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THE

GROUNDHOG

Mentone, Valley Head, Hammondville, Menlo, Cloudland
P. O. Box 387, Mentone, AL 35984

Volume 33, No. 4

"Neighborhood News from the Heart of Lookout Mountain"

April 2014

A Tribute to The Grand Old Lady--The Mentone Springs Hotel (1884-2014)

The Mentone Springs Hotel 1884

*From the minds of men with vision, I was built upon this ground.
By their hearts and craftsman hands, My beauty would be found*

*I rose against the sunset, so many years ago,
To take my place as watchman, For the valley far below.*

*My grandeur was, as promised, For all to come and see,
With songs, love, and laughter, They put the soul in me.*

*Generations came for comfort, To rest, relax and stay;
Memories of lifetimes shared, Would began anew each day.*

*From horse hooves to the sound of wheels, A time too soon began
When I would see the uphill fight, To gain my relevance once again.*

*As the seasons had so swiftly passed, (I was long since passed my prime)
Your hands reached deep inside of me, To save me just in time.*

*But the lonely years of aging, As reality has taken its toll,
Only prove that beauty was not outside, True beauty was in the soul.*

*To those I owed my existence, And all of those who loved and cared
I leave this site forever more, To fond memories we have shared.*

*So do not pass me by with sorrow now, As though nothing is left to see,
Reminisce the songs, the love and laughter
"Remember the soul in me"*

*Written by Eddie Smith
Given to Sandra and Ray Padgett
March 6, 2014*



Photo By Ray Padgett

1981



2013

Evening Shade and Friends

By Ray Padgett

She sat precarious and lonely amidst kudzu and scattered stonewalls, looking sadly like a neglected Cinderella out of a children's fairy tale. Dilapidated was an understatement – near death was a better description. The once magnificent front porch that flowed and curved around her turrets was completely gone and a grotesque concrete block “apartment” was stuck in the middle of her front entrance. Windows were missing, sideboards had lost all their paint and many were missing or hung by a single rusty nail. The visible holes in her roof stood out and seemed to be in step with the weathered and broken steeples atop each turret. Kudzu was slowly beginning to climb the stone foundation. This is the picture that grabbed my family and me when we rounded the last little curve coming into Mentone from our first Desoto Falls picnic.

While everyone's mouth was open in amazement, no one spoke, until finally Sandra said “She is going to die” and then “we have got to save her”. These words shaped and molded my family's every activity for the next ten years – our relationship with the Mentone Springs Hotel will remain in our hearts and minds for the rest of our lives. We purchased her on Sandra's birthday, October 23, 1980 and we began the single-minded task of saving the Mentone Springs Hotel. Almost every weekend of the decade we owned it was spent breathing life into the Grand Old Lady.

We were always amazed at the people willing to help: Sandy made the butterfly windows, Will lent his construction knowledge and expertise, Prez cooked and helped with hammer and nail, the Peterson boys repaired and shingled the roof, Carl helped level the building, Jack added the porch, Richard fixed doors and windows, and Terry picked and sang at night. Everyone pitched in when we replaced the east wing. Some were paid, but most just volunteered their time and labor. Many, many more helped with emptying the building of pipe organ pipes and parts (every room and hallway was full), constant scraping, cleaning and painting. It seemed Mentone, and



Photo By Ray Padgett

Painting Turret - 1983

all its visitors, had stories to tell and advice to give. At times it was more of a social event than a construction project.

Most of the construction details of saving the hotel have faded in the past thirty years; however, some linger like memories of old friends. These are some of the things we did that now appear foolhardy, impossible and a little scary. This was done with friends who volunteered, because no sane construction crew would do it or because we had no money to have it done.

The steep roof belied the rotten decking underneath and many a foot broke through before it was all repaired. When the roof was on, Bob cut an oak steeple for each turret and my newfound friends and I pushed it up through

the hole and attached it securely in place. Then “someone” went up on the roof and sealed around the new steeple. With rented nail gun and ladder, Prez and I repaired, replaced and re-nailed every exterior board on the old hotel.

Carl spent many weekends “leveling” floors and replacing floor and ceiling boards, major columns, and beams in the main lobby. However, our most innovative project was replacing the main sills on the west wing. We rented railroad jacks from Southern Rail in Atlanta and raised the entire wing, poured concrete footings, and replaced the rotten sills – all over a three-day weekend.

