



No. 363

May 2023



Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

A World War II Love Story

As Anna waited for the hostess to bring her a glass of wine, she casually glanced around the busy restaurant lounge.

The Fogcutter was a popular place in town and already it was starting to fill up with the after-work crowd.

Anna knew she was early but didn't really care, this was her forty-second wedding anniversary and she really wanted to spend it dancing with her husband.

What if she had never met him in 1945?



***Also in this issue:* Wooden Speedboat Accident; Bad Career Decision; Dickie Hale Remembers Huntsville; The Story of Weatherly Heights; The Coon Hunt; Love of a Grand-Daughter; Hot Summer Pet Tips; Best Loved Recipes and More!**

LOOKING BACK THROUGH HUNTSVILLE HISTORY



In the 1950's Huntsville was booming. Rocket scientists, engineers and military contractors were flocking to the Arsenal to become part of the space program.

For many people prosperity was an elusive dream. Born in a cotton town and raised in a cotton mill, these people had few of the skills needed for the new industries.

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A World War II Love Story

by *Caroline Parker,*
as told to
Tom Carney 1999

As Anna waited for the waitress to bring her a glass of wine she casually glanced around the restaurant lounge. The Fogcutter was a popular place in town and already it was starting to fill up with the after-work crowd. Anna knew she was early but didn't really care, this was her 42nd wedding anniversary and she wanted to spend it dancing with her husband.

The couple was very popular at the restaurant. The waitresses called them "Mrs. Anna" and "Mr. Bill" and would often stop to watch as they danced to the music of Roberta and her band. Anna smiled as she thought of her husband Bill. He was tied up with a late appointment at the office but promised he would be there as soon as he could get away.

Anna had often tried to imagine what her life would

have been if she had not met Bill. In 1945 she was a displaced person, living in a camp near Salzburg, Austria and he was an American soldier. She had no family or friends. Her only possessions were a pair of Luftwaffe overalls she had salvaged from an abandoned German Army truck.

Anna Kempka was born in 1923 near a small village in southwest Poland. Her family were ethnic Germans who, although they had lived in Poland for over two hundred years, still considered themselves to be Germans. In 1939 the Nazis invaded Poland and the farm they lived on was confiscated. It became part of an artillery range and the family was forced to move.

Everyone was required to work for the "war effort." Anna was assigned to a factory that made shoes for the German Army where she labored ten hours a day, six days a week. Her job was sewing the soles on the boots, but the machines were so old and worn out that often they would break down for days at a time.

The machinist assigned to repair her machine was Hans, a young man only a year older than her, with bright blue eyes and a shaggy mane of blond hair. The couple began seeing one another after work and

"Support bacteria. They're the only culture some people have."

Rory Neece, Madison



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within a short time had fallen in love. In 1944 they were married and life would have been perfect except for the war. They still considered themselves lucky though as Hans' job was considered vital to the war effort and there was little chance he would be called up.

Germany was losing the war and basic necessities were almost impossible to obtain. Air raids had halted the transportation of food and many people were starving. Hans began stealing leather from the factory to trade on the black market for food. It was small amounts, just enough to trade for a few potatoes or a piece of fish.

Exactly six months from the day they got married, Hans was arrested as he attempted to sneak some leather out of the factory. Germany was experiencing a severe manpower shortage so rather than being sentenced to jail, he was assigned to a penal battalion. These units were often assigned to the German Army as ammo carriers, freight handlers or ditch diggers thereby freeing more German soldiers for combat.

Anna never saw Hans again. Although she spent days walking from one office to another, no one had any information of his whereabouts. He was just another name, among millions of others, who had been swallowed up in a horrible world war.

In the final days of the war the Russians began entering the city. There were still some diehard German units who refused to give up and the Russians began obliterating large parts of the city with bombs and artillery. Anna's apartment was destroyed and both parents killed. With nothing but

the dress on her back she fled to the safety of a nearby train station that had been turned into a refugee center. Anxiously she searched the crowds trying to find someone she knew, but there was no one. She was alone with no friends and nowhere to go.

Her home had become about twenty square feet of a bombed out railway station.

At that time, in the closing days of the war, it had become a custom to place small notices on the walls of the train station inquiring as to information on missing loved ones. People who had been bombed out would post a notice to let their family know where they were. Soldiers returning from the front, if they had a comrade from that city, would tape up notices letting families know what had happened to their sons or husbands. As Anna searched the walls for the notice she had placed for Hans weeks earlier, her worst fears were confirmed. Someone had written on the bottom of it: "Killed - Cracow."



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The following months were an unending, horrifying nightmare - searching garbage cans for a scrap of food - drunken Russian soldiers dragging screaming women off into the darkness - stepping over dead bodies to get a drink of water.

Every morning she would join long lines of people hoping to be selected for work in clearing the war damage. The only reward was a bowl of thin porridge, but it was enough to keep thousands of starving people coming back every day.

Anna met a truck driver who made trips back and forth to the American lines. After much pleading and begging he agreed to smuggle her across the border in exchange for her wedding ring and a few other pieces of jewelry she had managed to hold onto.

Several miles from the border the truck stopped on a dark side road. After opening the rear door the driver motioned for her to get out, telling her in no uncertain terms that he expected her to be nice to him before they went any further.

Screaming and fighting, Anna finally struggled to escape and began running into the darkness. Daylight found her at the edge of a large forest where several German Army trucks had been abandoned. There was no food but she salvaged a pair of Luftwaffe overalls which she put on in place of her ripped and tattered dress.

That afternoon while walking across a field she was picked up by American troops

and sent to Salzburg, Austria where a huge camp for displaced persons had been set up. Going from the Russians to the Americans was like leaving Hell and going to Heaven. Things were still bad but there was now hope for a future.

That night as she lay on an Army cot she began to listen to the conversations around her. Everyone was talking about where they were from, what they had lost and the horrors of the war.

Anna made a silent vow to herself that night. She would forget the past, erase it like it never happened and live in the future.

After weeks of searching, Anna got a job as a cleaning woman for the American Army. The pay was almost nothing but occasionally some G.I. would give her a pack of cigarettes or a piece of worn out clothing which she could trade. Her boss was a young red headed soldier named Bill, who was always playing practical jokes on

everyone. Despite her misgivings Anna found herself attracted to him and when he finally asked her out, she readily agreed. On their first date Bill gave her a dress, "so he would not be seen with the enemy." The overalls quickly disappeared and Anna and Bill began seeing one another regularly. When he proposed getting a room in town and living together she did not hesitate. Being a soldier's mistress was better than starving to death.

Bill never asked questions about her past. Several times Anna tried to talk to him about her experiences but it was too painful. She was afraid to tell him about having been married before for fear he would ask if she still loved Hans.

Almost from the beginning Bill had talked about getting married but Anna never took it seriously. Every soldier told every girl friend the same story. Much to her surprise, right before Bill's enlistment

"Why does it take so little time for a child who is afraid of the dark to become a teenager who wants to stay out all night?"



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was up, he announced that he had started making arrangements for her to go to the United States.

In 1947 Bill was discharged. Eight months later, after countless interviews and stacks of paperwork, Anna joined him in Chicago where they were married. She still was not sure if she really loved him but was determined to live in the future and make the best of it.

Years passed. Bill became an engineer and they had two children. In 1966 he was transferred to Huntsville where he worked on missile development. They made friends and became active in the community.

From all appearances they were a happy couple, but there was a dark secret constantly in the back of Anna's mind. Regardless of how long she was married to Bill, Hans would always be her husband.

Anna and Bill had always enjoyed going out for dinner and dancing and when the Fogcutter opened it became a favorite of theirs. Oftentimes if he worked late, she would go on ahead so they could get their regular table.

As Anna waited for Bill she glanced casually around the dimly-lit lounge. It was still too early for most of the regulars. Most of the people there were business people from out of town, having a quick dinner before going back to their hotel rooms.

She didn't notice him at first; it was more like she felt him staring at her. Curious, she shifted her chair to get a better look at him. He was a handsome elderly man, tall, well dressed and sitting by himself. She would have turned away had it not been for his eyes - they reminded her of someone whom she had known a half century earlier.

Suddenly she felt as if she was about to pass out. The man got up and walked over to where she was sitting.

"Anna....." he said. It was half question and half statement. "I knew it was you as soon as you walked in."

Anna was speechless but finally managed to say the name.

"Hans..... I thought you were dead."

The words came pouring out. Hans told of being arrested, being sent to the front lines where he worked unloading trucks. When the Russians swept through he was captured, given a Russian uniform and a rifle, and sent back to the lines. The war ended but instead of being released he was sent to Russia where he was tried and convicted for allegedly helping the German war effort. The next eight years were spent in a prison camp where he worked in a lumber mill. When he was finally released he went home but no one was there. Neighbors told him that everyone in the apartment had been killed during the war.

He told of emigrating to the United States and living in Chicago, ironically only a few blocks from where Anna and Bill lived.

Anna finally managed to explain how she had found a notice at the railway station saying he had been killed.



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"The best part about living in a small town is that when you don't have any idea of what you're doing, many others do."

Bette Farris, Arab

Almost as suddenly as they had began, the words quickly died out with neither knowing what to say.

After what seemed like minutes of silence Hans asked her, "Are you married?"

"Yes," replied Anna. "Two children." Noticing the ring on Hans' finger she asked, "You too?" "Yes. Two boys and a girl." Hans instinctively reached for his wallet as if to show their pictures, then decided against it.

More silence passed as Anna stared into his eyes as if trying to remember someone from long ago. There was nothing else left to say. They sat there silently for the next few minutes just watching each other, both thinking of questions they knew they would never ask.

Suddenly her attention was drawn to a man walking into the lounge.

"Is that your husband?" asked Hans

"Yes."

"Do you love him?"

Suddenly Anna thought back about all the years she had known Bill. She thought about the hours he had spent patiently helping her learn English and about all the times he had been there to comfort her when she felt bad. She remembered how proud he was when their children were born and how he never let a day go by without saying he loved her.

Finally Anna replied, smiling for the first time. "Yes," she said in a soft voice, "I love my husband very much."

"I sure don't remember being absent-minded."

Jerre Smith, Woodville

The look on Anna's face answered all of Hans' questions.

"It is best I go." Hans said as Bill approached the table. There was a trace of tears in his eyes. Taking a napkin from the table he wrote something on it before placing it gently in her hand and walking away.

When Bill sat down he immediately sensed something was wrong. "Are you all right?" he asked.

"I'm fine," Anna replied. "I want to dance. I just want you to hold me."

As Anna and her husband danced to the slow tunes of the music she watched over his shoulder as Hans paid his check and walked out.

Late that night, hours after her husband had fallen asleep, she got up and went into the den. After turning a lamp on she retrieved the napkin from her purse. The words were simple but beautiful; a poignant reminder of what might have been.

"I will love you forever."

Just one of millions of stories from World II. One that would have been lost forever if she had not told her daughter this story....

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Old Beliefs and Superstitions about Children



- In 1867 a noted journal said that when an infant was first dressed, his clothes should never be pulled on over his head (which would bring the child bad luck) but drawn on over his feet.

- In England, if several children from the same family were stricken with whooping cough a curious remedy was tried. A lock of hair from the eldest girl's head was cut off and put in milk, which the other children then drank, starting from the youngest and working upwards. It was believed that the whooping cough would then leave the household.

- In the seventeenth century, bachelor philosopher John Locke suggested that all children were molly-coddled and far too warmly dressed. He even told mothers to give their children leaky shoes on purpose in order to get them used to having cold feet.

- The interval between a baby's birth and its baptism was considered a dangerous period, during which the child was prey to all sorts of evil spirits. Protective objects - such as a pinch of

salt, a clove of garlic, some iron nails or a knife - would be placed in the cradle. In Scotland the mother's petticoat was placed over the boy child, while the father's coat was placed over a girl.

- For the first year the baby was kept in a darkened room, since his eyes were believed to be sensitive to light and exposure to bright light was considered to cause squinting in later life. Most babies today are born under bright hospital lights - but a dark, cozy environment helps the mother relax and is now recommended by the some practitioners.

- In the fifteenth century mothers were confined to their bed for as long as four weeks after the baby was born. For many weeks the threat of the mother dying from "childbirth fever" was very real, so she was kept warm and still. After a week or so, if she made good progress, she was allowed to sit up. This was often celebrated by a party known as "the lady's upsetting feast." The new mother's first outing would take place when she would go to church to give thanks for her child. Today it is common for mothers, even first-time mothers, to be asked to leave the hospital beds only a day after giving birth.



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**"When I was born the
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face, turned me over and
said, 'Look, twins!'"**

Rodney Dangerfield

MY EARLIEST MEMORIES - 1921

by Nell Rutledge Porter

I cannot remember how old I was when Daddy had scarlet fever. He was so afraid that all of the rest of our family would get the dreaded disease. He told Mother that we must move out of the house and into a little old tenant house a few rods down the path to the barn. We moved only the items that we would need, but I am sure that we took more than we used for we did not know how long Daddy would be sick.

I can remember going to the spring and bringing water for Mother. We dared not use any water from our well because Mother thought that was the source of the fever. Someone had built a concrete trough below the spring and put a pipe down to it. The water was so cold that it hurt your teeth to drink it. I could have stayed up by that spring all day, but I had to hurry with my burden, for Daddy had a great fever and Mother must keep cold water by him as much as she could.

She would reach in at the window and put the stone pitcher on a table. Then she would pour out a glassful of water for Daddy. Sometimes he was out of his head and talked funny. At those times he would not drink any water. The doctor was not afraid to go into this room and he came about every day.

Every time I could get away, I would go for water because I loved to watch it trickle down over the moss on the side of the trough. It formed a little stream that ran down under a culvert across the road and into the meadow.

