handed down for centuries were forgotten within a few short years. Parents, wanting a better life for their children, refused to talk of their Indian heritage.

The stigma of having Indian ancestry had become a source of shame.

Within a relatively brief period of time all traces of a once mighty Indian civilization in North Alabama had been erased.

Polly's husband died in the 1850s and she never remarried. She grew old tending her garden and keeping to herself. To most people who knew her she was simply, "Old Indian Polly." When she died in 1902, there was nothing to set her apart from the thousands of other Indians who had once lived here, except for the fact that she was the last one.

Today there are estimated to be almost 15,000 descendants of Indians living in the Tennessee Valley. Very few of them can trace their ancestry.



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**"Never let an airplane take you somewhere your brain didn't get to five minutes earlier."**

***Seen in Pilot's Manual***

# Her First Mother's Day

by M. D. Smith, IV



We lived in the married student apartments—WWII converted Army barracks—for two years when the spring of 1963 marked our first child's birth.

It was the Sunday after Easter in Tuscaloosa. Judy went into labor early that morning, and both sets of our parents arrived that afternoon to celebrate our son's birth on April 21 in the Druid City Hospital. Five days later, we were home, alone and scared—having no experience handling and caring for a tiny baby.

We didn't sleep the first few nights very much, not because the baby kept us up, but because we both had to check Dee regularly in his crib at the foot of our double bed to make sure he was breathing. Tales of crib deaths worried us, along with a hundred other "what-ifs" we had read that might happen.

Our two cats, Pete and Gladys, couldn't jump into the spindle-walled crib, so that was one thing less to worry about. And you know cats, after an initial sniff and inspection, they couldn't care less. That changed in the months ahead when they learned to avoid the "tail-puller" crawling around the floor.

Mother's Day was coming precisely three weeks after Dee was born, on May 12—it would be Judy's first as a new mother. After years of me giving my mother a card and a small gift on Mother's Day, I now had two mothers to consider.

In years past, I'd gotten my mother small craft items like a walnut grid hot dish holder for sitting something right out of the oven on until it cooled. I was always a practical kid, taking after my father.

Now I needed something to give Judy, the new mother, from her baby son, and flowers didn't cross my mind. They cost a lot and didn't last—gone in a week. I remembered before Dee arrived, she'd talked about having a throw rug inside our front door—nice to have, and we could take it with us when I graduated in June.

Fine. It was something she wanted, practical from my standpoint, and affordable with my small monthly allowance and earnings from a part-time radio job.

That's what it was. Neither she nor I can remember the rug's details, but she remembers it better than I did, along with an expensive card (cost \$.99), long ago lost in moving to new places to live.

We had a cozy celebration and took our new baby for a stroller ride around the Riverside Apartment buildings on the warm spring Sunday afternoon.

Over the years, Judy says the second Sundays in May tend to blend together, but not the very first one when we were on our own.

Happy Mother's Day to all who've had the experience of your first Mother's Day—a day to remember.

A conclusion is the place where you got tired of thinking.

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# Grandma's Journal 2013

by Iolanda Hicks

I picked up one of my journals the other day and found several entries that brought back funny and loving memories of my three grandsons before the "I am a grown up now!" stage. I am sharing some of those moments.

January 20 - My friends call me Muggzy. This was my youngest grandson (#3) declaring himself. It was the first time I heard the name that my little "Big Man" called himself. Who knows where he got it or who labeled him with such a title! His brothers? A week ago, Muggzy's Dad said that there were 2 small children, Justin (4) and Jasmine (5), who had caught Muggzy's eye, grandchildren of one of Dad's employees. Jasmine, especially caught his eye. He enjoyed giving her a big hug and told his Dad that he would like some private time with Jasmine sometime. Muggzy will be 5 on July 5.

February 10 - Muggzy's brother #2 who I call GQ needed help from Mom in the bathroom. Muggzy, parked outside the bathroom, was well hidden. Mom hadn't shown up yet, so Muggzy answered "Coming!" in his "Mom" voice. In a few seconds GQ called out again and Muggzy used the "Mom's" voice once again, "Coming! Just a minute." He kept the "voice" up for a few moments longer,

then Mom showed up. Muggzy's Dad (my one and only son) was watching his youngest from around the corner. He said Muggzy was trying not to laugh each time he used the "voice". I never found out if GQ found out about the "voice".

February 11- Looking at what I wrote yesterday, I am thinking, just maybe, Muggzy might be surpassing brother #1's earlier antics! When #1 was around 3, we went to a local book store to browse. It was cold outside so we decided to get some hot chocolate at the little Cafe inside the book store. We sat down in the reading area. #1 was sitting in Dad's lap, content to just look around at the people in the near-by aisles. It was a Sunday and so peaceful. All of a sudden, out of #1's cute little mouth, these words were spoken with complete seriousness: "What the HECK are all these people doing here?!" We were stunned and so were the folks standing around! So funny! This was probably #1's first complete sentence.

Not too long after that incident, #1 was sitting on Dad's shoulders at the J.C. Penny's outlet in Decatur. They were in line to pay for some of Mom's purchases. #1 looked behind him to see a tall woman stand-

ing there waiting for her turn to pay. Without hesitation, #1 looked down at her from his vantage point, and in a very loud voice said "YOU are a beautiful woman!" Boy did we laugh. So did everyone else around us! #1 remained very serious.

February 23 - Muggzy's Mom was sitting on the step down between the kitchen and living room and started telling Dad and me how Mrs. Schrimsher, Muggzy's Kindergarten teacher, yesterday, said that Muggzy had a girlfriend. He was spotted walking down the hall at school, with his hand resting gently on the mid-back of a blonde (Clare). When Muggzy was asked about it, he wouldn't deny or confirm the observation but he did smile, showing the recent loss of 2 front teeth.

March 6 - I had lunch with Muggzy on Monday this week. I was late! He met me at the door of the lunchroom and firmly said "You are late Grandmom!" I had told him I would be early and here I was LATE. We sat down and ate. Of course as always, he gave me the "face" and asks "Can you check me out?"

March 28 - Today Muggzy, his brothers, Mom and Dad went to Nashville to visit Grandpop who suffered from Parkinsons disease. I was al-

**"Young at heart, slightly older in other places."**

**Seen on bumper sticker**



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ready there since I was Grandpop's caregiver for a time.

Muggzy jumped out of the car when they arrived, ran to Grandpop and hugged him. "I LOVE YOU GRANDPOP!" We all were hungry and soon went to the local Subway. Muggzy ordered his own meatball sub. All 3 boys, of course, had to sit with Grandpop. Muggzy asked Grandpop why his hands were shaking so much. Grandpop tried to explain that it was part of his illness. Muggzy, with the innocence of a child, to make his Grandpop feel at ease, said "Grandpop, I can shake too! SEE?!" As he said that, he held his hands up and began shaking them.

March 31 - Easter, Wow! What a day! Muggzy got baptized today! Yep. He was looking at Pastor Mark at the end of the service and said "I wanna get Baptized." By golly, he went to his Dad and I heard him say "Dad go tell Pastor Mark that I want to get Baptized." It was amazing! Muggzy walked into the Baptismal, sat down, was asked if he accepted Jesus into his heart as his Savior. He said "yes" and looked out into the church. He turned back, held his nose and Pastor Mark fully immersed him - no fear! This was all the result of #1 brother who had encouraged his parents to go to Willowbrook. He belonged to the youth group there and enjoyed going every week. Dad had gotten baptized April 10, 2010. On Christmas Eve in 2011, Mom and #1 brother got baptized at Joe Davis. Dad got baptized with them again! Maybe #2 GQ will be next!

April 13 - We were talking about eating cake from Peggy Ann Bakery. I looked at Muggzy and said "You and your Dad have a sweet tooth." He looked at me seriously and said "No, I do not have a sweet tooth!" He tilted his head up, opened his mouth wide and showed me his teeth. He pointed in the area

where one was missing and said "See, it's gone. No sweet tooth!"

May 4 - #1 had a sleepover at my place. The three boys will fight over whose turn it is and one will try to bribe the other to give up their turn so that they can have it! #1 got an academic cudo for a Baskin Robbins treat. I was so proud of him! As we were walking back to the car, I asked #1 if he enjoyed his ice cream. He grinned, looked at me and said "Grandmom, ice cream is like life. It's over before you know it!" What serious birthday philosophy from such a youngster!

May 31 - It was #2's 9th birthday today. We had his favorite cake and GQ got some neat gifts! It happened to be award day at school too. He got his Certificate of Completion to the third grade. Yeah!!! Muggzy will go to 1st grade and #1 got the highest score in all of his subjects, made the A honor roll and Certificate of Completion to the 6th grade. A very good day!

June 24 - This was a special day for me. I had all 3 of the boys with me. We were in the car and the boys were talking about their Mom's birthday coming up in a few days. I shared with them what I had gotten their Mom. #1 and GQ spoke up and said "It sounds like you spent more on Dad's birthday than you did Mom's birthday." I must have had a funny look on my face because Muggzy immediately said "Grandmom, Dad is your son. He came first, you have known him longer and you should spend more on him." I cracked up!

August 7 - I failed to record what a special day July 28th was to me and the family. Not only would it have been my Dad's 93rd birthday but it was the day GQ got baptized. He decided after listening to Pastor Mark's talk on Parables and baptism, being Baptized in the river was what he wanted to do. #1 and Muggzy joined GQ in the river and were all baptized together! Pastor Mark was awestruck to have all 3 brothers together!

December 16 - It is just before Christmas and Muggzy had an epiphany! "Grandmom, I believe that I am half human and half elf. Just look at my ears! They are almost pointed! Isn't that great?! I am definitely Santa's Secret Elf!"

The innocence of youth. How wonderful! It's been 9 years now and the three brothers have grown. Some of the innocence has faded and knowledge has replaced that "look". Regardless of time moving forward, I will always have those fond and funny memories of the days spent with #1, GQ and Muggzy!

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# Dallas Village Friends

by Ruby Crabbe (2005)

I believe just about everyone in Huntsville knows two men, Clarence Carroll and Floyd Hardin. Their goodness and kindness to their fellow man follows them everywhere they go. They have shown more love toward people in this area than anyone I have ever known.

Clarence's trips to the hospitals to visit sick folks are too numerous to even try to count. His kind words to the sick are spoken with love and tenderness.

If anyone, not only in Dallas Village, but all the surrounding areas, needed help - Clarence and Floyd were there. If anyone was depressed or ill, Clarence and Floyd were there. If someone passed away and they needed more cars to carry the family and friends to the cemetery, these men were there to help.

I remember when my aunt Ida passed away 62 years ago. Someone made the remark that there weren't going to be enough cars for all the friends and family to get to the cemetery. A voice spoke up and said, "Clarence will be here with his car."

I remember the first time I ever saw Clarence Carroll. I was a second-grader at Rison school. My mother, Josie Allen, sent my sister Eva and I over to Clarence's barbershop for a trim. Clarence asked us how we wanted it cut. Without hesitation, Eva and I said we both wanted our hair cut just like "Widdle's".