Julia calls that decade our Mentone “Daze” – our free time was spent working on the hotel and it seemed we were always broke. Yet this was probably the most enjoyable and rewarding period of our lives. Our efforts to save the hotel brought us in contact with a steady stream of interesting people with diverse backgrounds, and we are still friends with many today. In fact, most of our good friends we met as a result of the purchase and work on the Mentone Springs Hotel. We were fortunate to have been stewards of her for such a long period of time. We are happy that others continued to improve “our” grand old building.

The Mentone Springs Hotel had recaptured some of her former glory before the end. She was a special place for folks to meet, relax, talk and become friends. The Mentone Springs Hotel was a direct tie to Mentone's immediate past. She reminded everyone of the joys of a slower pace of life, of sauntering and of sitting in the evening shade sipping ice tea. This is a memory worth preserving.

Something will rise in her place that reflects the heart and soul of Mentone and its people, but she will live on in the memory of those who enjoyed her hospitality.

Note: We have included some pictures of the hotel taken within the first year or two of our stewardship.



Photo By Ray Padgett

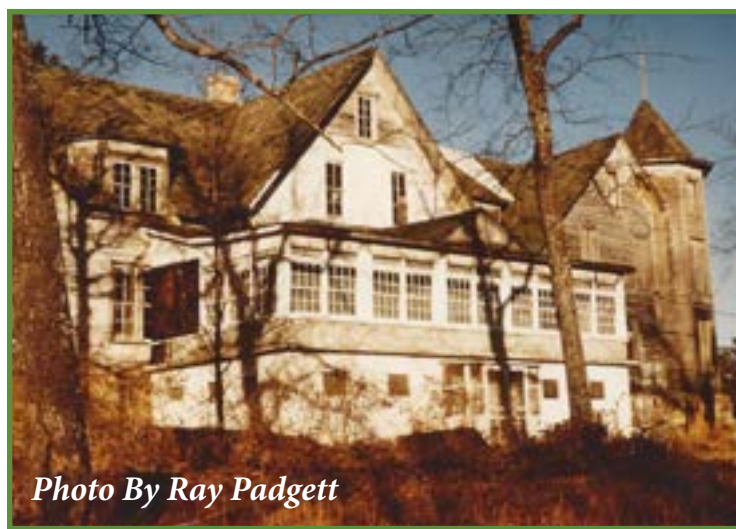


Photo By Ray Padgett

Left - Ragged edge shows where east wing had been removed; middle - hotel in 1980; right - spring 1981



Photo By Ray Padgett

THE GROUNDHOG

P. O. Box 387
Mentone, AL 35984

Published monthly by the Mentone Area Preservation Association, MAPA was first conceived on Groundhog Day, 1982, and organized April 5, 1982, for the purpose of preserving and protecting the heritage, natural environment and other unique qualities of life in the Mentone area, and is chartered as a 501c3 non-profit corporation.

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Mentone Matters

By Mayor Rob Hammond



The first time I saw the Mentone Springs Hotel was in 1961. I was eleven years old and a camper at Camp Laney. On Sundays, the whole camp would hike from Laney to Brow Park for a picnic supper. Coach Laney did not want us leaving the mountain without viewing a sunset. ("Boys, boys, look at that beautiful sunset!") Our route took us up Cutler

and we crossed 117 at the hotel. We didn't know the name of it and it appeared unoccupied. The hotel was in bad need of a paint job, and some of the windows were broken out. It did not take much convincing from the veteran campers that the place was haunted. We would quicken our pace when we walked by it.

My first adult experience inside the hotel took place at a MAPA forum for candidates the first time I ran for mayor in the 80's. My opponent was Bruce Bon Fleur, and we were given the opportunity to speak and answer questions. It was all civil and good natured.

In subsequent years, San and I enjoyed many meals there with family and friends. Any time we brought out-of-town guests, they left impressed with the hotel and its restoration.

The last time I was there for an event was last fall. The municipal district clerk's meeting was held there. After lunch Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs Director Jim Byard spoke. When I left, he was outside taking pictures of the hotel.

From The Editor

This month's issue is bittersweet for all of us. Following the devastating loss of our beloved Mentone Springs Hotel and what was originally its annex, the White Elephant Galleries, on March 1st, MAPA board members voted to devote the entire April issue of The Groundhog to memories of the two historic structures. We've invited local residents to share their memories of these historic buildings, and the heartwarming stories in this issue may give you some idea of the impact these buildings had on Mentone life.

It is especially tragic that the hotel was lost in the year of its 130th anniversary. Owners Jim and Darlene Rotch had several celebratory public events planned throughout the year. Interior and exterior renovations were in the works, including a new landscape design that would transform the parking area in front of the hotel into a rose garden.