The days ran on and soon Daddy was able to sit up. None of our family could go into the house though because the house must be fumigated. On a pretty sunny day Mother helped Daddy outside and into her old rocking chair. Then a neighbor lady came and she and Mother worked on our real home.

"The wind is like air, only pushier."

Jenny, 4th grader on her science test

First they built a fire on the hearth and when it had burned down good they transferred the live coals into an old iron kettle. Then they poured sulfur onto those coals. Before they did that Mother had taken all mirrors and pictures out of the house because the smoke would have ruined them. As the fumes rose up into the air, the two ladies ran from the house. No one could live in those fumes, not even a mouse. That was how they fumigated houses in those days.

We moved back into our home in a few days, and it took Daddy a long time to get his strength back. His skin peeled off and the men folk called him "Skinny" for a long time. I never liked that name.

Big Fire In Dallas Village

from 1905 Huntsville newspaper

A very destructive fire raged in Dallas village from 1-3 o'clock this morning and destroyed three of the principal businesses of the village and one residence. The list follows:

Geo. W. Wise merchandise store and store house, loss \$1000, insurance \$3300.

Richard Rousseau's grocery and general merchandise, loss \$1000, no insurance. Joseph Ward's meat market, loss \$500, no insurance

Joseph Ward's residence, loss \$500, no insurance

The blaze originated somewhere in the building occupied by Wise's store and hardly before the alarm had been given the whole building was enveloped in flames. The house was full of merchandise from top to bottom and the blaze was fiercely hot against the sides of all buildings in the locality.

There was little water to be had and the people of the village could offer practically no resistance to the spread of the flames except by dashing buckets of water against the sides of their houses. Another store across the street from Wise's, that of Holland, was on fire at one time but was saved.

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Time Really Does Fly!

by Jerry Keel

I have always heard the old saying "Time flies when you are having fun." Well, take it from me, you don't really have to be having fun for time to fly. One day you wake up and it hits you, "Oh me, where did all that fun stuff I once did go. Mercy, I have gotten OLD!"

Advanced age is not so bad I suppose — it's certainly better than the alternative which is to die young. Nobody wants to do that! Almost everybody wants to hold on as long as they can (me too!).

One of the first things to leave you as the years pass by is usually your memory. That is why a publication like "Old Huntsville" is so important to have. The people who have reached their "golden" years didn't get there by being dumb or stupid. The large majority of senior citizens have accumulated much wisdom.

The young folks of today would be wise to listen to some of the "old folks" when they share that wisdom.

Some of the youngsters of today tend to think all old folks are senile and don't know what they are talking about. Not so!! When an older person wants to share their life experiences with today's generation the younger ones should listen closely. The lessons the older ones can share are not found in books. They reside in the memories of the people who experienced all the ups and downs in their past and now wish to pass on that knowledge to today's younger folks.

When the elderly die all that knowledge and wisdom stored in their memory banks will die also. And once that happens all we will have left is what was written and shared during their lives. Better to take advantage of that knowledge while we have the chance.

I don't claim to be one of the wise ones but I do know my memory is getting worse every day. Don't wait until it is too late to share that precious gift of all the knowledge you have.

When I retired from The Huntsville Times in 1998 I decided to leave the crowded city and move to the quiet life in the Hazel Green area. Things were so pleasant for a few years until many of Huntsville's residents in town decided to move to the Hazel Green area and also move in every direction to escape all the traffic problems and frustrations associated with life in the big city.

Today as I try to make my way home from Huntsville I find it much worse than the traffic in the city. So many fields where cotton, corn and/or

soybeans were planted now have been or soon will be planted with houses. So many new subdivisions are popping up everywhere. Either houses under construction or site preparation for the mass of apartments which will soon be built.

It seems that progress is like a malignant tumor. Everywhere you look buildings are being torn down to be replaced by huge apartment complexes or single-family homes. When I was young I knew every street, avenue or pig-trail in the city. Now when I go into Huntsville I often get lost with all the changes being made everywhere.

Back in the good old days when the farm crops were growing us kids would take leaves, cotton bolls and plants of all kinds to school for "Show and Tell" sessions in class. Now most of the kids don't know the difference between a cotton boll and a baseball bat. Such a shame.

But we just have to accept the many changes which have occurred since the "good old days". Progress has changed our lives and will continue to change things in the future. Good or bad? Everyone has their own opinion, but one thing is certain. That is the fact that progress cannot be stopped so we might as well embrace it and do the best we can.

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The Salesman

by Dale Cassidy

Early entertainment in Huntsville, as in most towns of the 1800s, was limited. An occasional dance, a town picnic or a church social seemed to be the recreation highlight of most citizens' lives.

A peculiar amusement of the 1890s, however, was listening to the medicine men, who plied their trade with abundant vigor and enthusiasm. They ranged from small-time fakers, who peddled their wares from the back of a wagon, to more pretentious phony "doctors" who enlivened their programs with elaborate stage setups and a considerable troupe of entertainers and workers.

One of the most colorful of this type to come through Huntsville in those days was the self-styled "Yellowstone Kit." Kit carried a tent and actually charged for the choicest seats during his program which consisted of song and dance, banjo picking and general gaudy entertainment. As soon as the crowd was warmed up and lively, "Yellowstone Kit," in his magnificent ten-gallon hat, make-up and fringed clothing, which he thought made him look like Buffalo Bill, would jump up on the stage and exalt his cure-all elixir, which he generously offered for only one dollar a bottle.

The band played loudly and diligently as Kit continued to entice the enthralled patrons with the results which his amazing tonic promised

to provide. He would prance along a platform, built out into the audience, and exchange bottles of his "priceless" elixir for one dollar each, held up by willing and hypnotized spectators. There were very few times that Kit failed to "pack 'em in" for one of his shows.

"Yellowstone Kit" continued to brandish his wares throughout the South for many years during the late 1800s and early 1900s, stopping and staying often in Huntsville. When he reached the end of his days, in spite of his own "marvelous" medicine, a New Orleans reporter quoted him as saying, "At least I had one satisfaction in my long career - I never actually harmed anyone."

The mixture he had sold far and wide as a miracle potion had been simply canned milk!

Crunchy Chicken Pie

3 chicken breasts
6 ribs celery/ chopped
1 3-oz. pkg. walnut pieces
1 3-oz. pkg. pecan pieces
1 8-oz. carton sour cream
Salt & pepper to taste
1 c. grated cheese
1 9-inch pie shell, baked

Cook the chicken and cut into bite-size pieces. Mix all ingredients except for the cheese and fill the pie shell. Sprinkle the cheese generously over the top, sprinkle with a bit of garlic powder. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes at 300 degrees.



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Jimmy Durante



Instead of my normal Grandma's Tips this month, I wanted to write a short story about how I learned to fly a plane. It's all true!

by Judy C. Smith

I guess I started flying lessons backwards. After a trip to Nassau, I knew that if I ever went up in another small plane, by golly, I wanted to know how to land it. So I started flying lessons from instructor Bob Wise. I felt free as a bird while flying and in no time had soloed. I got my solo flying plaque with the date on it, August 7, 1967.

I remember I would call the tower after I had descended to 1500 feet (800 feet above the ground) for clearance to land. If the person in the tower said that a Southern Airways flight was ahead of me, I'd ask him to please divert the other plane to go around and let me land first. The tower always complied with my wishes. I guess I had a convincing voice.

I continued to fly, but I guess I can upset most anyone at times and my instructor, Bob, would holler out things like "pull up" or "slow down" or whatever he felt I needed to do. It made me very nervous and took a lot of the fun out of flying.

I also remember when we'd be turning base or final for the runway, I'd use landmarks, like the big church on Airport Road as my point where I'd turn to final. Bob wanted me to use the instruments and references to the runway, knowing that at other airports, I would not have such convenient landmarks.

Sometimes when landing, Bob would jerk the control horn and override my steering to pull the nose up or down. I'd have done just fine, but he was not so sure and didn't want to take chances. This didn't do a whole lot for my confidence.

My husband M.D. was taking instrument lessons from Grady Thrasher, a kindly old southern gentleman with a very mild manner. I started taking lessons from him and loved flying a whole lot better. By then, we were all flying at the new airport.

When M.D. wouldn't baby sit for a lesson, I'd drop the kids off fifteen minutes before Sunday School and they could stay through church in the nursery.

That was just long enough for me to head to the airport for a quiet, peaceful, serene flight.

Several months later, I tried to contact Bob for old time's sake since I had not seen him at the airport for a long time. I was told that after he had finished giving me flying lessons, he decided to quit being a flight instructor and became a psychiatrist.

I never was sure exactly why he quit instructing, but I believe I had something to do with it.



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W. E. and Martha Quillin Rodgers



by Willie Weaver

I met the Rodgers family when I came to town to work on the Arsenal in 1956. William Emmett Rodgers, known to most every one as "W.E." and Martha Quillin Rodgers raised five daughters on East Clinton Avenue in Huntsville. They became part of my family when one of their daughters became my wife. The town was growing fast because of the work on missiles and rockets but it seemed that almost all of the old-time Huntsville residents knew Mr. Rodgers. In later years, we often met folks who remembered him as the Insurance Man of their parents or grandparents.

W.E. was selling Life Insurance when the population of Huntsville was less than 30,000. The premiums on many of those policies were just a few cents and were collected on a weekly or monthly basis. At that time, Huntsville was so small that he could make many of his calls by walking about the town. When the weather was hot, he would return home at noon where Martha would have a fresh white starched shirt waiting for him.

W.E. was born in 1902 in Huntsville, Alabama to Sidney Augustus Rodgers and Dama Lou Terry Rodgers. In his younger days he spent several years working at the

T. T. Terry Department Store before starting his career as a salesman for the National Life and Accident Insurance Company. In 1967, at age 65, he retired with a pension from National Life and began drawing his Social Security. However, he was not one to remain idle. He had a plethora of elderly relatives, friends and former clients that he visited on a regular basis. He also found some paying jobs to keep him busy in retirement.

My father was a distributor of fishing tackle, specializing in Cane Fishing Poles. When he passed away in November of 1967 he left my mother with a warehouse containing about 20 thousand fishing poles. I was trying to help her to sell the business or at least convert the inventory to cash. We found a buyer for the tackle inventory and Dad's delivery truck but no potential buyer was interested in the poles. In a conversation with my father-in-law, I mentioned our difficulty in finding a buyer for the poles. He immediately declared that if I could get the poles from Tuscaloosa to Huntsville, he could SELL them.

Over the next 2 years, I used my boat trailer to haul bun-

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dles of poles to Huntsville. W.E. would put the bundles on a car-top rack and head out to sell them to bait shops and filling stations across the Tennessee Valley. Thus, we emptied the warehouse, provided cash for my Mother and income for the Rodgers. He really enjoyed his time as a FISHING POLE SALESMAN. He wanted me to contact the supplier and order a regular supply of poles. I wish I could have done so, but I declined because my job with NASA was becoming more demanding.

Later he took a menial job at GOODWILL INDUSTRIES, helping with stocking the clothes racks and doing cleanup work. He must have been doing a good job there for he was offered a job at The HUNTSVILLE NEWS. The job at the NEWS was basically janitorial, although he was also responsible for cleaning up some of the equipment used in laying out the pages for printing. That job was demanding enough that he recruited our 15 year old son to assist him.

Martha was born at Nettleton, MS in 1913 to Hiram T. Quillin, Sr. and Maude Catherine Sisk Quillin. After high school, Martha worked in the office of Blake Brothers Plumbing. After she married W.E. in 1935, she helped him keep his Account Books. By 1944 they had 5 young girls in the house. You can imagine how busy she was raising 5 girls in a two bedroom, one bath house.

One of her passions was sewing and quilting. She made many dresses and blouses for her daughters. As the grandchildren arrived, she made each a quilt containing pieces from her collection of scraps left over from her previous creations. It was always a treat to watch the daughters as they found a piece from a favorite dress or blouse in one of her quilts.

The family were regular attendees at First Methodist Church and Martha volunteered in supporting the children and youth ministries. All the girls received musical instruction and participated in the school bands, so she took an active part in the band parents organizations.

One after the other, the girls grew up, went off to college, found husbands, and began families of their own. The Rodgers remained at their Clinton Avenue home and looked forward to occasional visits with their children and grandchildren.

As W.E. moved into his eighties and Martha entered her seventies, it became apparent that W.E. should not be driving. In a family conference with Martha and the daughters, it was decided that their girls, the son-in-laws, and the driving age grandchildren would make sure they got anywhere they needed or wanted to go. Like the polite gentle-

man he was, W.E. acquiesced with little complaint. He did, however, mention once or twice that he wished he still had a car so he did not have to bother others to get about.

On December 9, 1985, Martha, age 72, passed away after a heart-attack and a stroke. W.E. went to live with a daughter. Fourteen months later, on February 10, 1987, William Emmett Rodgers, age 84, passed away after a stroke.

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Wooden Speedboat Accident

by M. D. Smith, IV

Remember the wonderful old mahogany wood Chris-Craft speedboats of the 40s and 50s? They were hand-crafted works of art. Christopher Columbus Smith built the first boat in 1874. In 1927, Chris's son, Jay, took over the mahogany powerboat company, now called "Chris Smith and Sons Boat Company," makers of Chris-Craft boats. They made their last wooden hull boat in 1971, when the company went entirely to fiberglass, as did all boat companies.