Well, Clarence had no idea who Widdle was. Didn't know him from Adam's house cat. We had a first cousin by the name of Willie Thomas and we thought so much of Willie we thought he just hung the moon. But neither Eva nor I could say "Willie", so it always came out "Widdle".

After more questioning, Clarence finally understood that Widdle was a boy. Clarence picked his scissors up and did he go to work on our hair! He gave us the finest boy's haircuts we had ever seen. Hair

was on the floor everywhere! Eva and I were so proud of our new cuts that we couldn't wait to get home to show Mama our Widdle hair cut.

We could tell at a glance by Mama's reaction that she was not pleased by our Widdle cuts. She went over to have a little talk with Clarence. Clarence told her that we wanted our hair cut just like Widdle's. When she heard that name Mama knew who he was talking about.

She thanked him for cutting her two little girls' hair just like THEY wanted it cut. But for some reason my Sis and I noticed that when Mama sent us for our next haircut she gave us a note to give to Clarence BEFORE he cut our hair.

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

*Elaine Boosler*



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# Honor Guard for a Vice President



by L. D. Rogers

I have only seen one President in person and that was Harry Truman and I got to see him two times. The first time I was in grade school in Paducah, KY. It just happened that his Vice President Alben Barkley was from Paducah. There was a parade downtown on Broadway and the President and Vice President were riding in a convertible waving to everyone along the way. Our teacher found out about the parade and our school was just one block over from Broadway on Kentucky Avenue so we all went.

The next time I saw him it wasn't a happy occasion. This time the President was in town for the funeral of Vice President Alben Barkley. I was a member of the Kentucky National Guard - 149th Combat Engineers. Our unit was chosen to be part of the honor guard for the funeral. Alben Barkley was one of our most well known citizens that had a home in Paducah. He had been a lawyer and politician, had served in both houses of Congress, and had been the 35th Vice President of the United States. His beautiful home was called Angels.

Mr. Barkley was addressing a mock democratic convention at Washington and Lee University on April 30, 1956. While giving his speech he made the statement, "I WOULD RATHER BE A

SERVANT IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD THAN TO SIT IN THE SEATS OF THE MIGHTY."

He then fell dead from a massive heart attack. He was brought back to Paducah and I considered it a great honor to serve at his funeral.

Our unit met at the National Guard Armory early the morning of the funeral.

There were several jeeps there from Fort Campbell. We loaded in the jeeps and went to Union Station to meet the train. It wasn't long after we got to the station that the train came in and they loaded the casket in a hearse and we all followed the hearse to the funeral home.

We were posted outside the

funeral home while visitation was being held. There were a lot of people going in to pay their respects. I do remember the Governor of Kentucky, A.B. Chandler, was there.

After the visitation was over we followed the hearse to Broadway United Methodist Church for the funeral. We formed our ranks outside the church and stayed there while the funeral was going on. I couldn't believe the crowd of people that showed up outside the church. There were so many they blocked off the street.

After the service we followed the hearse to Mount Kenton Cemetery where Alben Barkley was finally laid to rest.

When I look back over my life this is one time that I really feel honored to have served such a very fine person.



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I know it is Spring because I am bombarded with catalogs (many for seeds) every day. With postage going up, it surprises me at the number that keep coming. I hope you held off until after Income Tax day to plant tomatoes, but the frosts are behind us now. Welcome, May.

This is a beautiful time of the year, with yards full of flowers. Williams Street is fantastic, as well as driving through the Maple Hill Cemetery.

Schools will get out at the end of this month, so be mindful of children riding their bikes in the streets. When balls are kicked into the road, children run after them and don't think about cars coming, so drivers must be extra careful.

A dear friend of mine lost her six-year-old nephew to a drunk driver in the middle of a sunny afternoon. He was out riding his bike, and a drunk driver came and hit him. So tragic, parents have a hard time recovering from such a stupid mistake. So I urge each and every one of you to slow down and watch out for the little ones.

Pools will open up soon. So now is the time to register your children for swim lessons. I taught swim lessons for twenty-three years, and I can tell you it is one of the more essential things you can do for your child. It will last a lifetime, even save his life should the situation occur.

The Huntsville Pilgrimage Association is asking for donations to help preserve one of Huntsville's most treasured landmarks, Maple Hill Cemetery. Memberships are all levels starting at \$35.00. Your donations are greatly appreciated.

Mother's Day is May 8th, be thinking of something special you can do for her. My children used to give me tickets that I could redeem for car washes, dishes done, walking the dog and doing something special like breakfast in bed.

Memorial Day Weekend starts on May 27th. It is the time to remember our fallen soldiers. Maple Hill Cemetery has a section where many are buried.

Remember color, taste, and smell will keep you well. Stay Covid aware.

**HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!**





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# Don't Lie to Yourself About Age, Clothes or Love

*Used with permission of The Nashville Retrospect*

*From the April 21, 1941 Nashville Banner By Dorothy Dix*

The one person whom a woman should never lie to is herself. Speaking frankly and honestly and by the book, we are bound to concede that there are many times and occasions in the life of every woman when a few taradiddles to strangers bridge over a dangerous situation, and when telling a fib or so preserves the peace and harmony of the household.

But we must also admit that admirable as truth is in the abstract, in reality it is TNT which is likely to have disastrous results when carelessly handled. So we may be sure that when a woman tells her tightwad husband that her new hat cost \$5 when she paid \$15 for it rather than have a fight with him over the price; or when she presses a bore to stay longer and tell more about himself instead of choking him; or when she welcomes a self-invited guest with cordiality instead of slaying her on the doorstep as she would like to, her lies are accounted unto her for righteousness, and the Recording Angel drops a pitying tear upon them that blots them out.

Whatever her attitude toward others, however, with herself a woman should be Veracious Jane. She should use no pretense in dealing with herself and practice no self-deception. She should look herself and her circumstances and her problems squarely in the face and say to herself: "There you are, my dear, so what?" If she did, she would save herself a lot of trouble.

Take the matter of age, for instance, about which women have told enough falsehoods to send the entire feminine sex to perdition. A woman's birthdays are a private matter between herself and the Vital Statistics Bureau, and if she chooses to remain a permanent 39 for 20 years at a stretch she has a right to do so. It is nobody's business.

But it becomes a fatal mistake when she lies to herself about her age and tries to be 39 instead of the 49 or 59 or 69 she really is. For nothing is less charming than the mature or elderly woman who tries to act girlie-girlie, who simpers and smirks and squeals with enthusiasm like a debutante, and talks



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**The Life and Death of Bulldog Daniel**

"Bulldog Daniel was an unusual character," remembered a close friend. "He didn't cooperate with the authorities but could literally spend the rest of his life in jail. All of the old-time everyone in Huntsville had something they wanted to hide and now they were all wondering what Bulldog would say about them, if he talked."

## Thank You!!

This is just a special **THANK YOU** to our readers, advertisers and writers who are keeping the magazine going! When our readers pay \$2 for an issue, that money goes to our printing and we couldn't stay in business without you.

It's been 32 years now full of great stories. There are just a few of us who are putting this magazine together. We publish very unique articles and are truly a local paper.

Keep sending in your family memories - we need them! We Appreciate You more than you know.

about her boy friends. The soundest advice ever given a women is: Be your age.

**Be Truthful About Clothes**

Then a woman should not lie to herself when she goes to buy her clothes. It takes a lot of courage to face the heartbreaking and devastating truth that one's figure isn't what it used to be 20 years ago; that one's peaches and cream complexion has gone sallow; that one's golden hair is streaked with gray, and that all the snappy little numbers in the dress shops were designed for cuties who weigh about half as much as one does and are a third of one's age.

It is an awful wrench to a woman when she discovers she has to pass up plaids and has to consider lines. But she saves herself a lot of ridicule if she accepts the truth. For the only person who is fooled by the woman who dyes her hair and mascaras her eyes and dresses like her granddaughter is herself. You can't make old sheep look like spring lambs.

**Don't Lie About Love**

But, most of all, women should never lie to themselves about love, yet they do it continually. They are so eager to be loved they fool themselves into thinking that men are in love with them who never gave them a passing thought. The world is full of old maids who have waited for years and years for the proposal that never came. They cling so desperately to love that they will not believe it dead, though they see it mouldering in its coffin.

Yet there is not a woman in the world so dumb as not to know when the man she loves has ceased to love her. He tells her in a thousand ways—by coldness, by neglect, often by flaunting the new love in her face. She knows she has lost all her allure for him, and that by no miracle can she blow the dead ashes of

passion into a flame again, but she will not tell herself the truth. She will not say: It is all over and I will set about making myself a new life. She keeps on lying to herself, hypnotizing herself into believing that someday he will come back and love her as he used to do.

What a pity we women lie so often to ourselves. But, perhaps, we couldn't live if we did not.

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# THE MONKEY

by Cecil Ashburn as told  
to Tom Carney



was no Jake. Ashburn was getting worried - it was not like Jake to simply disappear. Finally, after searching for a few minutes he found Jake hiding behind some bushes, trembling with fear.

"Captain," Jake said, "There's a monkey over there staring at me!"

Ashburn looked around, but needless to say there was no monkey. This was a real dilemma. Jake was a valued employee but if he was halluci-

Jake was a long time employee of Ashburn & Gray Construction Company. Although he was known to "tip the bottle" on a regular basis, he was still a valued employee who showed up for work on time every day.

Once during the 1960s he was sent to a construction site on the Arsenal. That morning Cecil Ashburn, one of the owners of the company, was driving around checking on the progress of various jobs and decided to stop by and see how Jake was doing.

Ashburn parked his truck, got out and looked around but there

**"My silence doesn't mean I agree with you. It's just that your level of ignorance has rendered me speechless."**

*One "friend" to another*



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nating - seeing monkeys - it might be dangerous to leave him on the job alone.

"You been drinking?" Ashburn asked.

"No sir, Captain. I had a few last night but I was fine until a few minutes ago!"

Not knowing what else to do, Ashburn told Jake to go back to the shop and work there for a few days until he got over it.

Jake didn't mention the monkey again but the more he thought about it the more worried he became. Finally, one day at quitting time, he announced to Ashburn that he had quit drinking. "Captain," he said, "I done learned my lesson!"

Ashburn congratulated Jake on his wise decision and went on home.

That evening Cecil was reading the newspaper when he saw an article about Miss Baker, the first monkey in space.

Miss Baker had escaped her cage at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville and had been gone for several days before being captured in the woods near where Jake was working.

Ashburn clipped the story out and first thing the following morning showed it to Jake.

"Jake," he said, "It looks like you really did see that monkey."

Jake stood there, not saying anything, but with a look on his face like he was about to cry. "What's the matter, Jake?" Jake continued to stand there with a sad look on his face, struggling for the right words. Finally he looked at Ashburn and said, "Captain, I reckon I done quit drinking for nothing!"

**Patience: What you have when there are too many witnesses.**

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All of us have moods - both good and bad. When you're feeling especially good, make a list of what made you feel good or brought you joy.. Make another list of things to do to cheer you up when you feel low. Then when a bad day comes along, read your list and see if anything on there can make you feel better.