We've enjoyed reading the submissions from local residents and trust you will too. Especially interesting is Ray Padgett's account of the work that went into saving the hotel from complete collapse, thus laying the foundation for a process of restoration that continued for several decades.

Although I wasn't a resident of Mentone as a child, I spent many, many weekends here visiting all the grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins who were residents here. I guess I was having too much fun to pay much attention to the hotel or the White Elephant...until Mom and her sister tried to talk Dad and her sister's husband into buying the White Elephant back in the 70's. I remember walking through the building with them as they examined it. I have a vivid memory of looking up and seeing the wonderful skylight over the staircase, and then finding the original cast iron bathtubs in all the bathrooms. I fell in love with the place immediately, and was quite disappointed when Dad and my uncle wouldn't buy the place.

The destruction of the hotel and White Elephant are perhaps the greatest structural loss in Mentone's

history, but Mentone did not die with them. This community will survive, even thrive, despite the loss. With an active arts council pulling in artists from throughout the South, plans being developed for a multipurpose community building, the recent opening of several new businesses, and a town council that supports growth and tourism, Mentone is on the upswing and will continue to be, despite a struggling national economy. We truly believe our best days are ahead.

By Doreen Crow Waters

*for The Mentone Area Preservation Association, Inc.
Board of Directors*



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Grand Dames

If the Mentone Springs, a hotel, was the heart of the historical district of Mentone, then it seems fitting that the heart of our family, Kathyne McDorman, would have known it and loved it for almost one hundred years.

Mother first came to Mentone while a young teacher in Gadsden in the mid-1920s. Her chums in Gadsden came to Mentone to dance at the hotel and the Hitching Post. My naive young mother found these outings a bit "wild," and as she told her tales to generations of her children and grandchildren, we all smiled at how innocent that entertainment really was. She well remembered ascending the mountain over ridges of eroded shale rock, drawn by horse cart. That always seemed unimaginable to us, accustomed as we were to highway travel. Years later we all reported feeling a ripple of excitement as we started up the mountain; and as the hotel came into view, our excitement peaked.

After our parents married in 1929 and spent part of their honeymoon in Mentone, mother became a regular visitor to the mountain. In fact, we always stayed for the summer, or a good part of it, at our family place down the road; but throughout the years, mother always insisted that special events and times be celebrated at "the old hotel." Over the next four decades, as the hotel's fortunes rose and fell, she watched: sometimes in dismay, sometimes in celebration. Whenever it was opened and offered meals; however, we could always be found enjoying the atmosphere and the food. She was so delighted when the Padgetts saved the building and MAPA was born, but the great hotel was not yet restored to its full glory until Andy Talton and Mark Elaqua assumed ownership. Mother declared that--like a long absent friend--the hotel was truly back more like she remembered it. By those years, she was increasingly frail and gradually lost her sight. We are so grateful that the last image that she had of her old friend was that of elegance and class...sort of like mother,

By The McDorman Family



Photo by
John Dersham

herself. Andy and Mark more than returned the admiration. When a family friend married upstairs in the ballroom, and mother could not climb stairs, those two strong men scooped her up on their arms and carried her upstairs so that she could hear the wedding vows and toast the bride and groom.

On Kathyne McDorman's one hundredth birthday, Andy and Mark insisted upon giving a party for her to celebrate the special day with Mentone family. Once again, mother was back with her beloved friend, the Mentone Springs Hotel; and as she celebrated her centennial, the hotel itself turned one hundred twenty-two. It was a happy birthday indeed as the Grand Dames bowed in tribute to one another and to the staying power and fortitude both had shown over the years. In what proved to be Kathyne's



1954 photo found at the hotel after Ray and Sandra Padgett bought it.



Photo from Dorma and Terry Hutcheson



Roof repair in 1981 - Photo By Ray Padgett

waning years, she died two years later; the hotel survived her by six years...both the woman and the place symbols of elegance, endurance and gracious Southern hospitality.

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In the Shadow of the Old Hotel

By Julia Padgett

It's an odd thing growing up in a rotting castle. Maybe it is the juxtaposition of being so young in such an old thing, or maybe it's all of that space to ramble around and hide from the world. Whatever it is, there is no doubt that the Mentone Springs Hotel had an impact on me. Not the fascinating people I met or the childhood friends and my cousins I played hide-and-seek with. Not all the nature that surrounded it --- Beauty Springs, DeSoto Falls, the brow. Not even all the oddities that I stumbled on that were abandoned by its previous owners. Absolutely all of those things changed my life and impacted me, but that is not what this is about. What I'm referring to here is something else --- the space and place that was the old hotel.