My father had an awning and tent business that made war goods during WWII. When the war ended, he kept the sewing company he owned on the second floor of the Marson Manufacturing building (named for the MAR of Marcellus and the SON of Davidson, our first and middle names). But he converted the bottom floor into the showroom of the new franchise he got for Chris-Craft speedboats and small cabin cruisers. He partnered with 'Doc' Gilchrist of Gilchrist Drugs, which is still open today in Mt. Brook Village, outside Birmingham. I have a photo of my father and Doc standing in front of a small cabin cruiser in 1947. My father was only thirty years old.

As you can imagine, as a boy of seven, I loved that he often would take a demonstrator boat to Florida for our vacations. We went to Ft. Walton several times a summer, took Highway 31 from Birmingham to Montgomery, then old 331 through



Picture taken in 1944

MD's dad on right (M.D. Smith III)

MD's grandfather on left - Kirby Henderson Jones (his mothers dad)

Luverne, to Brantley, Opp and crossed the state line at Florala. We then went on to Crestview, and finally Ft. Walton Beach. It was a hard eight-hour two-lane drive from Birmingham, but it was what it was.

When we'd first get the huge six-seat boat into the water, I loved hearing that roaring exhaust pipe when my father cranked it up. There was no muffler until the water pump began cooling the engine and mixing with the exhaust gas. Then it changed to a muffled gurgle of the mighty eight-cylinder beast inside the wooden

hull.

Once my father got into a sparsely traveled part of Santa Rosa Sound, he'd let me drive. I had to sit on one of those square life preserver cushions to see through the windshield and over the top of the rounded deck. It had an accelerator pedal, similar to automobiles, and the more you pushed, the faster the boat would go.

The trip that burned into my memory was the one we took in 1949 when I was nine. Dad towed one of those heavy mahogany Chris-Craft speedboats with a V-8 engine—which ran



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like a tiger with its tail on fire. Pulling the massive trailer made from two long beams of laminated wood to form the cradle for the boat, it alone must have weighed nearly a thousand pounds. My dad's big old Buick was up for the tow, but there were no trailer brakes, and it took quite a ways to stop.

We were coming into Opp and Dad had the green light. I was sitting in the front seat with my mother in the middle of that long bench seat. I alternated between being there and lying on the rear seat to nap—no seatbelts in those days, of course.

I don't remember seeing it, but my father yelled out, "He's not going to stop." After that, all I saw was a flash of a traffic light before my mother reached over to pull me down in the seat and put her body on top of me. I heard the screeching of brakes, then felt the crash, heard the tinkling of glass, and all was quiet. She slowly untucked me as my father asked, "Is everyone alright?" Even without seatbelts, there were no injuries in our car or the one we collided with, so my father must have slowed considerably before impact.

But the boat on the trailer was another matter. As I said, the trailer, made of multi-layered wood beams, beginning at the hitch in the front, curved into a bow and spread to the boat's width on top of a pair of double axles and four tires. When we got out of that big old Buick, it wasn't hurt all that bad with the heavy steel bumper and fenders, but that trailer sustained a clean snap in half of both wooden trusses right behind the metal hitch attaching it to the car.

I remember seeing those multi-layers of hardwood broken in half like you would a pair of matchsticks. That trailer wasn't going anywhere. The boat was secured with heavy straps at the rear, didn't slide forward in the collision, and appeared unharmed.

I remember my mother being concerned and asking, "What are we going to do about our trip?"

I looked around this little town and couldn't imagine having to spend the night there instead of being in sunny Florida. Apparently, my father couldn't either. In the next couple of

hours, he accomplished several things. A wrecker was going to tow the boat to an auto dealer and wait for another trailer from Birmingham. My dad's Buick was towed to the same auto dealer's repair shop, where they pried the bumper off the front tire, hammered the fender back into some kind of shape, replaced the headlight and had the car drivable in a few hours. So we finished our trip. We got to the Miramar Inn Motel just after eight that night.

Our trip wasn't wasted. First, of course, there was Tower Beach Boardwalk with slot machines and the sand and surf of the Gulf. Then, my father rented an outboard fishing boat, and we fished in the bay and up by Destin under the bridge. So we had a fine vacation after all, and we checked on the Chris-Craft on the way home. I assume it got back at a later date.

My father got out of the boat business when he went full-time into the family radio business with WBRC-AM-FM and later TV. However, he continued to own Chris-Craft boats after I was grown and married. My wife Judy and I spent some lovely weekends at the Guntersville Yacht Club, taking his twin-engine, thirty-six-foot cabin cruiser out for the weekend and occasionally sleeping aboard. He'd put in an AC generator to power a window air-conditioner which kept the cabin cool in the summer. It was my mother's idea. She didn't care for hot weather all that much.

We'd made many trips before pulling boats, and we'd make a lot more well into my teen years, but that trip with the speedboat accident on dry land was the one I'll never forget.

(Visit <https://www.chriscraft.com/our-story/timeline/> for more on the history of Chris-Craft).

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Heard On the Street

by Cathey Carney



Well we had two winners for free subscriptions for the month of April. **Bettie Phillips** was the first caller to identify the photo of the month as **Doc Overholt**, who directed the Downtown Rescue Mission for so many years until his son **Keith Overholt** took the reins. Bettie told me she has every issue of "Old Huntsville" since the beginning, 33 years ago. So she has quite a collection. She recognizes many names in the stories that are published and loves that.

Then **Louise Jones** of Hazel Green was the first caller who found the tiny Easter egg I hid on page 37. I made it larger this month so there were tons of calls. It was on the top right ad, on top of the car in the picture. See it now? Louise found her magazine at Gina's Restaurant (Butter & Egg Diner in Hazel Green)

where she eats great country breakfast on a regular basis. Congratulations to both Bettie and Louise!

Many have been asking when the **Five Points Neighborhood yard sale** is happening so here's the info - May 20, starting at 7 am - meet at 700 Pratt Avenue! Lots of homes will have items for sale and you just go from house to house to find your treasures.

Our hearts just broke when we learned of the shooting of HPD Officers **Garrett Crumby** and **Albert Morin** just weeks ago. Our heroes were critically injured, Officer Crumby passed away. Officer Morin survived but is on a long road to recovery. We send love and prayers to the families and hearts full of pride for our police officers.

For a city of our size, we have city workers who are the best you'll find anywhere. This is a very small example. Near Old Town in northeast Huntsville, along California Street which is a very busy road, a little feral cat was hit by a car. Near the curb, it was difficult for any nearby neighbors to try and get the remains into a box so a message was sent to **Bill Kling**, District 4 City Councilman. That same day two employees from Animal Control were there to scoop up the little cat. It may not seem like much, but for a Councilman who has a huge district and is busy every day dealing with our city's growth, it means a lot to the neighbors. And that is why we say THANK YOU Bill Kling for being so responsive to the residents of Huntsville. We appreciate you more than you know.

Billy Lawrence wants to wish **Larry Worley** a very happy birth-

day on May 19th. **Billy** and his wife **Phyllis** live in Fayetteville and love **Larry** and his wife **Sandra** very much. Larry worked for the Huntsville Post Office for 50 years!

I have hidden a **tiny butterfly**, to celebrate warm weather and spring. If you happen to find it, be the first to call at the number below and you win a free \$50 subscription to the magazine. It is a very small butterfly so I expect no calls.

Ianthia Bridges, who works at Truist Bank on Church Street has many family celebrations in May. Her **Uncle Mark** will celebrate his birthday on May 4th; **Uncle Melvin** has a May 8th birthday; her late **Aunt Emily's** birthday is May 12th; that is also the day that her **Uncle Curtis** passed away.

On May 15th **Ianthia** and her sweet husband **Frazer** will celebrate their 30th wedding anniversary; on May 28th her mom **Joyce Ramsey** has a birthday; her **cousin LaTisha (Taye)** has a birthday on May 29th and her **cousin Brian** celebrates his birthday on May 30th. Ianthia's **great niece Raegan** has her birthday on May 12th. That covers the whole month! Happy celebrating to a loving and large family!

Many of you have noticed that

Photo of The Month

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we are placing old archived copies of "Old Huntsville" magazine at the **Customer desk at Publix**, the neighborhood one on Pelham behind the hospital. We decided to GIVE these away and they go back many years. There will be different ones you see when you shop there but we want everyone to read our local writers' great stories from over the years.

William (Bill) Brown Bill passed away on April 6, 2023 at the age of 97. Bill was born in Huntsville, Alabama and was raised in Huntsville's Merrimack Mill Village, graduating from Joe Bradley School in 1945. He enlisted in the US Maritime Service during World War II and served on a number of ships in both the Atlantic and Pacific. He graduated from Alabama Polytechnic Institute (Auburn University) in 1951 with a Bachelor of Chemical Engineering, becoming the first member of his family to earn a university degree.

He married his childhood friend and fellow Auburn graduate, **Doris Holmes**, in 1951. They raised four children, **Richard, Karen, Beverly and Donna**, who all graduated from Grissom High School and went on to earn graduate degrees from a variety of universities. He taught the entire family to be staunch Auburn Tiger supporters and thoroughly enjoyed college football.

He was a long time member of the **Golden K Kiwanis Club of Huntsville** and one of the hardest working, dedicated members. He loved being able to help those who were less fortunate, through the fundraiser of the club.

Bill loved the Tennessee River where he swam, fished, and taught his children and grandchildren to waterski. He continued to waterski until he was 83. Bill learned to fly in a Piper Cub. He was a private pilot and often flew himself on business trips. Friends and family enjoyed delicious honey from Bill's beehives.

He is survived by his sister, **Earlene Brown Davis**; children, **Richard Holmes Brown (Karen)**, **Karen Elizabeth Brown**, **Beverly Suzanne Brown Durborow (Robert)**, and **Donna Jeanne Brown Boatwright (Rodney)**. He leaves 11 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren. This kind, gentle man made a huge difference in the lives of many.

There are lots of fun activities beginning to happen now that the weather is warmer, some of them are:

Lowe Mill Concerts on the Dock started Apr. 21st and go thru May 26th for the spring lineup - times are 6-9 pm and \$10 to park. Bring chairs, kids, dogs and drinks and sit on the grass to listen to some really good music. Check their website for more information.

The **Botanical Gardens** feature Dog Nights in the Garden for you pup owners who love to take your dogs on exciting walks through beautiful landscaping. That starts May 1 and goes through Sep. 28.

Many like buying their fresh veges and flowers at **Greene Street Market** at 208 Greene Street downtown. That starts May 19 and goes through end of September. Times are 4pm - 8pm.

Ayers Farmers Market has all types of fresh food, Amish products, plants, honey, canned produce - newcomers to Huntsville should go by there to pick up healthy produce - they're open Wed - Sat 8-4pm.

On May 6 **Martina McBride** will be performing at the Orion Amphitheater, 701 Amphitheater Dr. in NW Huntsville behind Mid City off University Drive. Check their website

for a complete lineup.

Are there any **Elvis Presley** fans among our readers? Then you will want to know about this. Tickets are on sale now for a Sunday, August 20 Ultimate Elvis Tribute. Artists **Cody Ray Slaughter** and **Shawn Klush** who are known nationally for their Elvis tributes will perform. This show will be sold out. The Sunday Concert will bring Elvis fans from all over to culminate **Elvis Week 2023**. Von Braun Civic Center will offer pre-tickets NOW.

There are plenty of opportunities to volunteer and it seems that Service clubs like the Kiwanis, Civitan and Rotary clubs are seeing less membership. Really consider attending some meetings with these groups because it seems that people are not joining and the payback to you personally can be really rewarding. Also anything you do like this keeps your mind active and we all need that!

Make sure you have your family's plan for bad weather - it seems like tornadoes are more frequent now and we worry about those. Be sure all your family knows the plan so that everyone is safe. Best to be prepared and hope it never happens.

Happy Mothers Day on May 14th to all the sweet Moms out there, and we always remember our Moms who are our angels in Heaven.

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Best Loved Desserts

Spiced Fruit

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2 T. butter
1/2 c. sherry

Drain all fruit and layer the first 4 fruits in order in a casserole dish. Cook applesauce and spices in small pan for 5 minutes uncovered. Add sherry and pour over the fruit. Dot with butter. Bake at 325 for an hour.

Cinnamon Bars

1 c. butter
1 c. sugar
1 egg, separated
1 t. vanilla
1-1/2 t. cinnamon

1/8 t. salt
2 c. chopped pecans

Cream all ingredients together except for the egg white. Spread the dough on a large cookie sheet or pizza pan. Cover dough with unbeaten egg white. Spread 2 cups of chopped pecans on top, pressing lightly. Bake for 15 minutes at 325 degrees. Cut into bars while still warm.

Toffee Dream

1 pkg. brownie mix
2 sml. pkgs. instant chocolate pudding
2 c. milk
6 Heath Bars, crushed
8 oz. Cool Whip

Prepare brownies in a 9x13" pan. Prepare pudding with the milk, layer over brownies. Sprinkle 3/4 of the candy bars over the top, then spread with Cool Whip. Add rest of candy on top, refrigerate 4 hours or overnight.

Cream Cheese Squares

1 box yellow cake mix
1 stick butter, melted
1 egg
8 oz. cream cheese, softened
1/2 box powdered sugar
1/2 c. flour
2 eggs
1 t. almond extract

Lightly mix cake mix, butter and egg; press into a greased 9x13" pan. Mix remaining ingredients with a mixer and pour onto the dough. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes and top is golden. When cool, cut into small squares.

Walnut Pudding

2 eggs
1 c. powdered sugar
1 T. plain flour
1 t. baking powder
1 c. broken walnuts
1 c. dates, pitted

Beat eggs, sugar flour and baking powder together thor-

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oughly. Stir in walnuts and dates. Pour batter into a buttered baking dish and set in a pan of boiling water. Bake for 30 minutes at 350 degrees. Let chill and serve with homemade whipped cream.