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# Heard On the Street

by *Cathey Carney*



Of course I had a winner for the heart and tiny bunny. You guys always amaze me - I had a hard time finding them myself. The heart was on page 31, in the Southern Comfort ad, nearly in the middle. See it? Then the bunny I thought NO ONE would find - it was on page 13 in the Ole Dad's ad - see that little calf lower right, look at his nose. Can you see it now? My first correct caller, and I had a lot, was **Judy Wilson** who lives in Owens Cross Roads. She told me she and her 6 grandkids loved to look for hidden things in magazines when they were all younger. Judy is retired from Huntsville City Schools and found her copy of Old Huntsville in the machine that's in front of Mandarin House in Hampton Cove. Congratulations to you Judy, you win a \$50 year's subscription to Old Huntsville magazine.

We had calls on the beauti-

ful little girl who was featured in April's Photo of the Month. It was **Jane Barr** who loves living on Monte Sano and knows so much history about it. The first call was **Patty Thomas** who said she met Jane years ago at a library event. Congratulations to you Patty!

And there's a very small **feather** hidden somewhere in these pages - be the first to call and if you HAVE NOT won before you are the winner. Most difficult EVER.

We got the news recently that the **Downtown Rescue Mission** has opened another new thrift store in Madison - 101 Plaza Blvd. - and it will have treasures that you need to find. Remember that every time you buy something at the DTRM thrift shops, that money goes to help less fortunate people including Owen's House, which houses and cares for women and children at their main location at 1400 Evangel Drive in Huntsville.

Also DTRM is helping Mom's by teaming up with Two Men and a Truck just before Mother's Day. **Joe Hollingsworth**, franchise owner of TMAT says his company wants to help the community and wants to provide essential items for the moms at Owen's House at DTRM. If you would like to help contact **Stephanie Mills** at 256.694.6325.

We hear alot lately about people running into potholes and damaging their tires - the city says this is the absolute worst time for potholes and you have to look out for them - the city is repairing as they find them but with the freezing and thawing it just happens every year. When you report something

it goes to the proper city department and they are really good at taking care of these kind of notifications.

A special hello to **Pastor Paul Hillard**, whom I spoke with yesterday. He's promising to send some amazing stories!

This might be something fun you could do with your kids or just yourself. Buy green onions, stalks of celery, avocados, etc. with the intention of eating part of them then planting the rest. Green onions - have a pot of dirt ready or do this in your garden. Cut the green onions a couple inches from the bottom, so you have the roots. Then just plant that part and eat the rest. Celery - cut the bottom off maybe 3 inches up - eat the celery and plant the rest. See what happens with all this - lots of fun for everyone and you're growing your own veges! Carrots might work too - use your own imagination.

**Rosemary Leatherwood** wants to wish her sweet husband **Bill** a heavenly birthday. **Jamie** and **Billy** miss their Dad very much, he was the rock of their family.

**Susan Coulter** is the lady you'll see when you go into the Truist Bank (used to be BB&T) on Church Street. She is the Customer Ac-

## Photo of The Month

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

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This Little guy ran a popular restaurant with a Mill in it.



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count Manager there and knows tons of people who see her for help with their banking questions. She is going to be blessed with a grand baby, a girl, on May 5th! Her daughter and the mama-to-be is **Brie Coulter Clark** and the family is SO excited. Susan's daughter **Ashley** is celebrating her anniversary with husband **David Santos** on May 5th also so that is a big day!

Also at Truist, **Ianthia Bridges** is the sweet lady who is usually at the drive-through window on Church Street. Her family are celebrating events in May: **Mark Ramsey** is her uncle and has a May 4th birthday; **Melvin Ramsey** is another uncle with a May 8th birthday. Then a very important date is the 29th wedding anniversary for **Ianthia** and sweet husband **Frazier**. And we cannot leave out her mom **Joyce Ramsey** who has a 70th birthday on May 28th!

**Elizabeth Wharry** knows a Catholic nun who lives in Cleveland, OH and just celebrated 75 years as a nun. Elizabeth has a story in this issue about her Confirmation as a 2nd grader, and **Sister Anne Cecile** is the amazing person who meant so much to the children. Sister Cecile just turned 95 years old and has made such an impact on so many young lives.

**George Bennett** was known to so many in our area. In the early 1970s he traded his desk job for the opportunity to join his friend **David Byers** as a partner in Byers Nursery Center on North Parkway. In the mid 80s George had bought David's interest in the nursery and renamed it Bennett's Nursery. George's son **Jeff** joined him in 1989 and they spent the next 30 years working side by side.

If you had any questions about plants and asked George, he would have the answer for you. Everyone has been to Bennett's nursery with the little train, beautiful gazebo that housed musical talent on the weekends, smoked chicken that he gave away to customers, beautiful natural gardens and ideas for different types of landscaping.

George passed away on March 16, at the age of 78, and leaves a real void in the hearts of many. George was a generous, humble, kind man and didn't want any credit for what he did. Surviving George are wife **Corrine Bennett**, daughter

**Jeannie Russell (Danny)**; son **Jeffrey Bennett (Geraldine)**; brother **Steven Bennett (Mary)** along with beloved step children, grand and great grandchildren, nieces and nephews. He loved his family above all and loved telling stories to his grandchildren. I just have a feeling he's up in heaven organizing an amazing garden full of plants and little animals. He will be so missed.

Happy birthday to my friend and writer **Jim McBride**. He turned 75 recently and promised more stories are on the way! Have a great birthday, Jim!

Saturday, May 7th, is the day you need to be in the **Five Points neighborhood**. They are featuring porch bands through the historic district and you just park and walk. Bring chairs so that you can move from place to place. It was a huge success last year and looks to be even bigger this year! Porchfest 5 Points!

**Mary Ann Blakemore** is the beautiful lady who recently celebrated her 83rd birthday on March 23rd. She is **Tom Blakemore's** Mom and he couldn't be more proud of her.

**McThornmor Acres** has just been designated as a historic district here in Huntsville. It was recently added to the National Registry of Historic Places. It recognizes this north Holmes Avenue neighborhood as home to many members of the space team that sent the first man to the moon. City Councilman **Bill Kling** worked really hard on this but there were

many more who worked with him to get it done.

If you're lucky enough to still have your Mom with you, give her a huge hug and always remember that moment. Call her if you can't hug her, it doesn't have to be Mother's Day either!

Have a great May.



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# Latham United Methodist Church Favorites

## Auburn Cream Cheese Ball

- 1 pkg. cream cheese
- 1 pkg. Carl Buddig corned beef
- 3 green onions
- 1/2 t. garlic powder
- 1 T. Worcestershire sauce

Chop green onions and cut up the beef. Blend with the cream cheese, add garlic powder and Worcestershire sauce to taste. You can use a food processor or just a hand mixer. This is good on Triscuits.

Kelley Copeland

## Cheddar Cheese Ring

- 1 pkg. sharp Cheddar cheese, grated
- 1/2 small onion, grated
- 1 c. mayonnaise
- 1 c. chopped pecans
- 1/2 to 1 t. cayenne pepper
- Strawberry preserves

Mix first 5 ingredients together and shape into a ring. Before serving, spoon strawberry preserves into the center. Best to let set overnight.

Susan Yarbrough

## Chocolate and Caramel Pretzels

- 1 large bag Rolos candy
- 1 large bag small twisted pretzels

Preheat oven to 200 degrees. Place pretzels flat on a wax paper-covered cookie sheet and top each with a piece of Rolos candy. Put pretzels and candy in the oven for about 3 minutes, just long enough for the candy to soften. Remove from oven and place another pretzel on top of the candy and press to make the Rolo spread evenly across the pretzel. Allow to cool completely before removing from wax paper.

Amanda Clark

## Marinated Tomatoes

- 8 tomatoes, peeled
- 1/4 c. fresh parsley
- 1/4 t. pepper
- 1/4 c. oil
- 1 pressed garlic clove
- 1 t. salt
- 1 t. sugar
- 2 T. tarragon vinegar
- 2 t. prepared mustard

Quarter the tomatoes and pour the sauce on at least 18 hours ahead.

Kelly Fugit Kattos

## Martha's Chicken Casserole

- 5 bone-in chicken breasts
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 1 can cream of celery soup
- 8 oz. sour cream
- 3/4 c. butter
- 2 sticks Ritz crackers, crushed

Cook chicken breasts, remove bone and chop the meat.

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Mix chicken with the soups and sour cream. Pour into a 9x13" greased baking dish. Melt butter and mix with crushed crackers. Place over the top of the mixture and bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

Claudia Klus

### Never Fail Cheesecake

3/4 lb. cream cheese (4 small pkgs)  
 2 eggs  
 1/2 c. granulated sugar  
 1 t. vanilla extract  
 1 graham cracker crust  
**Icing:**  
 1/2 t. vanilla extract  
 1 c. sour cream  
 5 t. sugar- rounded

Soften cheese, blend in sugar then add eggs beaten with vanilla. Beat til smooth and creamy. Pour into graham cracker crust.

Bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes. Remove and pour icing over cake, return to oven and bake another 10 minutes. Cake should be refrigerated 5 to 6 hours.

Tip: I find 20 minutes is not long enough. Stick with knife

to test doneness after 20 minutes.

Betty Booth

### Admonition Cake

1 Duncan Hines yellow butter cake mix

Cook as directed in 2 cake pans and cool. Use string to split each layer in half.

**Frosting:**

2 c. sugar  
 2 c. sour cream  
 12 oz. frozen grated coconut (not flaked)

Mix the frosting the night before and let it meld flavors. Frost the cake on the top sides only - not on the sides.

Wrap frosted cake in Saran Wrap and store in the refrigerator for five days. Do not cut ahead of time.

Frankie Earle

### Chocolate Peanut Butter Pie

**Crust:**

7 whole graham crackers  
 6 T. butter  
 1/4 c. Splenda sweetener

**Filling:**

1 (1.4 oz.) pkg. sugar-free, fat-free instant chocolate pudding mix

1-1/2 c. skim milk  
 1/2 c. crunchy peanut butter  
 Sugar-free Cool Whip

For crust, crush graham crackers and mix with Splenda and butter. Press into deep dish pie pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 15 minutes, cool.

Whisk pudding into milk til smooth. Whisk in peanut butter slowly til smooth.

Pour filling into cooled pie crust. Spread Cool Whip on top and chill.

Rebecca Drake

Ernest Hemingway almost died in back-to-back plane crashes. In 1954, Hemingway and his fourth wife, Time and Life correspondent Mary Welsh, were vacationing in Belgian Congo when their sightseeing charter flight clipped a pole and crashed. When attempting to reach medical care in Entebbe the following day, they boarded another plane, which crashed upon takeoff, leaving Hemingway with burns, a concussion, and his brain leaking cerebral fluid. When they finally got to Entebbe (by truck), they found journalists had already reported their deaths, so Hemingway got to read his own obituaries.



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# The Class of "1951"

by Dale Casteel



The Year was "1950" and the war in Korea had broken out. Four boys were preparing to start their senior year at Clements High School, in Athens, Alabama. This would be Clements' first football team ever. Two of the boys played sports; William McElyea and Dale Casteel, while the other two, Richard McElyea and Harry Kerr, were involved with other school activities.

These four boys grew up together as best of friends. They hunted, fished and camped out on the banks of the Elk River, They would stay close friends even when they started courting the girls and going out on dates together at times.