I was not quite ten years old when I first crossed the threshold. My first memory of its inner being was the basement. That is where Norville Hall lived and eventually where my family stayed. There was little to no natural light --- but the small amount that came through revealed two plastic sidelight windows next to the opening that led to the dungeon. We called it the dungeon--- but it was a cellar that had a massive four foot wide wooden beam door. Between the eerie red lights and the bellowing



Photo by John Dersham - 1999

sound of the dungeon door my imagination ran dark fairly quickly. The floors were slate black and the air was damp even on that late summer day. To say I was hesitant to enter would be to put it mildly and the goose bumps on my arms stood out as a testament to my fear. But my parents and brother entered, so naturally I followed. It's the plight of being the youngest (or maybe that's a gift).

After that, the old hotel and I began an understanding with each other. It had a captive audience of a ten-year-old girl and it cast a spell on me. The sudden shadows, the creaks, the groans of old wood, the oddly placed doors and handrails, the angles, those fantastic turret rooms --- all of them blended into a hodgepodge of fantasies. "What was that? Did you see that?" My skin would crawl with the

unknown. Those abandoned rooms needed airing out. So that's what we did. We lightened the load on the structure. We put a roof on. And painted and painted and painted again. And the place flowed with people---the curious passersby, friends, strangers, family. All those dark corners would ebb almost to nothing and the fireplace glowed doubt away.

But in the two years I lived in it with mom and Duncan, during the week it would go back to being a rotting castle. Some of the shadows would reclaim a room and fix their place in my mind again. A place I had previously walked with head held high would find me wide eyed and terrified all over again. My bravery wilted in the quiet of the Mentone Springs Hotel's dusty halls and stairs. The building didn't seem ready to change and no one else seemed to notice but me. Indeed, my dad would come up on the weekends straight from Atlanta and tackle this and tackle that. The flow of helping friends converged. Prez would make spaghetti and meatballs, Terry would pick guitar and sing, Sandy would lend one hand and drink with the other, dad directed traffic and made sure none of us were too idle for too long, mom laughed and talked, and everyone got covered in dirt. And that is the slow way to change a building.

And change it did---and we did with it. I stopped trying to escape to the outside so much. I even began staying upstairs and out of the dungeon. The windows seem to let more light in and the walls took on brighter and lighter colors. The rotten boards were replaced. Some of the groans subsided. The old lady began to feel herself again and remember who she was as more and more life poured through the doors. May we all be so lucky to let light in. Rest in peace MSH-I'm glad you found yourself before the end.

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THE MENTONE SPRINGS HOTEL AND ME

By Linda Brown

The first time I came to Mentone I was thirteen years of age. I came with a Mentone summer person who was planning a party. She asked me and another girl from the neighborhood to come with her to serve the food to her guests. We came through Valley Head, and I still remember the awe I felt when I saw the Mentone Springs Hotel. It was the largest building I had ever seen for people to stay in. The lady knew its history and told us all about it. I remember wondering if the community respected this building as it should be. Little did I know that I was destined to learn the answer.

Four years later, I came to Mentone in a baby blue Ford. I was dating a Mentone boy, and he came to see me on Sunday afternoon. We went to the Mentone Methodist Church (later United) youth program at night. Every Sunday, I saw the Hotel standing guard over the town. Always, I looked to see how much of the wonderful building I could see as we came to the top of the mountain.

Fate would have it that I would marry this young man, and I would form a bond of my own with the Hotel. Soon after our marriage, we moved to Mentone and were never far from the cross roads and the hotel. As the years went on, I learned more and more how the Grand Old Lady, as she came to be called, influenced the lives of Mentone folks. It stood as a memory to another lifestyle.