Candied Pecans

- 1 c. brown sugar
- 1/2 c. sugar
- 1/2 c. sour cream
- 1 t. vanilla extract
- 1/2 t. cinnamon
- 2-1/2 c. pecans

In a heavy saucepan combine the sugars and sour cream. Cook to soft ball stage, or your candy thermometer registers 234 degrees. Remove from heat and add your vanilla, beat well til mixture starts to get thick.

Add pecans and stir very quickly. Spread on shallow pan that you've covered with waxed paper.

Annie Weber's Nut Cake

- 1 box yellow cake mix
- 1 pkg. vanilla pudding mix
- 4 eggs
- 1/2 c. vegetable oil
- 1 c. rum
- 1 c. ground pecans

Mix all well and pour batter into a greased, decorative Bundt pan. Bake in 325-degree oven for an hour. Remove from oven, cool, flip onto plate. Sprinkle with powdered sugar. Serve with whipped cream.

Chuck Owens Sweet Potato Pie

- 4 medium sweet potatoes, cooked and mashed
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 c. brown sugar
- Small can evaporated milk
- 1/2 c. butter
- 1-1/2 t. cinnamon
- 1/2 t. each of ground nutmeg and ground ginger

- Pinch ground cloves
- Dash salt
- 2- 9-inch pie shells

Mix all ingredients, preheat your oven to 400 degrees. Pour the sweet potato mixture into the pie shells, place in oven. Bake for about 45 minutes and pie is set in middle.

Great with whipped cream or just by itself!

Hot Kettle Corn

Heat 3 tablespoons oil in a saucepan, add 1/2 cup popcorn kernels and 3 tablespoons sugar. Cover and shake over the heat til popped. Sprinkle with cinnamon.

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Helos in the Air

by Iolanda Hicks



I had the opportunity recently to sit down and speak with Scott Thompson, a retired Army helicopter pilot, who has been a volunteer at the Huntsville Veterans Museum since 2014. He spoke of the beginning of today's Air Force. Its roots began probably at the turn of the 20th century even though balloons were used by the French for observation in 1794 (French Revolutionary War) in the Battle of Fleurus and then again in the American Civil War. The progress of America's aviation was slow in the early years, with the Army Air Corp. to form in 1941 and then to change to the Air Force in 1947.

Have you heard that unique sound in the air, of chopping, whirring and whirling of rotating blades? This is the unique sound of a helicopter and there are five helicopters that can be seen at the museum, all with names and numbers attached. They all date back to a certain time in history. The Bell OH-13 Sioux was pre-Vietnam and was the "Mash" type helicopter you saw in that interesting TV series from 1972 to 1983. Once you walk into the main room of the museum, turn around, look up and there you will see the "soap bubble canopy" appearance of that "Mash" helicopter, which was first flown in 1945.

We go forward in time. The next two helicopters that were flown during the years of the Vietnam conflict, were the UH-1 and the OH-6. The Huey UH-1 Iroquois was one of the most famous helicopters flown during that era. It was developed in the 1950s and first used by the U.S. in 1959. More than 7000 were produced with over half lost during that timeframe.

The Huey UH-1 sitting out front of the museum's old entrance was the type of helicopter written about in the book called "Chickenhawk" by Robert Mason. This helicopter was actually the one that Robert Mason flew in Vietnam and was also used in the movie titled "We Were Soldiers".

The Hughes OH-6 Cayuse, nicknamed "Loach", is also out front at the museum, next to the Huey UH-1. This smaller helicopter was used for light observation and maneuverability in 1968 Vietnam. The OH-6 would act as bait to draw out enemy fire and mark targets for US aircraft to then attack the enemy.

Two other helicopters that you can see at the museum are the Bell AH-1G Huey Cobra (or Snake) and the OH-58 Kiowa. The AH-1G is considered to be the "world's first dedicated armed attack helicopter" and became a powerful asset towards the latter part of the

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Vietnam War.

The Cobra can be found, inside, along the north wall of the museum. Ken Magnant, another volunteer at the museum, happens to hold the patent for the rocket launcher for the AH-1.

There are so many amazing, talented people in this world and I have happened on a gold mine at the museum! The last of our museum helicopters is Bell's OH-58 Kiowa. It was used in Vietnam, but saw active combat in the Gulf War, Invasion of Panama and the War in Afghanistan. As an additional bit of information, three of the current, active Army helicopters that still fly are the Apache, Blackhawk and the Chinook. Scott flew all three of these while in the Army, along with the Cobra.

The American Native names that many of the helicopters have imprinted next to the designated letter/number system were, at one time, required by Army regulation. The Native names were to denote confidence and spirit. Today the regulation is no longer in force but that tradition still remains.

We must give our gratitude to all those extraordinary pilots of the past and present. Many gave their lives to ensure freedom and many have lived to tell their stories. Even though a pilot must have traits of fearlessness and bravery, he has to also have that love for flying.

I will share what that famous artist, Leonardo DaVinci said, so long ago, "When once you have tasted flight, you will forever walk the earth with your eyes turned skyward, for there you have been, and there you will always long to return."

The U.S. Veterans Memorial Museum in Huntsville is a treasure trove of military history that has got to be seen. It is located at 3650 Alex McAllister Dr. (2060 Airport Rd. just west of Airport Rd. & So. Memorial Parkway) and its hours are Wed-Sat 10-4.

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THE STORY OF WEATHERLY HEIGHTS

by Bob Baudendistel



In the wake of World War II, both Huntsville and its arsenal were placed on standby mode. Following the arrival of the Redstone Ordnance Corps by the early 1950s, economic growth in and around Huntsville was soon re-kindled as many more rural and picturesque communities became the focal point with a wave of new development. Back at the time, traveling south of Huntsville toward the Tennessee River was done over the former Whitesburg Turnpike. As a fully improved public state road, this arterial corridor ran parallel with a series of scenic mountain ridges and outlier spurs where many connecting trails and other slightly improved roads branched over into the seemingly hidden Aldridge Creek Valley.

Immediately south of Lily Flag Station was one such road leading back into Weatherly Cove. Just east atop the ridge is where Todd Mill Road diverged out ahead of Morris Chapel meandering below the eastern skirt of Weatherly Mountain. Atop this mountain rising some 300

feet in elevation over the surrounding valleys was a 45 acre tract previously cleared for farming.

The mountain's rich sandy soils allowed for colorful landscapes and thriving vegetable gardens where mules, horses and cattle were once found grazing over its pastured areas. Accessing the top of this mountain required use of an early wagon trail leading directly up from the Weatherly Farm found below near Aldridge Creek.

In September of 1955, the first residential subdivision atop Weatherly Heights was surveyed with 31 lots staked out along the newly cut paths of Nottingham Lane, Westleigh Drive, Dover Road, Somerset Road and Hampshire Lane with each street being named after the English villages per the Legend of Robin Hood. As new homes were being built atop Weatherly Heights, most of the surrounding valley areas remained open farmland for another five to six years counting down until the space program launched another boom in economic growth.

Soon, new residential subdivisions were built adjacent to Weatherly Mountain as were a number of schools, churches and neighborhood businesses. In the summer of 1963, the Whitesburg Baptist Church launched a mission to service the newly developing areas along Weatherly Road. By October 6 of that year, the Whitesburg Mission met atop

Weatherly Mountain at the home of Burt and Janet Carpenter with 17 families in attendance. Just below the mountain, the newly built Weatherly Heights Baptist Church was dedicated shortly thereafter in 1964 over a 3-1/2 acre tract just across from the new public elementary school.

Growing up on this mountain triggers an early faith and appreciation for its people, history, geology, forestry, landscaping and natural resources; all of which will never leave a person empty handed. The top of the mountain is capped by a layer of Hartselle Sandstone that when weathered, produces a rich sandy and loamy soil. Heading up Torino Drive is a unique hollow where a perennial spring is found. There at the spring remains evidence of an early water detention system where back in 1833, Mr. Peter Weatherly, a native of Berwickshire Scotland, first settled within the immediate area of this particular mountain.

Per old land records, Mr. Weatherly purchased a 40 acre tract of land near this spring where he built an effective irrigation system for his crops. Higher up through the hollow is a unique void where water flowing over the face of the upper sandstone bluff has created a spherical-shaped cathedral opening with walkable sandy floors.

Back over the northwestern slope of the mountain was once a 20 foot deep pit where a de-limbed cedar tree was evidently tossed in being used for a ladder. Down inside was a separate room featuring a dome-shape ceiling with names etched in the walls, some dating back nearly 200 years. Eastern red cedars are common over the lower portion of the mountain while higher up we find a more varied selection of oak, hickory, poplar, walnut and southern yellow pine.

One particular stand of pine includes trees measuring well over 70 feet in height where we, as daring gymnasts, would climb way up top to look out over the city and see for miles and miles.

Living atop Weatherly Heights to this day offers residents a peaceful getaway far enough away from our growing inner-city traffic yet convenient to just about everything. In 1965, Huntsville Utilities contracted for the construction of the mountain's 200,000 gallon reservoir to service the water needs there atop and below the mountain. Standing over 80 feet tall, this elevated structure and its notable pale blue color stand tall like a beacon or statue letting residents know from miles away that their home sweet homes are within range.

The architecture of homes atop the mountain includes many traditional southern-style ranchers and a blend of more contemporary designs featuring open floor plans. Looking out through any given yard offers a magnificent view of the surrounding valley while homes built farther down across the slopes feature more densely wooded lots with uniquely exposed rock formations.

Many of us reflect back to our fondest childhood memories where outside of home, the many joys in life often begin with early education. It was on a Friday afternoon during the spring of 1973 when I and several kindergarten students were enjoying the outdoor playground at the Weatherly Heights Baptist Church. Looking up we could see a line of cars with parents waiting to pick up their children, one of which was our father driving his brightly colored Chrysler sedan.

After heading back inside anxiously awaiting the teachers to escort us out to our ride, it was soon all-aboard as we left the church heading up Weatherly Mountain to pick up Jim, our younger sibling, at Mrs. Johnston's Preschool along Westleigh Drive. Out in back of this home was a basement area renovated into a Pre-K classroom with a well-equipped outdoor playground. Inside were lots of toys, games and books making for a fun and memorable learning environment.

If the City of Huntsville were to ever produce a television series focused in on early education and learning, there would be no more perfect fit than here atop Weatherly

Heights at "Mrs. Johnston's Neighborhood," where in addition to her preschool, many other events common to the mountain might even make the Broadway Theatre on any given day!

For what it's worth, it was during a recent visit with a long-time friend living on Weatherly Mountain where we decided to take a walk down memory lane. Throughout that evening, we shared many great stories, met with friends and neighbors walking their dogs, heard laughs and cheers from young children playing in their yards, and in doing so, praising all of the good times and great experiences for which the mountain meant for us.

Stopping to watch the sunset looking out and toward the west; we looked up to friends and family, including those we've laid to rest. It was there within the forest, upon the solid rock we stand whereas the trails that lead us to here were covered in leaves and weathered sand.

Looking back throughout our journey as we walk down separate roads, may God bless the simple things, for they are the ones that heal the most!



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Trees

by Gerald Alvis,
The Poet of Greenlawn



The last rays of evening light highlighted the trees. Most of the reds were gone, but its branches and limbs were defined even at a distance. They were contrasted like one of those charcoal drawings you've seen. Boldly standing on display, patiently awaiting the modesty of foliage, these giants slipped into the night.

I paused a little longer this last evening, capturing in my mind these arms that extend the earth's reach into the heavens. Though these conifers and deciduous examples looked nothing like the painting, I drew this morning.

Art is challenging for me. I've shown some of my work to my 12 year old Granddaughter and then listened to her stifled giggles. Yea, it's that bad, but still, I enjoy doing it. I've decided to work on it. And then came the opportunity.

One of the greatest honors I have received is being a part of the steering committee for the VA. These projects help veterans to cope with stresses and re-acclimate to civilian life.

I helped pilot a writing program last fall, and when the art

class was announced, I knew I wanted to be a part of it. It's one of the most rewarding things I've done listening to and encouraging those who gave much more than I did.

In my non-clinical view, these programs allow Veterans an outlet, a refocusing of thoughts and a chance to see with new clarity. I looked at the trees as if I had seen them for the first time. There was so much detail there on the horizon. The painting was for me, and as we each displayed our art, I pointed out mine had that little hole in the trunk for the squirrel, but I had somehow forgotten my V birds in the background. I enjoyed hearing the somewhat embarrassed chuckles and encouragement.

That's what it's about, replacing some old emotions and memories with new ones. They are there, but it's not where we have to stay. In that sense, we have it better; we, unlike the trees, can move.

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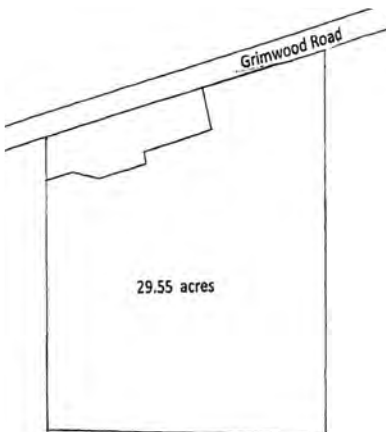
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My Car is Possessed!

by Elizabeth Wharry



I bought a new car from a Limestone County dealership. It had been used as a courtesy car and had all kinds of bells and whistles. It didn't have a lot of mileage and was in fine condition.

I noticed the OnStar light was on, but didn't give it a second thought. I found it annoying that had to shut off my location quite often. Little did I know that OnStar was an option and could be canceled at any time.

The first cross country trip was to Mersing, Idaho. My cousin had a job there. It was 2200 miles each way. I took the time to get an oil change before heading home.