The boys had to work to help make a living. Their par-

ents were poor folks, but this would not stop them from enjoying their life.

At sixteen years of age, they each decided to join the National Guard Unit, in Athens, and would be assigned to the same company, Company B, of the 1343rd Combat Engineers. This would be a way for them to earn extra money, other than working in the fields, chopping and picking cotton. And, it worked out pretty well for a while. In 1949, their first training would be in Fort Benning, Georgia and would last for two weeks.

However, in the summer of 1950, while William, Dale and Harry were practicing football and Richard was involved in other school activities, the 1343rd battalion would be mobilized into active service. Now, these young men would become official military members and their lives would change forever.

In Athens their training would begin at the fairgrounds. However, as time allowed, they would continue practicing football. William, Dale and Harry would actually get to play their first football game and it would be on #1 field at Athens High School because Clements did not yet have a football field. The Clements High School Football Team played Tanner High School and took a "good licking" from the Tanner boys that year.

On the following Saturday, the four young men would load up on a troop train headed for Fort Campbell, Kentucky, where they would take basic training. After training, they would load again on a troop train and head west. Approximately one week later, they pulled into Seattle, WA. (It does rain a lot in Seattle). They stayed in Seattle for a few days and during this time they would get passes to go into town at night. A particular song that would be played and forever in the minds of the young men was "Tennessee Waltz" by Patti Page. Of course, this would make each of these "ole country boys" homesick.

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The young men loaded on the ship "The Marine Phoenix" one evening. While unsure of their destination, they would bunk for the night and awake the next morning with some of the boys experiencing sea sickness.

About a month later, they would dock in Yokohama, Japan, and their stay would be less than a day. The crew would not know that their destination was Korea until the next day. The ship would dock again in Pusan, Korea, and within a few weeks the crew had gathered all of the necessary equipment in preparation for the war. The battalion would head north and travel through Inchon and Soaul, which were cities that had been completely destroyed by bombs. Traveling further north, they began to hear the big guns firing and each would know exactly their destination.

Reminiscing, the young men would talk about their class back at home and wonder how it would be to be back in school. However, they never once would complain about their surrounding circumstances. They knew that it was their duty to perform any task that their superiors commanded.

Although they would leave Athens, Alabama, as boys they would become men in Korea and their love for their family and country would grow stronger. Also, each would have a new perspective about Freedom. And, they would get on "speaking terms" with the Good Lord. This would be their strength to continue in the worst of circumstances and have hope for the future.

After 13 months in Korea, they would leave as proud Americans and proud to have been able to serve their country. They would learn more about life in Korea than they could have ever

learned in school. The young men left Korea walking Tall and Proud.

The families welcomed the young men home and were happy that they returned safely. However, it seemed that no one could really understand what the young men had experienced and lived. No one really knew the true cost of this war. Gratitude was not expressed by the public and freedom was taken for granted by all.

If truth be known, there is probably no other school (in the U.S.) that would have 25% of their senior class removed and sent to war. And, returned home alive. Could this be a record for a little county school (Clements High School) in Athens, Alabama?

As one of these young men, I can honestly say that I am proud to have served with Richard McElyea, William McElyea and Harry Kerr. It was an honor to have served with each of you. I want to "Thank You" for serving our country with an unselfish manner, I love each of you as my brother and you three are among "My Heroes"



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**Seen in local church bulletin**

# The Great Bed Sheet Caper

by Billy Joe Cooley

During the second world war there spread a great spirit of patriotism across America. Some ladies in Paint Rock Valley decided it would be nice, since we had an abundance of cotton in the South, to cut bed sheets into four-inch squares and convert the squares into bandages for use in "poor houses" up north.

A Mrs. Kirkpatrick knew elderly people who lived in such a commune in Dayton, Ohio, so it was agreed that the bandages would be sent there for use in the facility's clinic. The ladies theorized that cotton bandages were difficult to obtain in northern communities.

Each week, the Valley ladies would buy two or three new bed sheets, cut them into the little squares, sew hems on the borders and ship them up to Ohio in cardboard boxes. Since money was scarce during the war, the ladies would sell produce from their tiny "victory" gardens to finance the buying of the bed sheets. Some even sold home-baked bread, cakes and pies to workers in home-front factories and mills in nearby Huntsville and Scottsboro. The ladies worked their fingers to the bone, so to speak, to provide this very necessary service to the ailing elderly of the Ohio Home for the Destitute.

Three days a week the Paint Rock Valley women would meet in various homes, pray for the war effort and pour over their bed sheet tasks. It also gave the women a chance to talk about various events in the community and stay abreast of war news as it affected the community: which local servicemen had been killed or wounded overseas and which ones were missing in action.

But mainly it was the bed sheet project that excited the ladies. The knowledge that their bandages were being sent to help poor people in another part of the nation accounted for a great deal of morale-boosting. That would lessen the demand for "civilian" ban-

dages on the medical industry, thus freeing more commercial bandages for use by our servicemen overseas.

Cut, cut, cut! Sew, sew, sew! This procedure went on for years, until the war finally ended and medical supplies, including bandages, became more plentiful across the nation.

The ladies of Paint Rock Valley were given special recognition for their fine deeds with the bed sheet bandages.

Mrs. Kirkpatrick finally dispatched a letter to the Ohio poor-house and mentioned that she hoped the bandages had served a needed purpose, since each tiny square had been cut and sewn by hand and "each stitch was made with a loving prayer by the Christian ladies of Paint Rock Valley, Alabama."

Soon a reply to her letter was received from the medical director of the Ohio institution. It read in part:

"Dear ladies. Thanks for the many bandages you have sent us in recent years. However since we didn't need many bandages, our womenfolk painstakingly sewed the bandages together and made bed sheets.

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**"I have a bachelorette degree in computers."**

**Seen on local store clerk resume**



# A Horse Tale

by Catherine Cameron



My son Philip has always been a lover of horses. When he was about 4 years old, he almost wore out the Sears & Roebuck Catalog looking at the saddles and horse gear. I suppose he thought if he had a saddle, a horse would follow. We could not afford a horse, nor did we have a place to keep one.

When Phil got older, he and his wife Cindy were able to buy a house with some pasture land. So he got his horses. At first, he had 4 horses. Through the years, he lost two of them and only had 2 left; a brother, CC and a sister, Lady. They were beautiful Palominos. During a spell of sickness, under Doctor's orders, I spent a couple of weeks, recuperating at their house. I usually arose from my night's rest, before Phil and Cindy. I would sit in their living room and watch the horses go to the top of the hill hunting sparse clumps of grass, as the sun rose. It was in April, so it was still chilly, I thought they were a beautiful sight to see.

That fall the sister Lady died. I knew very little about horses, so I had no idea how CC would grieve. He ran all over the pasture, whinnying, looking for his sister. It was one of the saddest things I have ever heard. When I talked to Phil on the cell phone, I could hear his sad call.

There were horses in the field adjacent to CC's pasture. CC would call to them and they would come to the fence, briefly, then they would go away.

Then a strange thing happened. At night, instead of sleeping in the barn, CC

would lie down by the fence. The other horses came and lay down by the fence on their side, until morning. CC started his whinnying all over again, as soon as his friends left.

Phil & Cindy felt they couldn't afford another horse. They had a friend who had a Jerusalem donkey they wanted to sell. They bought the donkey, Sister Sarah, as a companion for CC. They had to be very watchful, because of the difference in size. It took several weeks, but now they are good friends and stay together all the time.

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# Third Time is the Charm

by Lawrence Hillis

We recently returned from a two-week vacation trip to Hawaii. Our attempt to go to Hawaii began 35 years ago but we got caught up in a travel scam. Looking for an affordable plan, we paid up front only to find out the guy was a notorious thief and con man. Some businessmen in town who were also victims of his con game banded together and had the man arrested. Our ideal vacation hopes were dashed when we didn't get any money back and had to postpone the trip.

Two years ago, we were again making plans to go to Hawaii, but the Covid pandemic hit, cancelling air flights to Hawaii and closed down hotels. We cancelled arrangements, and this time we got our deposits back and received flight vouchers.

A few months ago, our daughter Kala and her husband Anthony Brown started making plans for a Hawaii trip and asked Karen and me to accompany them. We jumped at that chance. Kala and Anthony have traveled to Hawaii a number of times and they know exactly what to do and where to go.

However, things were looking grim a few weeks before the trip when Karen was helping her sister grocery shopping and tore her

bicep lifting a 50-pound sack of dog food at the store. Her doctor prescribed immediate surgery and while he was in there found her rotator cuff also needed repair. I was sitting in the car outside the surgery center during her operation holding her cell phone when the text messages started coming in. One message was from her niece and the conversation went like this:

Niece: Aunt Karen, I heard you were going to have surgery. What happened?

Me: Tore bicep lifting a 50-pound bag of dog food.

Niece: But you don't even have a dog.

Me: Due to the price of groceries, we have been substituting it for meat in our meals.

Niece: Are you saying dog food?

Me: Yes, it is good for the digestive system and helps us run faster.

Niece: Are you eating dog food?

Me: Yes, the only bad thing is that when Lawrence gets around females, he begins to sniff them, and he says I have

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been growling at him and barking a lot.

Niece: Who is this on Karen's phone?

Me: This is your Uncle Lawrence.

Niece: Oh crap.

So, there she was with her arm in a sling only weeks before our big trip. For several weeks, Karen received excellent therapy care from Byron Moffett at Focus Physiotherapy. Thankfully, she was able to get out of the sling a few days before our trip.

We spent a week on Oahu and then a week on Maui. Kala and Anthony planned a hike almost every day.

Just to name a few we hit the famous Diamond Head ancient volcano and a very strenuous Koko Head hike up a thousand foot ascend to some pill boxes left over from the WWII. We hiked a tropical forest and a Lava rock beach in Kihei.

We rode a ship to watch whales and a submarine to watch under water sea life. We toured the USS Arizona in Pearl Harbor and the old Hawaii Iolani Palace.

During the evenings we swam in the hotel pool and I attempted to surf, but only Kala managed to conquer the surf board.

I think my favorite adventure was the evening we drove up the dormant Haleakala volcano and viewed an astonishing sunset.

I did not know there was a mountain 10,000 feet above sea level in Hawaii and above the cloud tops. It was astonishing to see the top of the mountain was barren of trees and the shades of gray looked like pictures on the moon.

It is a shame we had to wait 35 years to make the trip to Hawaii. I would suggest to Old Huntsville Magazine's readers if they have a chance to go to Hawaii, please go, and not to take 35 years.

**One of the most important things a father can do for his children is to love and respect their mother.**



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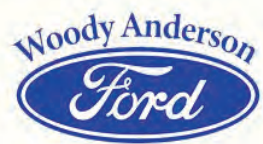
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# Spring's Child

by Ted Roberts



I admired her for months, but she never paid any attention to me. How could She? (Huntsville is full of majestic trees: I know them, but they don't even glance at me.) She was a wide-spreading Catalpa tree that filled up the whole front yard. Her business was with nature, not gawky spectators. I'm sure she wouldn't miss one of her baby trees that grew in her shadow. There were so many. The seeds have all fallen around the base of the tree where they fight for light and nutrients. He, the Creator, has not used his magic of the Maple seed wherein the wind blows the seeds so they could fly far away from the competitive ground beneath the mother tree.