Since my husband and I are raising our youngest grandchild, we decided my car would be the family transportation. I had always wanted to go to Myrtle Beach, SC. We

made our hotel reservations, packed up the grandbaby and went. It was a lovely trip. This trip occurred a couple of months after the Idaho trip.

About a year after buying my car, I was sitting at the traffic light at Highway 72 and Wall Triana Boulevard. As I was waiting for the light to change, I heard a chime then a female voice ask, "Are you wearing your seat belt?" I just about jumped through the roof! The only thing holding me back was my seat belt. I yelled, "Who the heck are you, and what is going on!?" Dead silence.

The next day, I took my car back to the dealership. Went up to the service department and told them my car was possessed. Naturally, they grinned and chuckled. I explained what had happened the previous day. The service manager came out, and saw that OnStar was active. He advised me to call OnStar and cancel the service. Before I left the dealership, I did just that.

OnStar staff said that the mix-up came from a transposed letter/number in the VIN.

Happy Mother's Day!





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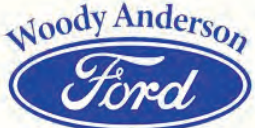
It is this thought that has been the stimulus and inspiration to the Ford organization's growth, that has been incentive in developing inexhaustible resources, boundless facilities and an industrial organization which is the greatest the world has ever known.

In accomplishing its aims the Ford institute has never been daunted by the size or difficulty of any task. It has spared no toil in finding the way of doing each task best. It has dared to try out the untried with conspicuous success.

Such effort has been amply rewarded. For through this organization, the motor car which is contributing in so large a measure toward making life easier, pleasanter and more worth while has been made available to millions.

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

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"My mom and dad both have something in common. Neither one of them wants to have any more kids."

Andrew, age 7

A NEW BEGINNING



by David Bowser

This is the story of triumph over tragedy of the Great-Grandmother of Huntsville, AL. native Albert Russel Erskine who from 1915 to 1933 was President of the car company, the Studebaker Corporation. Mr. Erskine was born in 1871 and died in South Bend July 1, 1933 and is interred in Maple Hill Cemetery in Huntsville, AL.

Imagine with me in your minds eye back to 1779 to the wilderness of what's now West Virginia and picture a small family moving to Kentucky consisting of the father, small child and his wife who is with child. This is the Paulee family and our focus will be on Margaret Hanley Paulee. They were surprised by an attack of Shawnee Indians that killed Mr. Paulee and their son, leaving 26 year old Mrs. Paulee the sole survivor. Devastated and terrified, she had seen her loved ones killed and was now in a strange place and marched into the Shawnee camp, where after this she was given to

old Chief White Bark. She spent the next 3 years in captivity. Mrs. Paulee became well liked and popular within the tribe and this probably saved her life later on because for some reason old White Bark tried to have her killed, but because of the strong objections of the tribe her life was spared.

During her captivity a trader by the name of Mr. Higgins started coming by and tried bargaining with White Bark for Mrs. Paulee's release but was always turned down.

Eventually old Chief White Bark went to the big pow-wow in the sky and she was given to one of his sons. At some point word of her capture got back to her friends who started working for her release. Another source states that Mr. Higgins paid \$200.00 for her freedom. Is it possible that her friends and Mr. Higgins had contact with each other? It seems likely doesn't it? At any rate, Mr. Higgins offered \$200.00 to White Bark's son for her freedom which was accepted.

After Mrs. Paulee's release she re-adjusted to life as she had known it and married Mr. Henry Erskine and started another family with one of their sons becoming a medical doctor. This son in turn had 3 sons who themselves became doctors. Two of these sons went into medical practice together and were instrumental in treating people in Memphis during one of the smallpox epidemics, with smallpox taking the life of one.

You can see that Mrs. Paulee-Erskine had had a tragic life early on but by starting over that her marriage to Mr. Erskine produced descendents that impacted society in a positive way.

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Remembering My Dad

by Bob Hawkins

A long time ago there was a night that I will always remember. My Mom called me about 6 pm and said my Dad had fallen and hit his head on the coffee table. That he was unconscious. He was in his late eighties at the time.

I was 20-30 minutes away so I told her to call an ambulance and send him to the hospital, then I would meet them. When I got there he had regained consciousness and wanted to go back home. The doctor would not let him go until he took some Xrays of his head.

My Dad was pretty agitated and would not be still so they gave him a shot to quiet him down. It did not work so they gave him another shot. They gave him the third one and by this time it was close to midnight. After the Xray they said he was OK and I could take him home.

By this time he was out of it and as limber as a rag doll.

No one was available to help me and I finally got him into a wheelchair and pushed him out of the building. I left him under the canopy to get my car and when I pulled up to the canopy the wheelchair, with him in it, was rolling down the driveway. I managed to grab the wheelchair with no damage and got home about 1:30am.

He only weighed about 165 pounds but he was still out from those shots and just limp as could be.

How I got him out of the car, up the steps and into the house I'll never know. Mom said to put him into bed but the couch was the closest thing I could get to and that is where I put him. Mom said he didn't wake up til noon the next day.

He and I had worked together for 25 years. He has been gone now 18 years, he was a fine man and I miss him very much.

"Zombies eat brains.
You're safe."

One "friend" to another

A \$25 Wife

from 1902 newspaper

Huntsville - John Kendall of Madison County was arrested yesterday on the charges of selling his wife to Lem Nobles for the sum of 25 dollars.

Apparently all concerned parties were happy with the transaction until Nobles was informed that he was also the owner of six children, whereas he promptly complained of fraud to the Sheriff. Both men are currently residents of the jail and are expected to stand trial soon. Mrs. Kendall, and her six children, are residing at the home of Lem Nobles.

With your busy life, don't forget
your older relatives.

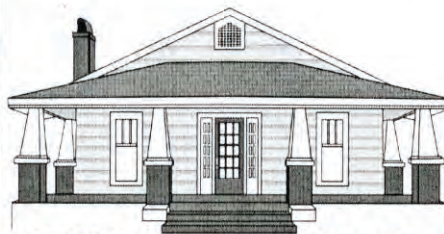
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From Oscar Llerena, HHS class of 1966

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My Life and Times in and Around Huntsville (part 2)

by Dickie Hale



Why we moved from Huntsville to Gurley, I'll never know. But we did. We moved into an old farmhouse about 2 miles from Gurley in the summer of 1955 during the first of two 6-week school breaks. The first 6 weeks were for hoeing cotton and back to school for 6 weeks then out for another 6 weeks for picking cotton. By this time my mom had to go to work to put food on the table because grandpa died 2 years back. She went to work for Service Cleaners at 5 points in Huntsville as a seamstress and counter person. It's no longer there today.

The next thing that happened changed my life forever. My mom was killed in a head-on car accident on a Friday night late coming home from work. It was dusty dark on Highway 72 and she passed a semi-truck hitting the same guy I was picking cotton for. She left behind us 4 kids ages 5 to 11 and grandma.

While in Gurley I hoed and picked cotton for 2 cents a pound, dragging around a pillowcase my grandmother converted to a cotton sack. I remember a Daisy BB rifle in a hardware store in Gurley for \$4.95 that I picked cotton forever to save the money to buy. Each package of BB's was 5 cents. I went bird hunting that same day.

My Aunt Delia and Uncle David bought an old farm outside of Woodville on Bill Sapp Hill. Grandma and the 4 of us kids moved there to tend

it. The farm was on a dirt road on a big hill a mile on either side of the paved highway and 4 miles from Woodville. We all went to school in Woodville for the next 3 years. Shirley Jo had to get my little sister Phe Phe ready and I helped my little brother Tim (Tee-Bow). I can still hear that old yellow school bus in the mornings come up that dirt road. We were the first ones on in the mornings and last off in the evenings. I was in the 4th, 5th and 6th grades and Ms. Berdie Kemaner and Ms. Louisa Collins were my teachers. They taught 4th and 6th and split the 5th.

Grandma would make our lunch and put our sandwiches in a brown paper bag. I carried that bag for a week and it would fit in my back pocket perfectly. It was soiled pretty bad by Friday. She made peanut butter and banana, peanut butter and jelly, potted meat, pimento cheese and bologna and cheese. I got into fights with Jerry (Curley) Keel, Ray West, and Gayen Hill. Was sweet on Diane Page, Rosemary Hall and Maxine Stewart.

On the hill I learned how to milk cows, cut wood for kindling, slop hogs, feed chickens, tote coal, churn butter and draw water. Grandma cooked on a wood burning stove with a water warming pouch. We bought a big mule named Mac and I plowed Grandma's garden, potato patch and corn field. Mac and I became best of friends. When we got snowed in, I would ride Mac to Woodville for necessities.

While in Woodville, Shirley Jo met her first real boyfriend, Jack Jones. Jack lived down the hill about a mile away and we became good friends. Jack was a big man around school because he was a great basketball player. Jack was 3 years older than me, but we hung out together and that made me feel important. Jack, Tee-Bow and I would go down to the old sawmill and swim in the large creek that ran by the abandoned mill. Along the bank were cotton mouth water moccasins and guys across the creek would shoot them with 22 rifles while we were swimming. You think I would do that now, uh, NO.

Woodville was a great place to live. Working on the farm taught me the value of hard work. I loved living there and going to school. Too isolated to get into trouble. That was about to change.

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my uncle sold the farm and we had nowhere else to go. Sparkman Homes was a low rent apartment for people with low income. It was a tough place to live and easy to get into trouble. When mom died the only income we had was her small Social Security check of \$118.00/month for all 5 of us to live on so it was expected that we all got out and find income.

I have stood in a lot of commodity lines with grandma and a flower sack held open for non-perishable foods out by the fairgrounds. Right out of the country and not knowing city life, I made my share of blunders.

First blunder. I knew we needed more income to survive, so I went looking for my first job. Got it working at the Plantation Restaurant in the kitchen. This was the biggest restaurant in Huntsville. I was told I was to be the dishwasher. First night the bus boy quit, and I was instantly promoted. First job and never been a busboy, I was lost, and it was on-the-job training. All the waitresses loved me because I was gullible and needed their help.

Well, the first table I bussed there was all this change under the plates, and I thought it was for me to clean the table, so I took it.

This went on until about mid shift and all the waitresses were complaining about no tipping. One of the waitresses noticed my pants pockets was bulging with change and ask me about it. I told her that I must be doing a good job because people were leaving me this money under their plates. Remember, I was fresh out of the country. The other waitresses found out and were laughing so hard that they couldn't get mad.

I took every penny from my pockets, and they split it. My pay was \$18.00/week. Shirley Jo worked as a soda jerk at Kress's - across the street from the Grand Theater downtown Huntsville. If you remember they had 2 U-shaped counters and she worked inside these counters. She would give me the left-over milk shakes at the bottom of those stainless large cups you would slide up under the mixer wheel.

Phe Phe started her baby-sit-

ting business and one of her best customers was Bill Webster who owned Webster Tree Service on Holmes Avenue next to Sparkman Homes. Grandma took in ironing from local people in our neighborhood. Some of her customers were parents of our friends and they were not bashful about letting us know who ironed their clothes. She also fed a handicapped lady across the sidewalk for 45 cents a meal. Cleaned some houses in the neighborhood.

We all pitched in and helped any way we could.

About this time my little brother and I decided we would start our own business. We had a bicycle fabrication and repair business. We had a gardening business cutting grass in the project. We would go up to the office and in the basement was an old guy that took care of the old rotary push mowers, and we checked out two. The end apartment had larger lawns than the inside apartments, so the end apartments were 35 cents and inside apartments were 25 cents.

We also had a paper route business in Sparkman Homes.

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This was a good route because all our customers were grouped close together. The sad thing is all the apartments looked the same and my little brother had trouble remembering who took the paper and who didn't. I put him on my handlebars above the basket and pointed to the apartments to throw the papers to. I logged a lot of hours with him riding and me peddling him everywhere.

At the end of the week, we would treat ourselves and go to the movies at the Center Theater in West Huntsville. Again, Tim would ride on the handlebars. It costs 20 cents if you are under 10 years old and 25 cents for 10 and older. I lied.

The best job I remember as a kid was at Wilson Grocery in the back of Sparkman Homes. Mr. Wilson and his wife both were blind and had trouble getting around their little store. He offered me a job after school and I took it. Grandma made me an apron and away I went. It didn't pay much but it was better than getting into trouble.

The last job I remember was being the elevator operator and bellboy at the Russel Erskine Hotel on the 5pm to 12 mid night shifts. Got to wear a cute little gray suit and hat. This worked well because I played sports in school and had PE in the 6th and last period of the day. Practice from 2-4 and I worked 5-12pm. The hotel had 12 stories and the elevator had 2 doors, one accordion type and the other was 2 piece solid with an old auto transformer that controlled the landing spot for the elevator. This was how you lined up the elevator floor with the building floor. Loved that job.

Sparkman Homes was a tough place to live, especially with no mom or dad. Grandma tried her best, but she was getting up in years and we were getting hard to handle. My little brother was always cocky but if I was around either in a group of people or on the bus, he was even more cocky. Got into a lot more fights because of him and his mouth.

As time moved forward, I joined the service and spent two tours in Vietnam in '65 and '67. Every time I came home on leave from service I would have to go to the West Huntsville Church of Christ in uniform and sit with my grandmother, 6 rows back from the front with all her gossiping lady friends. My sisters and brother would eventually get married while I was overseas, and Grandma would pass away.

Before I close this out, I would like to share 2 things with you. 1) My Grandmother was my hero, look up to person. She not only raised 6 of her own kids but 4 of us when she started getting older. When Mom died, we were scheduled for orphanages. Thanks to her it never happened. She only knew one man. Never flew in a plane. Never drove a car.

I could go on forever tell you all the wonderful things she did

for us and the sacrifices she had to endure.

2) I am now retired from Chevron Oil Company and live in Walnut Creek, California. I often think of my childhood in Alabama and my family. Would not trade it for the world. I live by a jogging path I can see from my front yard. I will look up and see two boys riding down the path one peddling, the other on the handlebars and I think; there goes me and Tee-Bow.



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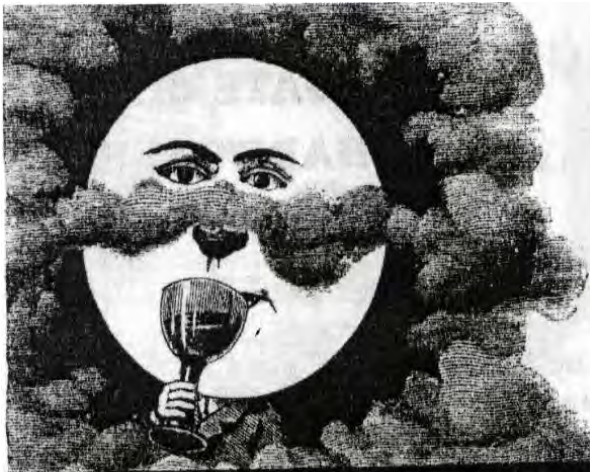
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OLD TIME REMEDIES

These remedies are presented for your entertainment, check with your doctor always with medical questions.

* For general illness, dissolve 3 teaspoonsful of malted milk into a quarter-cup of cold water. Fill up the remainder of the glass with sweet milk. Beat the white and yolk of one egg separately and add both to the mixture, along with a teaspoonful of sugar, a little nutmeg or a few drops of vanilla. Drink it cold and you will soon feel better.

* A good cure for rheumatism is to take a pint bottle and fill it two-thirds full of poke berries and one-third of whiskey. Leave it set for two days and then take one tablespoonful before each meal, three times daily. If the toes begin to tingle, skip a few doses.

* There is nothing that so quickly relieves severe pain as horseradish leaves scalded in hot vinegar. They should be stripped off the stem, wilted, and laid between two pieces of thin cloth. This is very good for headache when applied to the back of the neck.

* Bake unpeeled sour oranges in a moderate oven for twenty minutes. When done, open at one end and remove the pulp. Sweeten it with sugar or molasses and take for hoarseness or cold on the lungs.

* To ease the pain of cuts or abrasions, take a pan of hot coals and sprinkle brown sugar over them. Hold the cut place above the smoke and relief will soon be felt.

* If you step on a nail, pour vinegar over the puncture and bind a penny over the wound.

* Boils can be cured by the following method: place a slice of fat pork on the boil. Bind with cotton cloth. Apply new fat strips as needed until the boil disappears.

Didja Know?

- Before all-porcelain teeth were perfected in the mid-19th century, dentures were commonly made with teeth pulled from the mouths of dead soldiers following a battle. Teeth extracted from U. S. Civil War soldier cadavers were shipped to dentists in England by the barrel.

- During the Civil War, General Ulysses S. Grant believed that onions would prevent dysentery and other physical ailments. He reportedly sent the following message via wire to the War Department: "I will not move my Army without onions."

Within a day, the U. S. government sent three train loads of onions to the front.

G.R. Peters Survives Fall From Courthouse

News was received yesterday of the miraculous survival of G.R. Peters who fell from atop the Madison County Courthouse and walked away unharmed.

Peters was repairing a seam in the roof when he lost his footing and slid down the roof and to the ground below. A large indentation was left in the soil where Peters made contact. He is currently unemployed and seeking another position. (from 1930 newspaper)

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Childhood Memories



by James Thomas Vann

The following are memories from my childhood about the farm (the old home place) my mother grew up on Highway 72 east of Huntsville. My Mother's father Thomas Wilbourn (my namesake and in the picture above) moved his family from Garth, Alabama to the current site of "the old home place" off 72 East in 1911. I was told he did that because he was a strong believer in education and his children would have access to Central School.

Thomas was harvesting his first crop in 1913 when a thunderstorm came. He got under a tree to avoid the rain, and lightning struck the tree and he was killed. His body was put on the eastbound train, taken off at Paint Rock, and kept overnight in the Rousseau General Store. The store sold caskets and he was buried in one of those about a half mile west of Paint Rock. There are about 4 grave sites in that location. They discovered that the ground did not perk (properly drain) so they opened the Paint Rock Cemetery farther east in Paint Rock proper.

I met Austin Miller at Jackson Way Baptist Church (JWBC). Austin used to walk on the carpeted track which is upstairs in the JWBC gym. We exchanged several stories because he grew up in Ryland and knew nearly all of my relatives. Austin said that his grandfather was helping my grandfather the day he got struck by lightning. His grandfather was not hurt by that storm. Austin passed away Jan. 3, 2023.

My grandmother Mary Eliza Wilbourn and her six children had a hard

time just existing for a few years after that. They survived with the help of neighboring farmers who would help the family plant and harvest the crops. Some years later, she married Mr. Macon Jamison Williams who moved back to Madison County from Texas after his wife died in childbirth having her sixth child. I'm pretty sure that I got my name James from Jamison. So, I was named after both my grandfather and step-grandfather.

The six children in age order were: Bertha (my mom) Clara, Olan, Otis, Maxie and Horton (Uncle Buddy). My mother was born in 1900 at Garth and weighed only 3 pounds at birth. I've been told that they took a shoe box, lined it with cotton and that was her incubator. I was told that she was so small they would put one of her diaper pins thru the pillowcase so she wouldn't roll off. She was so small that they didn't let her go to school until her next younger sister Clara started to Central School. Bertha graduated from Central High School at 21 years of age in 1921. I have her diploma and it is signed by S.R. Butler who was Superintendent of Madison County Schools at the time and Butler High School was named after him.

Bertha Wilbourn Vann was an incredible woman. I weighed 10 pounds when I was born and my sister Sara weighed 12 pounds at birth. Not bad for a woman that weighed 3 pounds at birth. Of course, we were poor and she had no prenatal care and we were all born at home with Doctor Holliman in attendance. My Mom never learned to drive a car. She walked everywhere unless one of the neighborhood public buses went close to where she wanted to go. We could walk a couple of blocks to two different bus stops that could take us almost anywhere in Huntsville. It cost one token to ride the bus. I think we got ten tokens for a dime. I remember that before we got a modern washing machine and clothes dryer, she washed all the family clothes using an old wringer washing

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machine. It was located in an outbuilding that was our chicken house at one time. I remember seeing her sweating profusely in the summertime as she washed our clothes. After they were "wrung out" through the ringers, they were hung on the clotheslines that were in our backyard.

Mother married Ranzy Odell "R.O." Vann. My siblings in birth order, were Doris, Sara and Helen. I was the youngest child. The sisters were 3 years apart in age but Helen was 6 years older than me. I think I may have been an accident. In the winter of 1938, the weather went 23 days in Madison County without getting above freezing. I tell people that's why I'm here. That's a true story except it happened in 1939, the year I was born in August, so that's my story.

I have so many fond memories of "the old home place". There is a creek that runs behind the old house and barn location. I would wade and swim in that creek when I was quite young. There were small fish and crayfish in the creek. I would get an empty tin can and place it behind a crayfish. Crayfish swim backwards so I'd push a stick down into the water in front of the crayfish, and it would swim backwards into the can. That was like a game and there's no telling how many crayfish I caught like that.

I learned to pick cotton, hoe the weeds out of the corn and cotton patch, gather eggs from the chicken house, and a few other things like that. Every Easter all my relatives would assemble at the "big house" for an egg hunt. We would dye the boiled eggs, and then an adult would hide them outside. They would always count the eggs before and after the hunt. One year we found all of the hidden eggs except one. It wasn't a big surprise that the next year we found one more than was hidden that year. The extra egg smelled awful when it was cracked open.

One of the crops they raised was sorghum cane. One fall I was able to help process the cane into syrup. That was a real experience. They had a machine that had a long pole that stuck out of it. A mule was harnessed to the pole and walked around the machine turning the rollers that pressed the liquid out of the sugar cane. The machine had a heated enclosure on it that helped keep the syrup in a liquid form. I

remember my grandmother came down to where the machine was located with freshly made biscuits that we cooked in the heated enclosure. We spread some of the freshly pressed syrup on the biscuits and they were delicious. The old stringy part of the cane was gathered after pressing and tossed into the pig lot that was nearby. I remember going back out there sometime later when we had experienced a few warm fall days and the sugar left in the stringy part would start to ferment. Most of the pigs in the lot were intoxicated by the alcohol that was available from that mess. I remember seeing them walking around burping and passing gas like you would not believe.

My step-grandfather Macon raised some prize pigs. I have a picture of one that he raised that weighed over 1000 pounds. He had a grist mill where he processed grain for the family and others in the community. The mill was located on the property bequeathed to Laura Jo Hamilton and Jimmy Wilbourn. Granddad would keep part of the output as payment for his grinding. The mill was in a back room but the motor that turned the grinding stones was in the room where you entered the building. There was a wide leather belt that ran from the motor back into the mill room. The belt was joined with a lashing of wire that sewed the belt together. There were ends of the wire that stuck out of the belt and my mother was always afraid that I would get my clothes hung on the wire and get pulled back into the mill room. I avoided the belt and its path very carefully.

My Granddad Macon was also a blacksmith. He had the

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blacksmith shop with the fire pit, the bellows for blowing on the fire, and a big anvil in a shed-like building behind the big house. He made a large number of the tools that were used in farming. My uncle Otis also had a blacksmith shop and I have some of the tools that he made there.

I was visiting two of my Wilbourn cousins when we decided we would go fishing in the creek. We cut small limbs for our fishing poles. We had string and hooks but had no weight to take the bait down into the water. We presented our problem to Granddad and he pounded a piece of lead into a thin strip that we could cut off with our pocket knife and wrap around our line for a sinker. For bait, we dug up some worms from the barnyard. We caught several small bream from the creek. We had a stringer that we put them on and started back to Uncle Otis's house. It had rained earlier that day and we dragged those fish through every mud puddle trying to keep them alive as long as we could. Aunt Lily cleaned and cooked the fish for my cousins and me and they were delicious.

Granddad Macon was quite an interesting man. He loved current events. I would sit on the front porch of the "big house" with him while he asked me about current events. His eyesight was really bad so he had 2 or 3 pairs of reading glasses that he would put on top of each other so he could read the newspaper. He read it from cover to cover every day. He would also listen to news reports on the radio. Macon was born on 29 January 1877 in Alabama. He married Fanny Berry in 1898.

One of my treasured possessions is Granddad's canteen that he would fill with water, tie on his belt and wear to the field. It is a glass vinegar bottle with a fiber string tied through the handle of the bottle and it has a cork in the top. He died on 28 May 1962 at the age of 85 and was buried in Madison County at a church cemetery on Ryland Pike.

My grandmother Mary Eliza was quite a character as well. One day she went to the hen house to gather eggs. On the way back to the "big house" she fell and broke her wrist. She went into the house and sat in the living room with her broken hand covered up with a cloth of some kind. She did that because her son Olan was on the place and she knew he would come back thru the house to check on her on his way out.

Olan had a heart problem and she was afraid that if he saw her twisted broken wrist, he might have a heart attack.

She sat like that until my Aunt Max-

ie got home from work and took her to the doctor. Grandmother had what we called palsy. Her hands trembled all the time except when she had a needle in her hand. I remember she collected all the ribbons that were on the flowers at Macon's grave site. She hand-stitched those together into a bed coverlet that she spread on top of her bedspread.

The youngest child from grandfather Macon's first marriage was Emma T. She had some sort of health episode (perhaps Spinal Meningitis) that had a high fever associated with it. She suffered brain damage from that and was disabled from that time until her death. She would have seizures and fall down trembling. As a young child, that scared me terribly.

Macon made my grandmother promise to take care of Emma T. as long as she lived. She did that faithfully and when Emma T. passed away, my grandmother's health started to deteriorate.



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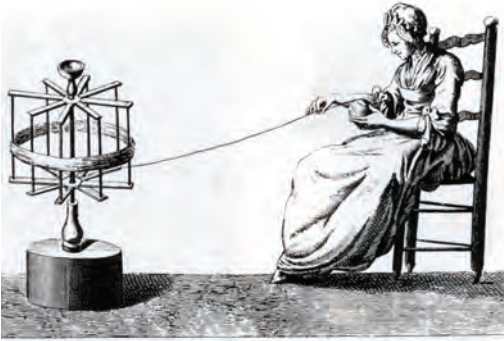
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Tips from Liz



- Check your down pillow by holding the center in the palm of your hand. If the corners droop, it's time to get a new one because the down is shot and insomnia lies ahead.

- Get out and walk! This time of year is perfect to put on those comfortable shoes and explore Old Town, Five Points and Twickenham.

- You can cut paint odors if they bother you by adding 2 teaspoons of vanilla extract (use the artificial) per quart to the paint.

- Never place bookcases where they get strong sunlight. The glare will fade the bindings and warp the covers.

- Marble scratches are easy to get. To repair them use very fine sandpaper, then polish the area with tin oxide and finish by buffing with a chamois.

- When considering buying a home, always check to see if the ceiling is solid. Test the plaster in each room by tapping with a broomstick.

- A folk remedy that often works with hay fever victims is chewing on a honeycomb.

- Out of eggs? In many recipes you can substitute half a cup of mayonnaise for each egg.

- When trapped in the house on a rainy day, use the time to pick out items for a future garage sale. You may never have one, but you might find some items that you haven't seen for a long time.

- A damp cloth dipped in baking soda is the best cleaning agent for oven glass doors.