I had been watching the mama tree for many months. And like I say, I had admired her many months. She proudly held up her leafy arms as to provide shade for man and beast and she was a super condo to many families of squirrels. Weary birds by the dozens rested in her arms. A magnificent tree. If there was a tree guarding the gates of Eden, it would be like this.

One day, as I drove home, down Weatherly Road, I could resist temptation no longer. I stopped and parked in her yard. Strengthened by my admiration of this living, green replica of the Statue of Liberty. Welcome, she seemed to say.

I marched up to the front door and introduced myself to the owner (as though there could be any owner beside He who

made humanity and trees and he already knew me). I stressed my credentials as a solid citizen of Huntsville, a prompt payer of city tree tax and a lover and caregiver to trees. I pointed out that I had a spacious, sunny yard made from the kind of soil that Catalpa trees craved. I bragged that not a single tree had ever filed a complaint against me. And not one tree had ever died in my sunshiny yard. Most telling, not one tree ever punished me by falling on the house.

Then I struck home. "Ma'm, would you mind if I dug up one of the baby trees that are sprinkled around the yard - just one, ma'm - one of the smaller ones will do nicely."

She must have been impressed by my panting desire and the fact that I was a tree lover. "Certainly," she said. "Just get yourself a spade and a bucket and help yourself."

I was back in 20 minutes with a spade in one hand and a bucket in the other. I dug up a huge clump of earth around the seedling I'd selected after exploring a couple dozen trees. She was a beauty - just like her mama. As I dug I looked nervously over my shoulder to make sure mama didn't care, even though the

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other trees, a pale Maple and a middle-aged Oak, looked on jealously. She seemed at peace except for one time when the wind ruffled her leaves, she made a long, whimpering moan. I put down the shovel and she stopped. But soon I was back at work and before mama Catalpa, the tree's temporary owner, or the Creator of trees and birds and squirrels and us could change their minds, me and the bucketed baby Catalpa were in the car.

Once home, I repeated the process - only backward.

Now the test began. How would the new creature in my backyard prevail against the suns of summer and the icy winds of winter without the shelter of mama Catalpa? Would she be homesick all alone in her new home? Only time will tell. My yard was only a mile away so, of course, they could still talk via the wind. Catalpa trees know how to do that, but they'd never see each other again.

I still pass mama every morning on the way to work. I know she'd be proud of her young one who is now 30 feet tall and provides housing to three squirrels and resting places for weary birds. I don't suppose a picture will help. Before you cut down that tree by your house remember what the poet Joyce Kilmer said, "Poems are made by fools like me, but only God can make a tree."

*The stories of Ted, the Scribbler on the Roof, appears in newspapers around the US on National Public Radio and numerous other sites.*

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**Gandhi**



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# MONTE SANO HOTEL

by *Cathey Carney*



For as long as I can remember I've heard stories about the beautiful Monte Sano Hotel that used to be perched on the northwest ridge of Monte Sano, overlooking the lights of Huntsville down in the valley. Older folks who remembered the hotel being torn down, walking through it before all was auctioned off, remembered the grandeur and felt sad that it was no more.

One story in particular that always intrigued me was about a singer - a lady who performed in a small folk group. She remembered one night in particular, it was one of the last parties held at the hotel. Her group was to perform after dinner.

She told me that behind the hotel there was sort of a large flat rock that was pretty close to the drop off. She stood on the rock to perform her solo with a group of people standing nearby. As she edged towards the back of the large rock she lost her footing and began to fall backwards, down the steep slope.

All of a sudden she felt someone grab her around her waist, and pull her back up towards the rock. In true performer style she continued with her song, but never met the man who had saved her. She said she had wanted all of her life to be able to meet him, but never did.

Charles Farley lives up on Monte Sano and has written a book called "The Hotel Monte Sano" that everyone interested in Huntsville's rich history will treasure. His book is a story of a family who came to Huntsville from New York for health reasons, and while the people are fictional, the historic details at that time in Huntsville are completely accurate.

You'll learn about the rock formations on Monte Sano, the springs and caves, what it was like to be actually walking through the woods behind the hotel. You will experience walking through the lobby, going into your room, looking off the balcony overlooking Huntsville.

The story of the family coming here is very compelling and you will find it hard to put down!

**"My favorite exercise at the gym is judging."**

*Meri Johnson, Arab*

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# Huntsville News in 1897

- John Kenny was charged \$20 in court for beating his mule in front of the Courthouse. He was arrested last month for beating his wife.

- Charles Hawk, a young painter of Huntsville, about 24 years old, while attempting to jump on a running freight train that was passing Dallas Mills, missed his footing and fell with his right leg under the wheels. It was so badly crushed that it had to be amputated three inches above the knee.

- On Thursday last, Mr. John Hertzler was riding in a buggy on Clinton Street in this city. His horse took fright near the Baptist Church, ran away, and ran the buggy against a tree on the opposite side of the street, throwing Mr. Hertzler out and breaking loose. The horse ran off. Mr. H. was knocked insensible and was taken into Mr. Thos. Jamar's house where he remained for two days.

- Lem Johnson, of Knoxville, was arrested here for picking pockets near the Post Office. Apparently he picked the wrong pocket as he is now in jail under the care of a physician.

- In search of Mrs. Frances W. Gerkin, a music teacher, nearly blind, who left Norfolk, Virginia some years ago and is reported to have been drowned while crossing the Tennessee River four or five years ago.

- A son of Lira Elliot of Lincoln Village, aged

ten years, was ill for a year and although having a ravenous appetite, grew emaciated. His physician gave him some medicine that produced nausea and he was choked by the appearance of a snake which required all the doctor's force to draw from his mouth. It was striped and eighteen inches in length. The lad recovered and is better.

- Miss Myrtle Holloway, a resident of Knoxville, is visiting Huntsville with the goal of securing a husband. So far suitors have been few and far between.

- We hear that Mr. and Mrs. J. Walter Penney had an entertaining sociable at their cozy home on West Clinton Street, where a small number of their friends were entertained and treated to a repast of the substantial and good things of the season. Those present were Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Hundley, Dr. and Mrs. S. A. Sheffey, Mrs. A. E. Douglass, M. L. Clay, Dr. B. E. Scruggs and a representative of the Journal.

- Wanted - one hundred families to go to Texas and Louisiana to farm. Call on Thos. H. Haywood, Decatur, AL. Transportation will be paid.

- For Sale - I have in my posses-

sion a vacant lot 40x80 in front of M. M. McKinney's store, in that part of town known as "Georgia," which I wish to sell for cash. Contact H. C. Binford.

## A Serious Accident

On June 10th as Mr. James Jones was returning home from the city with his wagon, out on the Pike someone dashed by him on a bicycle which caused fright to his mules and caused them to run away. Mrs. Jones was in the buggy just ahead, the mules ran into the buggy and the tongue of the wagon struck Mrs. Jones in the side injuring her seriously. She was in the act of jumping out, or it would have killed her. She is some better and will soon be out again. There ought to be a law prohibiting persons riding their bicycles fast when passing or meeting vehicles with horses or mules attached.

**"My neighbor's personal diary says that I have boundary issues."**

**Millie Smith, Scottsboro**

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# Meet Tommy Toole

by Bob French

Toward the end of February, I received a pleasant phone call from Cynthia Cross of Loretto, Tennessee. She had been rummaging through some old items and came across some things that might interest me. After describing the items, I was definitely interested and gave her my address. On March 3rd, I received her package.

I was delighted to find a framed picture of my Grandmother, Hester Maples Sibley (331 West Clinton) and her worn out Sunday School Teacher's Bible. Eons ago, perhaps in the 1920s and early 30s, she taught Sunday School at the First Methodist Church for several years. There were a lot of genealogy notes in the Bible. I was happy to find my name and day I was born in September, 1933.

There were three other pictures: my Uncle Ira Taylor Sibley, Jr. was pictured in full color in his Navy uniform. I must admit, he was a handsome sailor. Then, there was my Uncle Gordon Eugene Sibley, a well-known Huntsville businessman, and a picture of Luther Arnold Sibley holding a tether on the Bull, Tommy Toole, and therein lies a story.

Several months ago, this publication featured an excerpt from my book, "Call Me Herman", wherein I described living on Beane's Dairy, on Pulaski Pike, during the Depression. I pointed out that there was some

kind of Pre-Veterinarian School opened in Huntsville for young male high school graduates to attend in preparation for a career in Veterinary Medicine. As an 18-year-old, my Uncle Arnold attended the school for a while and was caught up in WWII. That ended that.

During the time he was going to school, Mr. Beane owned a solid black bull named Tommy Toole. Tommy serviced 32 cows and produced a nice calf crop every year. However, he was mean, exceptionally mean. He guarded his herd from man or beast. He hated people and dogs. The only person he would tolerate was Uncle Arnold. I, along with my cousins Earl and Ira George Baker were warned to stay away from the pasture where Tommy Toole was grazing. "He'll hook you if he can." So, we avoided him.

His claim to fame was that due to his great blood line, Mr. Walter Jones wanted to breed him to his prize heifer, a purported descendent of the Chicago World's Fair famous cow, Lily Flagg.

The picture Cynthia Cross sent shows Uncle Arnold with Tommy Toole on their way to the Jones Farm. Although Tommy liked my uncle, it doesn't appear he is too anxious to get within the range of those horns.

A little later, Uncle Arnold would be wounded in WWII and finish out his life, with his brothers Edgar and Ira, Jr., working at Huntsville Glass Company.

**"Handle every stressful situation like your dog would - if you can't eat it or play with it, just pee on it and walk away."**

**Rob Jacobs, Gurley**

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# How Old Is Old?

by Judith Smith

I haven't thought much about this question until tonight.

Months ago, I decided that I wanted to adopt another dog. Shoes (Maggie Two Shoes) my Shih Tzu, needed a companion besides the two cats, Leroy Higgins (a Rag Doll Himalayan) and Sci-Fi (a Siamese) that live with us. Since Shoes rarely barks, I was in search of a watch-dog. So for months, I searched the want ads.

I've owned poodles in past years and found standard poodle puppies, but I was looking for an adult female that wasn't going to be used for breeding anymore—also, one that was socialized, leash-trained, and house-broken. My neighbor has a beautiful one, so I called her for help. She gave me the name of an excellent breeder that had two poodles to find a home for. I could choose which one and just pay to have her spayed. It overjoyed me after calling and talking with her for at least fifteen minutes. During the time, I discussed my history with poodles and mentioned my age. Then, at that moment, I found out some shocking news. "I'm sorry, Mrs. Smith, but you don't pass the adoption test."

"You're too OLD," she said. Whaaat? My heart was broken. I never thought of myself in that way. I exercise three times a week at Steady For Life and stay busy all day. How can I be old?

Or maybe I shouldn't have told her that I take Shoes around the block for exercise while riding my electric scooter.

So when you see me, just say, "Good to see you," but don't say, "Sorry, you are too old for a dog." Doggone it!