- Dust your little knick-knacks with a small paintbrush.
- To mend a leaky vase, coat the inside with a thick layer of paraffin and allow it to harden.
- Calm down that angry child by just whispering in her ear. She will have to stop crying to hear what you are saying. This works on husbands, too.
- If you have houseplants that get little daylight, water them as little as possible and keep them cool.
- Chopsticks make excellent support for small houseplants.
- For the best-tasting oatmeal cookies, toast your oatmeal first.
- Virtually every recipe for baked goods comes out much better with unsalted butter.
- Try doubling the vanilla extract in your next recipe - you will probably get more compliments on the dessert from your family.
- A couple of drops of ammonia will loosen a rusty screw.

The Gurley Jail

by Margaret Sanford Connally

Early in the 1900s, Gurley had a jail. It was a little one-room affair located by the rail road tracks. It was used mainly to lock up young men who celebrated too much on weekends.

One young man, Allen Sanford, tired of spending so many Saturday nights there, decided to do something about it. He went to the local saw mill and got a long log chain. That night when the train stopped in Gurley for water Allen hooked one end of the chain to the jail and the other end to the train.

I am told that a Gurley resident used the remains from the jail in a barn he was building, but Gurley hasn't had a jail since. Allen served in the Rainbow Division during World War One. While he did have a drinking problem he had a big heart, especially when it concerned children. I am told that once during the war he won a large sum of money in a poker game, and had it all changed into small coins to throw to the French children begging in the streets.



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"The telephone pole was approaching fast. I attempted to swerve out of its way when it struck my car."

**Seen on recent Madison
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THE LOVE OF A GRAND-DAUGHTER

by Gerald Alvis, The Poet of Greenlawn

Grandpas teach, but we also learn a lot. We have time to ponder and pass this knowledge along less hurriedly. Walks are an excellent time for sharing. Jupiter and Saturn were putting on a brilliant show last evening, courting the moon as they passed across the sky. Whatever comes up, we talk about it as we stroll. But there are many pauses, for there is much to investigate at a pond. It's another step in their preparation for whatever comes up in the heavens and on earth later in life. So do they get it? Does it all roll off and become forgotten? They may not remember the myriad of tidbits I include, but they do understand they are cared for deeply. Children emulate; that's how they learn; it's a form of practice for life.

Recently we had the spring on our double garage door break. Per the Technician, it typically snaps at the bottom of the movement. This is when the spring is loaded most, as it assists the motor in lifting. We have cautioned the Grandkids to wait until the door is all the way up before crossing underneath as a just-in-case preventive measure.

Well, last night, Grandpa wasn't following the rule after our evening walk. My eldest granddaughter, who is 12 jumped in front of me and then threw her arm up over my head to protect me in case it all came crashing down. She didn't think she reacted, and I obligingly backed up while she still stood between me and potential danger. She didn't even look at the door; her eyes remained locked on me.

She has learned that there is something greater than self, and she was willing to defend what she cared about without hesitation.

My precious God, can a man feel and be more loved?

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PET TIPS FROM ANGEL

Hot Summer Pet Tips



Provide plenty of water and shade - Dehydration in dogs and cats is a real possibility during the summer. Our dogs get much thirstier than we do when they get hot. Signs of dehydration include dry gums and excessive drooling.

Make sure your pet always has access to fresh, clean water inside the house, and bring a bottle for your furry companion when going outside, just like you do for yourself. You might also switch to wet dog food during the hotter months to increase fluid intake.

Keep your pet in the shade as often as possible. While dogs and cats like to sunbathe; direct sunlight can overheat them (especially dogs) and lead to heat stroke.

Know the signs - You may have asked yourself: how hot is too hot for cats? Or - how hot is too hot to walk dogs? What temperature can a cat tolerate? A dog's normal temperature is between 100° and 103°F, while a normal temperature in cats ranges from 100.4° to 102.5°F.. Anything higher than that means your pet's in danger.

So do cats sweat? No, dogs and cats don't sweat as we do. They drink water and pant to bring down their body temperature.

Watch for these possible symptoms of overheating:

- Heavy panting
- Dry or bright red gums
- Thick drool
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Wobbly legs

If your pet shows signs of heat exhaustion, move them to a cool place, give them a drink of water, put a damp towel over their body, and get them to the vet asap. Don't place your pet in cold water, that can put them into shock.

Most pets love riding in cars. But they wouldn't enjoy being stuck in it somewhere in the parking lot when it heats up to over 100 degrees. You may think leaving your pet in a car for a few minutes is no big deal.

However, it can take less than 10 minutes to develop heat stroke in dogs and cats inside a hot vehicle. So make sure if you have to go out of the car, always leave dog in car with AC running, but it would be best not to do it at all, if possible.

Apply sunscreen - Believe it or not, pets get sunburns too, especially those with short or light hair coats. And just like with people, it hurts and can even lead to skin cancer. Use only sunscreens made specifically for pets. Pets tend to lick it and sunscreen made for humans can include the components that are toxic for animals (like zinc) and this can cause an emergency situation.

Don't shave your pet

You might think shaving your dog or cat for the summer is the best solution to overheating. But a pet's coat is naturally designed to keep it

cool during the summer and warm in the winter.

Feel free to trim the fur on your pet in the summer, but never shave. Be sure to leave at least a full inch of hair to protect your pet's skin from sunburns. And don't forget about your pet's regular grooming schedule, no matter what season it is.

Keep your dog's paws cool

Pets heat and cool from the bottom up. If you're out in the sun together, try to keep your pet off hot surfaces like cement and asphalt. Not only can it burn paws, but it can also increase body temperature and lead to overheating. It's also not a good idea to drive around with your dog in the back of a truck - the hot metal can burn paws quickly.

When spraying your dog with water, make sure to spray the paws and stomach to cool them down quicker. If you are using a wet towel, it's better to rub their paws and stomach than top coat.

If you can't walk your dog during the early and later hours of the day, doggy boots are a good way to protect their paws.

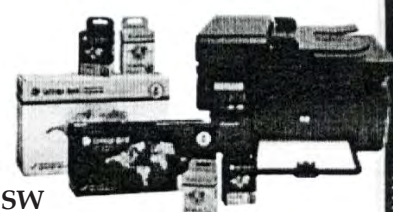
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BAD CAREER DECISION

by Tom Carney

In the spring of 1872, a young soldier visited Huntsville with an interesting proposition for our city's leaders.

He wanted to supply Huntsville's police force with uniforms. Although many Northern policemen already wore uniforms, the idea had not caught on very well in the South, partially because of the cost.

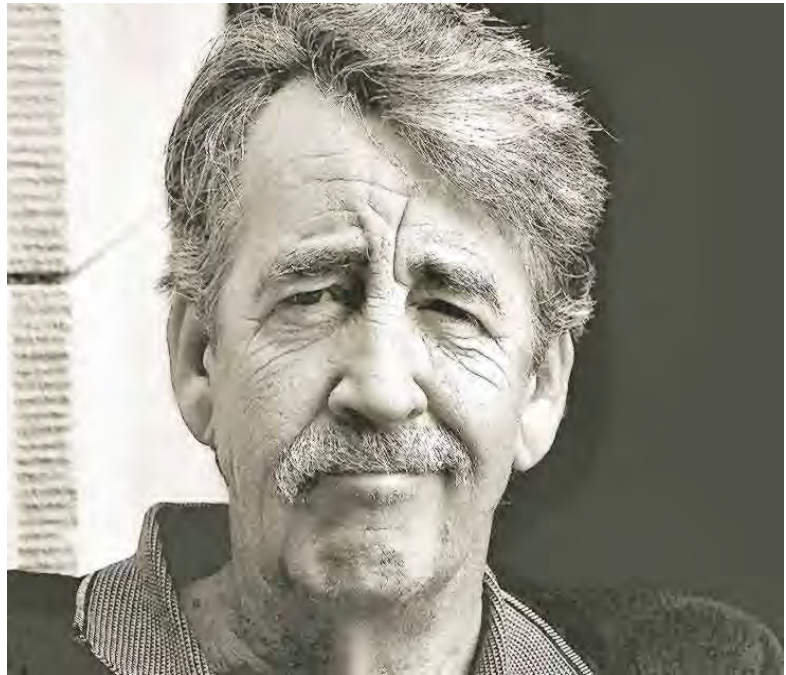
For the small towns still recovering economically from the Civil War, even a small item like uniforms was considered exorbitant.

The young soldier, however, had an idea. At the end of the war he had seen hundreds of thousands of Federal uniforms lying useless in warehouses. After purchasing a quantity of them for a pittance, he had a tailor in Cincinnati alter them.

Now he was traveling the South, offering the modified uniforms at a price much lower than the competition.

Whether or not he was the salesman who actually persuaded the city to clothe its policemen in blue has been lost in history.

We do know for a fact, however, that a short time after his visit our policemen had uniforms. Despite his skills at salesmanship, the young soldier's business never really got



off the ground. Faced with the prospect of failure, the young warrior once again returned full time to his military career.

Unfortunately, that too ended in failure. A few years later, the young soldier, George Armstrong Custer, was killed at the Battle of Little Big Horn.

A vintage advertisement for Lewter's Hardware Store. The ad features a decorative border with ornate scrollwork and illustrations of various hardware items like tools, a saw, and a hammer. The text inside the border reads: "LEWTER'S TRUE VALUE HARDWARE STORE. For All Your Hardware Needs". Below the border, on a dark background, is the text: "A Hardware Store ... The Way You Remember Them! 222 Washington St. 539-5777".

LEWTER'S
TRUE VALUE
HARDWARE STORE.
For All Your Hardware Needs

A Hardware Store ... The Way You Remember Them!
222 Washington St. 539-5777

This old Lewter's ad ran in Old Huntsville magazine in 1996. Lewters Hardware Store advertised in the magazine for 30 years, each month. Thank you!

Best Way to Give your Cat a Pill



1. Pick your cat up and cradle it gently in your arm as if holding a little baby. Position your right forefinger and thumb on either side of cat's mouth and gently apply pressure to cheeks while holding pill in right hand. As cat opens mouth, pop pill right in there. Allow cat to close mouth and gently swallow.

2. Retrieve pill from floor and cat from behind bed. Cradle cat in left arm and repeat process.

3. Retrieve cat from under sofa, and throw soggy pill away.

4. Take new pill from wrap, cradle cat in left arm holding rear paws tightly with your left hand. Force jaws open firmly and push pill to back of mouth with right forefinger. Hold mouth shut for count of ten and gently stroke neck to push pill down, speaking reassuringly to your cat..

5. Retrieve pill from goldfish bowl and cat from top of wardrobe. Call spouse from

championship football game she's watching.

6. Kneel on floor with cat wedged firmly between knees, holding front and rear paws. Ignore low growls emitted by cat. Get your spouse to hold the cat's head firmly with one hand while forcing popsicle stick into mouth. Drop pill down stick and rub cat's throat vigorously.

7. Retrieve cat from curtain rail, get another pill from foil wrap. Make note to buy more pills and to get curtain repaired.

8. Wrap cat in large towel and get spouse to lie on cat with its head just visible from below spouse's armpit. Put pill in at end of drinking straw and with cat's mouth open, blow pill into mouth with a small puff of air.

9. Call the fire department to get cat out of tree across the street. Apologize to neighbor who crashed into the fence

while trying to avoid hitting the cat. Take last pill from foil wrap.

10. Tie cat's front paws to rear paws with panty hose and bind tightly to leg of dining room table. Find heavy-duty pruning gloves in shed. Force cat's mouth open with small tool, push pill into mouth followed by large piece of filet steak. Hold head vertically and pour 1/2 pint of water down throat to wash pill down.

11. Get spouse to drive you to the emergency room; sit quietly while the doctor stitches fingers and forearms and removes pill remnants from right eye. Stop by furniture store on way home to order new table. Place order for curtain repair.

12. Call a good mobile vet and warn them in advance.



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**"Don't let worry kill you.
Let our church help!"**

**Seen on sign outside of a
local Huntsville church**

What is the Tree of Life?

by Lawrence Hillis



The Tree of Life is depicted in many ways throughout the ages by a drawing or a carving of a tree including its roots, trunk, limbs, branches and leaves. The tree of life has been pictured on walls of places of worship, government buildings, businesses, homes, and fortresses and carved on the armor of warriors. In some cultures, the branches are often equally divided on the right and the left sides of the stem with each branch having one leaf and one leaf on the tree's apex.

The tree is a symbol of a living organism that grows tall and strong to avoid wind damage. The roots represent its nurturement. The internet refers to the tree of life as a common idea in cultures throughout the world. It represents the source of life, the force that connects all lives or the cycle of life and death itself.

I am a member of the Huntsville Gem and Mineral Society which was organized in 1958 and was officially incorporated in Alabama in 1965. If you want to learn about rocks the HGMS is the place to go. See the website www.huntsvillegms.org The club is open to

everyone and has meetings every fourth Tuesday at the Sandra Moon Community Complex at 7901 Bailey Cove Rd. You might ask, what is so interesting about rocks? My answer is plenty. The club's purpose is the education and enjoyment of its members and the general public through programs and activities, shows and lectures.

I have spent several years learning about rocks, cutting rocks in the Lapidary Lab into slabs to see their makeup. Then cut out shapes such as crosses and Cabochons and made ornament and pendants for necklaces.

The club has a division called the Rocket City Jewelers. Last fall the HGMS's newsletter Rocket City Rocks and Gems announced that Judy Osmundson and Teresa Chivers would be teaching the December class on how to make The Tree of Life out of wires and gemstones.