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# Camping in 1955



*by Bill Alkire*

I was in a Boy Scout Troop for a few years between age 12 and 14. It was an extremely rewarding experience that enabled me to function in an outdoor environment successfully. Our troop learned so much from our instructors, who were veterans and the fathers of some of the boys. We were taught many useful concepts, including teamwork and discipline.

We learned about the importance of nature - what to do and plainly more important what not to do. We learned the skills of listening, tasting and visual awareness in the forest and fields environment. The men taught us how to survive if lost in the forest, how to make a fire, how to extinguish a fire, how to ford a river, how to establish a shelter, how to tie a tourniquet to stop bleeding, how to administer first-aid, and the basic do's and don't's.

We were taught also how to handle firearms and how to recognize the plants to avoid.

I learned how to trap different wildlife and how to release an animal that may have accidentally gotten caught in a trap. We learned the importance of leaving the environment better than we found it. I was able to do some harvesting of ginseng because of what I had learned. That is a story for another time.

The Boy Scout Troop had planned to camp out at the nearby

heavily wooded State Park for two nights and three days. The Park was in the southwestern portion of the County. An interesting feature of the Park, besides the river, good for swimming, hiking, and fishing was the Cave and the water features on the walls of the cave. During the Civil War, I was told that the Alum was mined for mixing with saltpeter, sulfur, and charcoal in making gunpowder. The cave was close enough to many battlefields, the railroad, and easy access for wagons to travel to the places where the munitions were formulated. This area was important to both sides of the war between the states.

A couple interesting events happened while we were camping at the Park. The second day of our outing we killed a copperhead along the river rocks upstream of

the swimming area. We also came upon a young man about eighteen. He had been shooting, he claimed squirrels (it was not squirrel season), and we suspected he was shooting birds with a new 22 Savage Rifle he had little knowledge of how to operate. He obviously had not been taught gun safety or knew much about handling a firearm in general.

He had fired his rifle and the bullet had bounced and ricocheted off who knows what, possibly a rock or even a tree. A bullet fragment had entered his right thumb, just under the nail. He was not bleeding much - but he was in monstrous pain and crying like a baby.

He was also by himself, which we were taught you should never do under any circumstance.

Our Head Scout Master came to his rescue. He was able to retrieve the metal fragment from under the boy's thumb nail and cleaned the area with peroxide and antibiotic cream and bandaged the wound. With the fragment removed the pain was gone. He obviously was going to lose the nail - but at least he did not kill himself or injure someone.

I believe the boy was a better hunter after that ordeal, at least a more conscientious person and more respectful of the forest and the handling of firearms. We were blessed with the knowledge and skill to leave the environment better than we found it.



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## REMEMBERING MY CONFIRMATION DAY

by Elizabeth Wharry

Growing up Roman Catholic, two particular rites of passage were highly emphasized to us as children. One was first Holy Communion, and the other was Confirmation.

Before we could take our first Communion, we had to go to confession and receive penance. Confession was in a closet size area with the priest in the middle, and a sinner on either side. Sr. Anne Cecile taught us how to go to confession.

She also taught us how to receive Holy Communion properly. Weeks were spent on the correct etiquette at the Communion rail. About a month out, Sister sent home a list of what we were supposed to wear. The boys wore navy blue or black pants, a long sleeve white shirt, a tie and black shoes. The girls were to wear a white veil, white dress, white frilly socks and white shoes.

I remember going to a department store to pick out my dress, veil, socks and shoes. The veil was held in place with a thin elastic strap that went under the chin. Those straps pinched unmercifully!

Finally the big day arrived! Mass was held at noon. I wasn't

sure which pinched more, my veil or the shoes that were a size too small. In those days, one was only allowed water after midnight before taking Communion. Somewhere in my childish mind, it translated to "Don't use the bathroom after midnight!"

Needless to say, but I will anyway, that particular Saturday morning was rather tense!

May 1971, time for Confirmation. We were supposed to pick a saint's name. The top picks for the girls were Anne, Mary, Bridget and Bernadette. I didn't want anything so common. I chose Charity. I didn't say a word to anyone about it.

Bishop Cosgrove came out on a beautiful Saturday afternoon. My sister Ellen was my Confirmation sponsor. His Grace was droning on - "I confirm thee (insert name)", made the sign of the cross with blessed oil and tapped each one on the cheek.

I was one of the last girls to be confirmed. He said, "I confirm thee...Charity?" He looked at those gathered in amusement and said, "Charity, well! That's a first!" He nodded, and confirmed me with a twinkle in his eye.

Blessings to all!

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# THANKS FOR ALL THE CLOTHES

by Anna Lee



When I was a little girl, my younger sisters and I LOVED to get hand-me-down clothes from family and friends.

I would walk an aunt or an uncle or a neighbor carrying boxes and bags of out-grown clothing from their family. As the oldest, I got first choice, then we girls would pick through the items and select what we liked. We all wore uniforms at school, so we were thrilled to get a glimpse into the world of "fashion."

I especially liked to get clothes from my glamorous older cousin Caroline. I can still remember her in the 1950s, with her blonde hair and blue eyes, smiling and posing for a picture and wearing high heels, a pencil skirt and a smart bolero jacket.

When I was older, my parents had friends who owned a dry-cleaning business, and they would send us unclaimed items they thought we might like. And we did. They were cute, they were stylish, they were freshly dry-cleaned!

As a young woman in the 1960s, my friends and I would get together for what we called a "hippy clothing swap." Our hostess would tell us to put our discards on the living room floor, and in we dived. At times we had enough to put into more than one room.

Some women would wish for a particular piece, say a long black skirt, and often find it. My best find was a brand-new pair of white sneakers that fit perfectly. I happily wore them home, along with my many other finds.

About an hour later I received a phone call from our hostess. By any chance, she asked politely, did I take a pair of white sneakers? It turned out they were NOT up for grabs; the owner had merely taken them off and put them aside for a moment. Back I went to return them, a little embarrassed, but laughing along with the other women.

Even now, as a senior citizen, I still get free clothes. My friend has a sister, a real fashionista, who owns a business. She seems to think that she has to change clothing often in order to impress her clients when they come to the office in person. Wear something pricey and new, enjoy it a few times, then pass it along to her sister — that seems to be her philosophy. Her sister (my friend) takes first choice, then I get my chance. I always find clothes that are fun to wear

and I even claim some for my daughter-in-law or another friend to enjoy.

None of these clothes ever go to waste. If we don't use them, they go to our local thrift shops where other women can find and wear them. It's the best of recycling.

So, over the years my fashion interest has stayed strong. I hope it continues, and I hope to continue getting free clothes!

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# A Special Week at Camp Cha-La-Kee

by Jim Thorne

It was Sunday, July 2, 1967, another of those warm summer afternoons as I, along with about thirty other counselors and staff, anxiously waited for the YMCA buses to roll into Camp Cha-La-Kee in Guntersville.

I was 18 years old and had just finished my first year of college when I was recruited by the camp director. I had already completed four weeks at camp serving as business manager in charge of camp registration, the camp store, night programs, along with other duties as assigned. I was housed in the staff cabin with eleven other guys who were in charge of the various activities including swimming, boating, canoeing, horseback riding, arts, crafts, archery and riflery.

But this week would be different. The director decided that I would be a counselor since there was no registration and my other activities would be covered by himself and his assistant. Noticing my hesitancy, he assured me that this would be one of the best experiences of my life. Little did I know how right he would be.

Since its inception ten years earlier, the week of July 4 had become a special week at Cha-La-Kee. It was "handicapped and retarded" week (not very PC in today's vernacular) sponsored by the Lion's Club of Huntsville. Most of the clients were coming from programs of the Madison County Association for Retarded Citizens (ARC).

There I stood awaiting those buses loaded with 80-90 campers, mostly adults older than myself, having various degrees of mental and physical handicaps. Having led somewhat of a sheltered life I had no idea what to expect from

this group I was about to encounter. I could hear the buses rumbling along the gravel road and soon they were in sight. As the buses approached the parking area where we waited I could hear screams of delight and see arms waving at us. Their happiness and excitement gave me a bit of a sense of relief from my anxiety.

What ensued could only be classified as organized chaos. Counselors were instructed to collect their assigned campers, gather their bags and quickly get the campers to the cabins to eliminate confusion. The campers, however, were filled with excitement and wanted to meet and hug the counselors and staff. I complied with the hugs but was uneasy with some of the male campers who were my age or older wanting to hug on me.

Though as the week progressed it became commonplace as I came to know them as children in adult bodies who wanted only to be my friend. Some of the campers were in wheelchairs, some had crutches or difficulty walking on uneven ground, some wore helmets, but most were, as I referenced earlier, "children in adult bodies".

Counselors were assigned as many as four campers depending on the severity of the handicap or behavioral issue while others were assigned a single camper who needed special attention. The range of handicaps included autism, muscular dystrophy, blindness, hydrocephalus, various levels of mental retardation, or combinations of these.

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# Mysterious Photograph Appears After Lightning Storm

*From 1886 newspaper*

During a heavy thunderstorm that visited Sand Mountain on the evening of July 18, Miss Lillian Paul was in the dining room of her father's house when she noticed a gleaming tray about which reflections from the lightning flashed incessantly almost like a flame.

Reaching for the tray to remove it, there came a flash of extreme brilliancy when she placed the tray under the table and left the room. The next morning it was noticed that the tray bore upon its centre a profile of the young lady's head and face.

Mr. Leo Doft, the inventor of the electrical motor which

bears his name, holds that "the picture was printed by light and not by heat, and that the flash was reflected from the face to the inside of the opposite window pane and thence thrown upon the tray, producing an actinic portrait."

However curious this may be, this result is not peculiar to Alabama lightning, as the following incident, related by a northern newspaper:

"We have heretofore published an account of a portrait supposed to have been photographed by lightning on a pane of glass in the window of an old farm house in this county."

Another instance of the same curious phenomenon has been found in the window

of the Mansion House on the "Mount Eagle" farm, more generally known as the "Gentry Place."

The portraits of four persons are plainly discernible - two men, a woman and a child. The faces are not all on one pane, that of one of the men and the woman being on adjoining glasses, the face of the other man on another, and that of the child on one of the lower panes.

The theory is that the party were all looking through the window during a thunderstorm, when a sudden flash of lightning, by some mysterious process, instantaneously fixed their features on the glass.

The existence of the portraits are of comparatively recent discovery, and have attracted many visitors as well as experts from across the Southern states who all express their bewilderment.

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# PET TIPS FROM ANGEL

## *Finding a Baby Bird*



As the nesting seasons for most birds are spring and summer, now is the time for baby and juvenile birds to spread their wings a bit, so to speak. Finding a baby bird where it doesn't belong — on the ground — can be very concerning as well as confusing. What should you do? Should you pick it up and try to help, or leave it where you found it? If you touch a baby bird, will its mother reject it?

When you come upon a baby bird out of its nest, it's important to first determine whether the bird is a hatchling, nestling, or fledgling.

A hatchling is a bird that has recently hatched from the egg, while a fledgling is a young bird. Hatchlings look more like newborns: they have no hair, and their eyes are closed. Typically, if a hatchling is on the ground, it's likely that it's fallen out of the nest due to weather or another nest disturbance. If you find a hatchling on the ground, they need help, since they are unable to fend for themselves and will likely die without assistance.

A nestling is slightly older than a hatchling but is still not capable of being on its own. Nestlings are typically around three days to two weeks old, and often have a few sprouted feathers. If you find a nestling on the ground, they will need help as they are, like hatchlings, vulnerable to weather, predators, and malnutrition. A fledgling is a juvenile bird that is older than nestlings (typically around two or more weeks old). They have their eyes open and have already begun to develop feathers.

They are still learning to fly and are often found on the ground hopping and flitting around after a failed flight attempt. If you find a fledgling on the ground, it's likely that they are fine just where they are — without need of rescue.

### **How to Help a Grounded Baby Bird**

When you come upon a hatchling or nestling on the ground, look for a nest in the area; it's likely to be within a few yards. Then follow these steps:

Put on gloves (or, if you don't have gloves, wash your hands).

Gently pick up the baby bird and place it back into the nest.

NOTE: If the nest has been damaged or is too high to reach, you can place the bird in a woven basket and hang it on a low branch. A basket looks to birds like a natural nest, and the weave design will allow rain water to drain through it and prevent the baby bird from drowning.

Watch from a distance to see if the parent comes back to the nest. This may take a few hours, so if you can't stay, try to come back later that day to check. If the parent bird doesn't return to the nest, or you can't find the nest, do this:

Using gloved or clean hands, place the bird in a container (e.g., a shoebox) lined with soft cloth. You can use paper towels, a baby blanket, a piece of clothing, etc. If you have a heating pad, place it on the lowest setting and put it under the soft bedding to keep the baby bird warm. A hot water bottle also works well.

Place the box with the baby bird in a dark, quiet place away from people and pets.

Don't give the bird food or water.

Contact your local wildlife rehabilitation center to arrange for further care. Whether the grounded bird is a baby or not, you should also observe it for tell-tale signs of sickness or injury, which could include:

- Dirty, matted, or missing feathers
- Fluffed feathers
- Visible injuries, like cuts or wounds
- Swollen and/or dull-looking eyes
- Drooping wings
- Limping or wobbling
- Tilted head
- Stillness, even when approached
- Inability to fly (for birds older than fledglings)
- Difficulty breathing; puffing or panting

### **How to Help a Sick or Injured Bird**

Wearing gloves, or with clean hands, gently pick up the bird and place it in a covered box with air holes and a cloth or soft bedding.

Place the box in a dark, quiet place away from people and pets.

Don't give the bird food or water.

Contact your local wildlife rehabilitation center to arrange for further care.

### **Why You Shouldn't Keep a Baby or Injured Bird and Care for It Yourself**

Stepping in and giving the bird initial care is one thing, but you shouldn't try to keep and care for a baby bird or one that is sick or injured. Call your local wildlife rehabilitators.

*by Annie Krug*

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# The Monte Sano Railroad

by Tom Carney

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

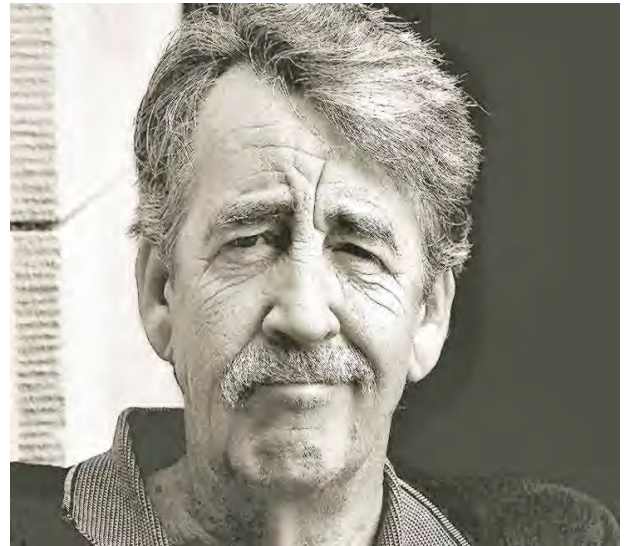
Yet, people then, as today, had dreams and ambitions. The dream that once existed on these now quiet trails on the western slope of Monte Sano took the form of a railroad – the Monte Sano Railway.

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

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

In the construction of the Monte Sano Railway, more than 300 persons were employed on a regular basis. Mr. Wilson himself designed the three coaches that comprised the train and the St. Charles Car Co. manufactured them. The engine was of standard gauge, although smaller than those used on the trunk line. The size of the engine was the reason the line was called the "dummy line," as the undersized locomotive resembled a trolley car. Of course, some Huntsville wags called it the dummy line because "only a dummy would ride that steep and perilous route to or from the mountain!"

Sure enough, not long after the railway opened, there occurred an incident that seriously damaged the popularity of the railway. Returning from the hotel, the train's sand-pipes clogged as the engineer tried to check the speed of the locomo-



tive down a steep incline. The train went out of control and left the tracks. Happily, no one was injured, but people were now somewhat nervous about taking this precarious path to and from the mountain,

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

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

Now, with the passage of time the old railroad bed and stone foundations of the trestles are all that remain. Older residents of Huntsville say that as late as the 1950s there were still railroad ties stacked up near the area known as the "button hole."

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# MAKING MUSIC IN HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA

by *Mart Hargrove*



Some of the fondest memories in my life consist of the wonderful times I spent playing in combos and musical groups in and around Huntsville many years ago.

I first started in music when I joined the Athens High School band while I was in junior high school. I wanted to play the trumpet, but my band director, Mr. Jimmy Cowart, suggested that I play the trombone because my lips would serve me better.

I later became interested in traditional music and Dixieland music and formed a small combo with some of my fellow bandmates and we played for activities at the school.

After graduation, I met one of my neighbors, Frank Simmons, who played trombone, and was a member of the Hilding Holmberg Orchestra, which played

at Cambron's on Whitesburg Drive in Huntsville. I played with this wonderful group for a short period of time, then started playing with small groups.

Some of these combos were led by other local musicians such as Glenn Slaton, Buzz Raines, and the great Charlie Lyle. I regret not recalling all the others. My band director also had a small band.

At this time I was too young to drive and did not have a car. I had to walk to the Trailways bus station in Athens, catch the bus and ride to Huntsville. Some of the guys would pick me up. We would go to the job. Later we would go downtown for those wonderful hamburgers on the North Side of the Square. Then back to catch the bus back home.

Another great memory was the night I got to play for

a wedding reception with the great Charlie Lyle Big Band at the Von Braun Civic Center. When we took our break, another orchestra would come in and play. Talk about class.

I hope that some of these memories will bring back some of the good times to your many readers.

I no longer play in these types of combos except that I have played in small groups at churches where I have been a member. I sure miss the good times.

The lips may be gone, but the memories live on.

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**Overheard after a job interview**

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# DUCK AND COVER

by M. D. Smith, IV



The recent Ukrainian invasion by Russia and their use of the word “nuclear” has unnerved us once again.

Our Civil Defense department issued a pamphlet and movie in 1951 called “Duck and Cover.” The flyer went on to sub-title, “When The Bomb Goes Off—don’t BE there.” The bottom sub-headline warned, “Things to do: Before, During and After the Bomb explodes.”

This was a time when Russia and the U.S. had growing nuclear abilities and bombers to deliver enough to wipe out either country. If you were not at the center of an Atomic explosion, then there were things to do that the CD wanted to make sure we all knew. This double-sided, legal-size document was “Rules for the Public” and contained citizens’ extensive evacuation and survival plans.

The other CD production was a movie that ran in theatres, schools and later TV featuring Bert, the Turtle, to make it more appealing to school-age kids and – I suppose – less menacing. Hah!

I was ten years old in fourth-grade grammar school, and we all practiced a nearly no-warning (saying we’d see a brilliant white flash) exercise to duck under our desks to avoid flying glass and debris. Of course, that was assuming there was a school left when the shock wave arrived.

I’d also seen newsreel clips of houses in slow motion during a nuclear explosion in White Sands, New Mexico, where A-Bomb tests were conducted. Seeing melted dummies before total destruction came to the family inside the test house was not comforting.

At dinner, I can remember asking my parents, “What if the bomb hits Birmingham? Would it do any good to “duck and cover”?”

My parents were quite uncomfortable explaining that one to me. Today, I know the answer would have been, “No.” Instead, they sidlined my question just to say that Birmingham would not likely be a target because other major cities would be a higher priority. With the massive steel production in Bessemer and other areas, I can’t imagine why it would not have been a priority city. Their assurances to me at ten did help. They seemed to make little of the concern, but I suspect they did it for me. I bet they were as scared as anyone of a Nuclear Holocaust with both countries trying to destroy the other.

Still, Bert the Turtle continued in a cheery voice to sing, with a full chorus, to “Duck and Cover” whenever we got a warning to do so via air raid sirens or instructions from CD radio stations or teachers that an attack was imminent.

No wonder kids were scared and bewildered. On the one hand, a cheerful cartoon character laying out steps to get safe under desks or even chairs in the event of an attack. Compared to the reality of what Atomic bombs do to places like Hiroshima and Nagasaki being totally destroyed. An oxymoron, perhaps?

What didn’t kill anyone near ground zero died of radiation poisoning sooner or later. But, then, let us know the current H-Bomb (Hydrogen Bomb) countries had now developed was far worse.

I suppose I’ve adequately explained why a kid’s world in 1951 and beyond contained mortal threats that re-surfaced from time to time.

Weeks, months and years passed – no nuclear attack. Then, I became a teenager and was interested in girls, dating and a car to drive.



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The CD warnings continued through the fifties and eventually went away. The cold war with Russia continued, but it appeared both countries understood that in the event of anybody "pushing the RED button," there would be no winners and not many survivors in a Global Thermonuclear War. Each country had the power to destroy the other ten times over, and the advent of missiles to deliver the payload made things even worse.

I went to college in 1959 and married in June 1961 to my bride, Judy, and we lived in the student apartments in Tuscaloosa for the next two years.

Do you remember what happened in October of 1962? That's right, the Cuban Missile Crisis. The U.S. put some nuke-tipped missiles in Italy and Turkey. Russia responded by secretly putting missiles and silos in Cuba. When our government discovered them from high-altitude spy airplanes, we demanded that missiles be removed from a location close to our country and 90 miles from Florida.

President John Kennedy met with the National Security Council to combat and stop that action. The Council initially suggested bombing the facilities and invading Cuba. President Kennedy didn't want to take that step toward war, so he declared a naval quarantine (really a blockade, but that was technically an act of war) around Cuba so no more Russian ships could bring the rest of the hardware. Kennedy also demanded the removal of the missiles there. We were aware of Nikita Khrushchev's iron rule and threats — not to be taken lightly.

The nation held its breath for a month, hoping nothing would escalate and no one would "push the red button." No one did, missiles were removed from Cuba and we removed ours from Turkey.

That was another time in my life I remember how close the world came to nuclear disaster.

There were several movies in the eighties about global nuclear wars and their aftermath. The mov-

ie "War Games" with Matthew Broderick and Dabney Coleman in 1983 featured a computer gone out of control and about to launch missiles against Russia for real, and it couldn't be halted. In the end, it was convinced to stop by simulating outcomes.