I attended the class and learned how to create a Tree of Life pendant for a necklace. It is stylish to make all aspects of the tree by first creating a circular or elliptical ring to support the image of the tree. We begin with the roots, then shape of the trunk of the tree. The branches should be twisted and stretched out to the frame and tied. Sometimes we add gemstones or beads to the branches to make them attractive. One style is to leave off the gemstones and only add a flat white stone near the top of the tree to represent the moon. Since the image is a wire wrapping hanging from a necklace, you can see past the tree, and ladies enjoy wearing contrasting shirts or blouses.

The club has another group called Metal Smithing/Silver Group. Classes are held several times a month and taught by Kathy Bowman and Shelley Curran. Since they use an acetylene torch there is a safety issue and a special class is needed to be a certified user.

The Bible first mentions the Tree of Life in Genesis 2:9 as being pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the center of the Garden of Eden was the "tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." The book of Psalm goes on to compare a good man to a tree planted by the waters and yields its fruit in season and whose leaves do not wither and whatever he does prospers. Proverbs state that a productive woman is a tree of life to those who embrace her and those who embrace her will be blessed.

What is your Tree of Life? Have you grown into a strong person and survived the damage of the storms of life? Are you fruitful?

In ancient times people shook hands to show that they were unarmed.



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AREA NEWS FROM 1892



- A number of cows have been disobeying the city ordinance by not being in their beds, like all good cows at the right hour.

These naughty creatures have been doing much damage. Some of them broke into the gardens of our citizens the other night and created sad havoc among the rose bushes and other plants. The authorities would do well to watch East Holmes Street and impound the bovines.

- For Rent - the valuable plantations belonging to the Estate of the late Josiah Springer, deceased. Apply to executors of the estate: Allen R. Campbell and Lawrence Cooper.

- In the case of Binder, the man who, a few weeks ago, placed a cross tie on the track of the M&C Railway three miles below Huntsville. Judge Richardson decided yesterday to send him to the State Lunatic Asylum at Tuscaloosa. Binder, it will be remembered, was the party who attempted to hew down the flag staff at the National Cemetery, in Chattanooga, and also raised considerable chaos at the engine room of the Bell Factory recently.

- Two days ago the "Stick Ringing" man took possession of the corner of Randolph Street and the

Square, and he did quite a thriving business. Yesterday the "Electric Shock Battery" man installed himself on the other corner and his machine attracted a large crowd all day.

- A local leader of the Scottsboro Temperance Society was unable to attend the meeting last week. He had been arrested for public intoxication.

- The city of Guntersville has a ladies' society called the "Sisters of Silence." It has two members, and they are both deaf and mute.

- A farmer near Hazle Green is advertising for a wife. The last four did not work out.

- A fight broke out at Maple Hill Cemetery when it was discovered that the deceased was wearing a new suit which the widow had stolen from her brother.

- The local editor of the Florence paper fell asleep while crossing the river in a ferry boat the other day, and when he awoke he owed the company \$13.70.

- A very wealthy farmer of Decatur has this notice pasted up in

his field: "If any man's or woman's cows or oxen gits in these here otes, his or her tail will be cut off as the case may be."

- A Huntsville minister was dismissed when it was discovered that he believed the warning against the wages of sin did not apply to him.

- A father near New Market is preparing to send his daughter to Nashville in search of a husband. All the eligible local beaux are cousins.

- A home near Gurley was destroyed when its owner used dynamite to get rid of a family of rats.

- John Depree is once again a guest of the city lock up, this time charged with bathing in the Big Spring in his natural state. He has been arrested 33 times in the past three years.

- From Huntsville - A \$10 reward will be paid to anyone recovering the horse belonging to my husband E. Lowry. It was lost Saturday night somewhere in the town limits while he was in a state of intoxication.



SPARKIE

Hello, my name is Sparkie. I am a mixed breed dog that is spunky and full of life! I came to the Ark Animal Shelter in December 2022. I was found as a stray with a buddy who has already been adopted. The vet thinks I am about a year and a half old and I weigh about 17 pounds. A unique thing about me is that I don't have a tail. I'm a little shy at first meeting but I'm friendly to the volunteers and am happy for any attention. I would like a home with a fenced in back yard because I am a very fast runner and I zoom around the play yard here with any toys I can find. I'm a little scared of new things but get over it quickly. Are you looking for a friendly and playful smallish dog that will be happy to see you? When you come, ask to see Sparkie, that's me.

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Advertisement from local furniture store

The Coon Hunt

by Malcolm W. Miller



When I was a small boy growing up in Ryland, Alabama, possum and coon hunting were very popular activities, both from the standpoint of sport and also putting food on the family table. My older brothers would go on many hunts as food was scarce, especially meat, and we had to eat anything we could get. The family ate the possums and saved the coons hides to sell. I have eaten coon meat but it was kind of tough and stringy. The possum meat was good if you were terribly hungry and you baked it with sweet potatoes surrounding it.

These days I don't believe I would ever be hungry enough to eat either possum or coon. It really wouldn't matter if I would eat it or not as I don't believe I could find anyone that would cook it for me.

The Ryland community is halfway surrounded by mountains and on almost any given still fall night my friends and I could look toward the mountain and see slow moving lantern lights along the side of the mountains. These would be other hunters following their hunting dogs and waiting for them to tree either a possum or a coon,

My dog, old Fuzzy, was the best possum dog in the whole community and other people would come by and borrow him to go on their hunts. Fuzzy loved that as he looked forward to locating the possums and the coons and he always returned tired and very proud of himself.

The majority of this activity took place in the late nineteen twenties and through the nineteen thirties when I was too little to take part in these hunts. However, after I was grown I took part in a coon hunt that I will remember as long as I live. I didn't realize what I was getting into when I

agreed to go on a coon hunt with Walter Pigg, Les Webster, Wiley Hopkins and Arnie Eliff.

This turned out to be one of the worst experiences of my life. We hunted in Banyon Bottom which was located somewhere west of Hazel Green. First of all the place was nothing much but a very large swamp full of mud holes and streams and I was the only one in the group that didn't have on boots. Arnie Eliff, who along with me is the only one still living, would carry me on his back across the streams and water holes even though he was short and I was six four. He had to be really strong to do that.

And now, as Paul Harvey use to say, here is the rest of the story. The only thing the dogs treed that evening was a skunk. The hunting dogs caught and killed the skunk on the ground, getting sprayed with that wonderful skunk perfume in the process. That skunk perfume remained in my memory for a very long time. It also remained on the hunting dogs for a long period of time.

Finally we got back out on a gravel road. Meanwhile everyone except Arnie and I was dog drunk on moonshine whiskey and shooting a shot gun in every direction and yelling at the top of their lungs. When we started home I had to sit in the back with three coon dogs next to me and their recently acquired perfume permeating the air. Needless to say when I got home I had to leave my clothes on the front porch.

This coon hunt happened over sixty-five years ago. That was enough coon hunting to last, a lifetime and the memories still linger in my mind.

"Confuse your proctologist by putting on a pair of rubber gloves the same time he does."

Tony Guadara, Guntersville



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Old Folks and What They're Worth

by Marcella House



Remember that old folks are worth a fortune; silver in their hair, gold in their teeth, stones in their kidneys, lead in their feet and gas in their stomachs. I have become a little older since I saw you last and a few changes have come into my life since then. Frankly, I have become quite a frivolous old gal. I'm seeing 5 gentlemen every day.

As soon as I wake up, "Will Power" helps me out of bed. Then I go see "John" for a bit. Then "Charlie Horse" comes along. When he is here he demands all my time and attention. When he leaves "Arthur Itis" shows up and stays the rest of the day. He doesn't like to stay in one place very long, so he takes me from joint to joint.

After such a busy day I'm really tired and glad to go back to bed with "Ben Gay". What a life!

The preacher came to call the other day. He said at my age (102) I should be thinking about the "Here-after". I told him I do all the time. No matter where I am; in the parlor, upstairs, in the kitchen or the basement, I ask myself: "Now what am I here after?"

**"Weight loss goal:
To be able to clip my
toenails and breathe at
the same time."**

Mary Spann, Arab



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HOT HOUSE IS RELATIVE

by M. D. Smith, IV

In the late 70s, I was at the heaviest weight level of my life at 265 pounds. I was still quite active in my late 30s, and in a heated house, I always felt warm, even at 72 degrees, a standard office temperature. I preferred 68 to 70 degrees.

My grandmother, MeMaw, with the help of my parents who lived near me, moved from Birmingham into a house two doors up from me in 1970, and my kids and I visited her often. She had become quite thin and frail and was comfortable with her house at 80 degrees year-round.

I remember that specific day in February 1979 when I took my four young sons, ages four through fifteen, to visit. We settled in the den, and I felt like I was in an oven. We'd only been there a few minutes when I moved from my chair to the sliding glass door opening to the patio. I opened it about four inches wide and wonderful cooling fresh air poured in.

I was able to tolerate another twenty minutes and the kids were getting anxious to go home, having already finished their silver dollar-sized suckers that each one got from a bowl MeMaw kept just for them, one per child. She died later that year in November at age 90.

I give you this for the background because it was a long time ago, and granted, it wouldn't have seemed so hot if I hadn't been so overweight. By the way, in 1980, I spent a year with Weight-Watchers, lost 100 pounds, and started my running days, completing several marathons and triathlons in the next fifteen years. But even thin and in shape, I think an inside temperature of 80 would have been a bit much.

Fast forward to 2023. I am in my early 80s. I am thin, my skin is like tissue paper, my feet are always cold, I've had multiple joint replacements

and spine fusions and I am cold often. My preferred room temperature is 75-76 degrees. Yes, 80 is still too hot. But my wife still likes 72 that we set for our house years ago. So we play a silent and secret war game of changing the thermostat up for me and down for her on the main floor of my house. I have a small space heater next to me at my computer workstation on the basement level at home and another at the office.

If they stay very long, people who enter my office and take a seat may often say, "Wow, your office is on the warm side." So I tell them I've turned off the space heater, and it should cool a few degrees shortly.

As we get older, we trade places with the aging grandparents (or maybe parents) as we become their age ourselves. Amazingly, I couldn't understand how my grandmother could live in a house so hot, but now I do because I prefer my house close to her temperature. Of course, my kids complain about our hot house.

How to Keep the Honeymoon in Your Marriage from the Year 1919

Have no secrets that you keep from your companion. A third party is always disturbing. Do not assume a right to neglect your companion more after marriage than you did before.

Don't both get angry at the same time - remember, it takes two to quarrel. Continue your courtship

Treat your partner as you want to be treated.

Keep Step in Mental Development - a tree that grows for forty years may take all the sunlight from a tree that stops growing at twenty.

Keep a lively interest in the Business of the home - Two that do not pull together are weaker than either alone.

Gauge your Expenses by your revenues - Love must eat.

Start from where your parents started rather than from where they are now - hollow and showy apartments often furnish strong temptation, while the quietness of a humble home will cement the hearts beyond risk.

Avoid Debt - Spend your own money, but earn it first, then it will not be necessary to blame any one for spending other people's.

Don't allow yourself ever to come to an open rupture - things unsaid need less repentance.

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Reunited After Many Years

from 1893 Newspaper



A citizen of Limestone County, who is buying cotton in the city, related to a reporter yesterday an interesting story of the Enoch Ardin variety.

When the flowers were blooming in the spring of 1861, a young farmer named John Holland, who resided near the Mississippi line, married Miss Lucy Brock, the daughter of a well-to-do planter in that neighborhood.

The young lady's parents bitterly opposed the match and the young people were compelled to leave home to marry. Their honeymoon was spent visiting Holland's relatives and waiting for the father of the bride to forget his anger.

In the early autumn a regiment was raised in that neighborhood and Holland was one of the first men to enlist. When it was known that her husband was among the battlefields of Virginia, Mrs. Holland's father relented and invited her to come home. She decided to accept the invitation and remain at her father's house until her husband should return from the war.

For several months the young bride heard from her husband at regular intervals, but when the spring had come again, his letters ceased and by and by news came that he was dead, killed in the battles around Richmond.

Soon after the news of Holland's death, Mr. Brock and his family moved west. They settled first on the Mississippi River, a short distance below

Memphis, but a year later they moved to western Arkansas. They left few relatives or intimate friends in Alabama and in a few years their old neighbors had forgotten them, and no one knew their address.

Holland owned a small farm near the river and when the news of his death was received his relatives took charge of the place.

About two months after the close of the war John Holland came back to his old home, to the great surprise and joy of his relatives and friends who believed him dead. He had only been severely wounded and taken prisoner, when it was reported that he was killed, and was a prisoner on Johnson's Island when the war ended.

Holland was unable to learn the whereabouts of his wife's family, and it was not long before a vague and uncertain rumor informed him that his wife was dead. He made every effort to find her or learn her fate, on receiving no news he at last believed her to be dead.

He took charge of the little farm and in a few years was making a comfortable living. Two years after his return he married the daughter of one of his neighbors and the two lived happily together for twelve years when his wife died, leaving him four children.

When the Brock family went west they left some property in Alabama and about a year ago the surviving members of the family came back to the old homestead. Among those who returned was Mrs. Holland, now Mrs. Lucy Morris, a widow of five years with three small children. She had married in Arkansas, fifteen years ago and had been a widow five years. When she heard that her first husband was living she refused to believe it until Holland himself stood before her.

When the two again stood face to face time had wrought many changes in their appearances, but the old love light beamed in the eyes of each.

They are united now after all these years of separation and their children play together as happy as larks.

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When life was simple...



Huntsville celebrated its 150th birthday in 1955. Most of the men grew beards but for the unlucky few who didn't there were kangaroo courts that would often sentence people to be placed in the stocks on the courthouse square for all to see.

That same year the Parkway opened, the Dwarf Restaurant began business and the Arsenal had 6,500 civilian employees.

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