Also, in 1983, the movie, "The Day After" was released, showing what likely might happen after a global nuclear war. Again, our nation was fearful and reminded of "doomsday" looming over our heads.

Forward to present, 2022, and the old fear of a lifetime that began with me as a ten-year-old has surfaced again. All my memories of the near-disaster events of the past seventy-one years are refreshed — I have to say it makes me uneasy.

But I have to believe that no matter what country hints at the use of nuclear weapons in a small country war, no one could be so stupid as to use them with the threat of escalation to a worldwide event. Some have even referenced that we are on the edge of World War III, and I wish they wouldn't. Of course, a true WWII is possible if someone starts using nukes, but then, as in the movie "War Games", NOBODY Wins, and the best choice is, "Not to play the Game".



# Nelson

Hello, my name is Nelson. I came to the Ark Animal Shelter because I was in danger! I was living outside at a trailer park and relying on the kindness of strangers in the neighborhood to provide me with food and water. People didn't socialize with me much because I am a bit shy until you get to know me. One of the kind residents brought me to the Ark Shelter because he heard

that someone might try to shoot me because they didn't like cats hanging around. As soon as I got here, I was sent to the vet to get checked out to see if I was healthy and to get vaccinations. The vet says I am about 3 years old. I am a beautiful buff color although they call me an orange tabby. When I went to the vet, I was given a microchip and got all my shots. Everyone here has been very kind to me but now I am ready to be adopted and I would like to get a home with a nice family. Since I am kind of shy, I think I would do best in a house with adults rather than children. Will you come to the Ark Shelter and ask to me? Please come and ask to see Nelson, the shy cat.

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# Short History of Annie Merts

*by Newspaper reports*



Miss Annie C. Merts was a teacher at East Clinton School and Huntsville High School, where she also served as a vice principal. She retired after 51 years in the classroom. The old Huntsville High School building now houses the Annie C. Merts Center, corner White St. and Randolph.

"The building was built in 1928, the original portion of the building is what is called the Renaissance Revival Style and that was originally built to be Huntsville High School including the gymnasium. Around the 1950s and 60s it was modified to be Huntsville Middle School, which is when they built several additions," said Huntsville Preservation Planner Katie Stamps. Additional renovations were made in the mid to late 1980s for use as academic offices.

In the early days of the city, schools met in rented buildings or privates until the first school was constructed in 1882, with 133 students then enrolled in Huntsville's public schools. A four-year high school followed in 1908 and two others opened in 1927.

Through the first half of the 20th Century many students in the area were taught in schools at the various Mill Villages, which were not part of the city. However, annexation in 1956 brought them into Huntsville City Schools and the number of schools blossomed to thirteen.

Huntsville's population nearly doubled between 1956 and 1970 and the city boundaries grew from 5 square miles to 114 because of the work done at Redstone Arsenal and Marshall Space Flight Center. Huntsville City Schools worked to keep pace. By 1972 there were five high schools, nine junior highs and twenty-six elementary schools.


During that period, Huntsville City Schools served as a model for progressive racial integration. In 1963, Sonnie Hereford became the first black student to enroll at a white Alabama public school. Twelve years later, Hereford would be elected student body President at the fully integrated S.R. Butler High School.

The Annie Merts Center located on White Street in Huntsville has a lot of history. The middle section with a staircase was the section built back in 1928. That was almost 100 years ago.

The additions on both sides, with the different colors of brick, came later.

1979 HALMA The Huntsville Art League and Museum Association was given housing at the Old Huntsville Middle School (Annie Merts Building), along with the Ballet, Fantasy Playhouse, Alabama Film Co-Op and the Photo Society.

Again, On the Move. In 1986, HALMA was notified that the City Board of Education was to use the Annie Merts Center Building and they would have to relocate, finding a new home in 1987 in an old storefront on Andrew Jackson Way.



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# Tips from Earlene

\* For healthy baby food, use your blender to puree vegetables and meats, put in ice cube trays and then freezer bags for use at a later date.

\* If your brown sugar is hard as a rock, just put a fresh slice of bread into the package and close securely. Leave for a day or so.

\* Need to clean your stuffed animals? Just rub in some corn-starch, let stand for a few minutes, and brush off.

\* If you need to wash some delicate material in the washer, just put them inside a pillow case that you're washing at the same time and secure with a safety pin. The delicate items won't get bounced around so badly in your washer and dryer.

\* If you're congested at night, try propping up your pillows a few inches more than usual. Also, invest in a cool mist humidifier or warm mist vaporizer.

\* To clean your silk flowers, simply put about 1/2 a cup of salt in a medium sized brown bag, stick in your flowers with the salt, close bag and shake vigorously. Remove and make sure all dust is off the flowers.

\* I know this has happened to everyone with a thin gold necklace. Whenever a knot appears in your necklace and you just can't get it out, try laying the necklace in a drop of vegetable oil and untying it with two straight pins.

\* For tired eyes, cut a cucumber into slices and lay a slice on each eye for about 15 minutes, (not on the eye itself, but the eye-lid).

\* For shiny brunette hair, after shampooing rinse with apple cider vinegar. The vinegar will get any leftover soapy film and will add some pretty highlights to dark hair.

\* If you have put too much sugar in a main dish or vegetable, add a teaspoon of cider vinegar.

\* Sprinkle edible flowers over your salads - nasturtium, marigolds and the blue flowers of borage are all spectacular.

\* To keep ants from your sugar and flour canisters, place a couple of bay leaves inside.

\* Mice hate mint. To discourage them, hang sprigs of mint in your kitchen cabinets, or place them on the shelves. Rub them occasionally to release their scent.

\* A rib of celery in your bread bag will keep the bread fresh for a longer time.

\* To get odors out of your fridge, put a small bowl of charcoal (the kind you get for potted plants) on a shelf - it will absorb odors very rapidly.

\* A little vanilla poured on a cotton

ball and placed in your car will eliminate most odors.

\* Extension cords can be easily stored without tangling, by simply winding the cord loosely and slipping it into a cardboard tube (from paper towels or toilet paper).

## Gibson's Books

We have stocked our shop with a general line of used and rare books and ephemera as well as other antiques. Our specialties include Local History, Southern History, Southern Cookbooks and Southern Fiction. We also have postcards, sheet music, advertising, photographs and other ephemera.

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# My Ancestors, Soldiers of the American Revolution

by William Sibley



Green Bottom Inn, Normal, AL

On July 4, 2022, our country will be 246 years old, and it gives me great pride to know that three of my direct ancestors were soldiers in the American Revolutionary War. Those ancestors were my maternal g g g g-grandfather, Thomas Connally (md. to Mary "Polly" Price); Sgt. John William Connally (married to Obedience "Biddy" King), my g g g g-grandfather; and Captain Robert Wright Sr. (married to Keziah Bibb), my paternal g g g g-grandfather.

It is believed that Thomas Connally is buried in North Carolina. Sgt. John William Connally is buried in Connally Cemetery, located between Maysville and New Market. Captain Robert Wright Sr. is buried in Wright Cemetery, located in Berkley, on Big Cove's east side.

The following story appeared in the August 19, 1948, issue of a Scottsboro newspaper, The Progressive Age:

*"The president's mansion at the State Agricultural and Mechanical Institute for Negroes at Normal, Alabama, was built from the ruins of Green Bottom Inn. The old tavern was built by John Connelly (also spelled Connally). A race track was built near the inn, and it was on this track that President Andrew Jackson raced his horses against Connelly's Gray Gander. It has been said Old Hickory had far better luck against the Creek Indians than his horses ever had in the races with Gray Gander, for Connelly's nag showed himself to be the fastest horse of the day, at one time winning a purse of \$20,000.00."*

*"The old inn gained renown as being a Vesting' haunt for presidents James Monroe and James Knox Polk.*

*It was destroyed by fire in 1930."*

It is good to know that three Presidents of the United States visited the Green Bottom Inn. In Ernie and Jill Couch's Alabama Trivia, a book of facts written in question-and-answer form, the following questions appear:

Q: In 1815 John Connelly built what famous hostelry in Normal? A: The Green Bottom Inn.

Q: What is the name of the world's fastest horse in the early 1800s that was owned by Madison County innkeeper John Connelly? A: Gray Gander.

Eleven children were born to Robert Wright Sr. and Keziah Bibb. Robert was a widower when he came to Madison County, and in 1811, he married Peggy Calvert in Madison County, Alabama, of the Mississippi Territory. They were the parents of three children.

Captain Wright got a grant of land in Little Cove for his service in the American Revolutionary War. He sold that land and relocated to Berkley near his Esslinger descendants.

A Huntsville newspaper, The Southern Advocate, printed the news of his 1847 death:

*"Departed this life Robert Wright, Sr., Patriot of the Revolution, aged 85 years 17 days, native of Amherst County, Virginia. Was at the Siege of York and assisted in the capture of Cornwallis. Emigrated to Madison County in 1808."*

In 2021, a group from DAR honored Cpt. Robert Wright Sr. with a dedication of his grave marker. The service was held at the New Hope United Methodist Church, with a large attendance.



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# GRANDMOTHER'S RECIPE FOR WASHIN' CLOTHES

*From 1904 Newspaper*



1. Build fire in backyard to heat kettle of rain water.
2. Set tubs so smoke won't blow in eyes, if wind is blowing.
3. Shave one whole lye soap in boiling water,
4. Sort things - make 3 piles: 1 pile white, 1 pile colored, 1 pile work britches and rags.
5. Stir flour in bold water to smooth, then thin down with boiling water.
6. Rub dirty spots on board, scrub hard, then boil, rub colored but don't boil, just rinse and starch.
7. Take white things out of kettle with broomstick handle, then rinse, blue and starch.
8. Spread towels on grass.
9. Hang old rags on fence.
10. Pour rinse water in flower bed.
11. Go put on clean dress - smooth hair with side combs, brew cup of tea - sit and rest and rock a spell and count your blessings.

**"For Sale: 8 puppies from a German Shepherd and an Alaskan Hussey."**

*Seen in local classified ads*

# A Penitentiary Romance: Innocent Incest

There is now in the State Penitentiary an aged couple who are serving out a term for the crime of incest, they being brother and sister.

The story is this: At the age of twelve years, the male left his father's house to seek his fortune and no more return. He, in time, came West, grew to manhood and married, raised a family of children, and in time his wife died.

His sister grew to womanhood and was married, and with her husband came West, and then to Iowa. Her husband died, and in time she received an offer of marriage from a man who was a widower. She accepted the offer and they were married. Her husband was wealthy, and after a time one of his sons wished to have the father give him some property, but the father refused to accede to his demands.

The son, one day, while looking over the family record of the stepmother, which had been laid aside and forgotten, discovered that there was a kinship between the families, and further Investigation proved that his father and stepmother were very own brother and sister.

To avenge himself for his father's refusal to give him the bulk of his property, he brought suit against them both for incest. They were tried and convicted and sent to the penitentiary for one year. They are both over sixty years of age. and as innocent of Intent to commit crime as the new born babe.

from 1873 newspaper

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