Then little by little the hotel got into a sad state of disrepair. The boards fell off of the walls and holes came in the roof. Most important was that the doors were never locked and the local boys found the perfect place to party. This must have been in the late sixties. I think that it was about

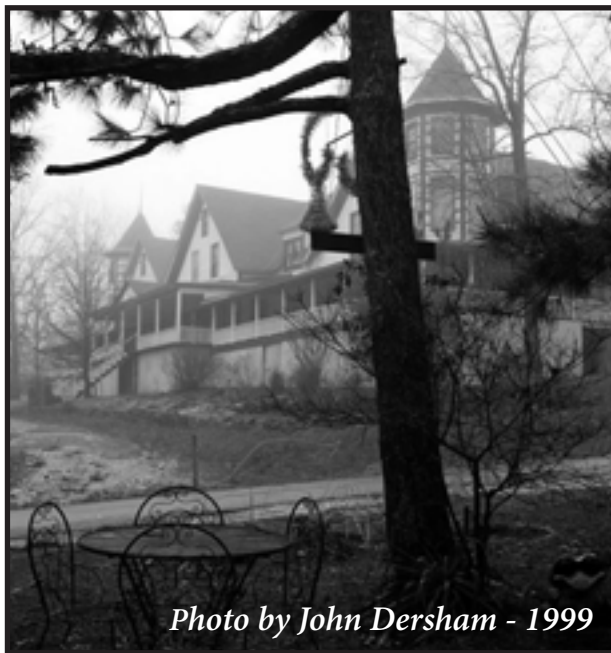


Photo by John Dersham - 1999

this time that a man who must have owned it used it to store organ parts.

The community did not abandon the hotel. Several groups tried to come up with enough money to buy the hotel. I was a member of the board of The Heritage Foundation. Our sole intent was to buy and preserve the hotel as a community center and a museum. With the help of donations and grants, we came up with enough to buy the hotel but quickly determined that we could not

afford insurance and daily upkeep. We dropped our offer to buy, refunded what money we could and used the rest for projects around town.

It was a happy day when I realized that someone had purchased the hotel and was repairing it. Over several years and several owners, the hotel was restored to its original state and was being used as a Bed and Breakfast. The lights were always on, and it was always a welcome sight as we came to the top of the mountain.

On Saturday, March 1, 2014, my daughter came into the room and said the words I had hoped to not live to hear--The Hotel is burning. I knew that many were going to watch as we lost our Grand Old Lady but I could not go. I could not move from my chair. Finally, on Sunday afternoon my husband drove me up to see. A quick look was all that I could muster and I cried.

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THE RECIPE CORNER BY ANGIE CARDEN

Having been born and raised here, I have a lifetime of memories of the Mentone Springs Hotel. I recall as a small child, riding by and being amazed at her towering presence. I knew that she was the largest “house” I would ever see. She was, in my mind, the “castle” in Mentone.

When I was in elementary school, my grandfather ran the Mentone Inn. My great-grandmother cooked there. I spent so much time at the Inn, gazing across the street at my “castle”. I day dreamed that some day, I would walk right into that castle! I had plenty of time to study her from the back entrance as well. I stayed at my Aunt Ruby’s quite often, which was right behind the hotel. One day, I must have been around ten years old, I was at my Aunt’s house, playing with my cousin Connie. And the impossible happened! We were invited for a “play date” with my cousin’s friend, Julia. I was excited until I found out that her parents owned the hotel and that was where we were going, then I became ecstatic! (Thank you Ray and Sandra for having a daughter near my age!!!) As we walked across Aunt Ruby’s lawn to the parking lot of the hotel, I could not feel my legs. My stomach was full of butterflies! Julia met us out back and led us into the entrance. I have no recollection of what

we girls did that day, my memory is of stepping inside and attempting to soak in everything I saw as I stood there awestruck!

A couple of years later, while I was taking gymnastics, tap and ballet from Gail Jones, we had to change venues and every Tuesday night, we met for class...in the hotel! Once again, I was inside my beautiful castle.

Later, while I was in high school, I had a good friend named Nancy. And if you can believe it, Nancy lived in the hotel with her mother, local artist Lucy Mitchell. I was in utter disbelief! But oh so fortunate to spend many nights with Nancy in my “castle”!

In 1988, I found myself inside the hotel once more for my Sweet 16th birthday party! That is certainly the birthday I will never forget!

Twenty-four years later, my oldest daughter had her picture made in front of the hotel before her senior prom.

I feel blessed to have had the Mentone Springs Hotel share my childhood with me and to grace my children’s lives. I will feel a great void, for the rest of my days, each time I pass her lonely hill. Thank you to the “Lady” for so many wonderful memories.

April Birthdays

April 1 – Michele Kincer
April 2 – Milton Chambers
April 2 – Ellie Cox
April 2 – Jayken Lawton
April 3 – Ray Padgett
April 4 – Jamie Vest
April 4 – Mina Blalock
April 4 – Sherry Barkley
April 5 – Kaitlyn Dean
April 5 – Jana Goss
April 6 – Jennifer Cruse
April 6 – John Chambers
April 6 – Ethel Manifold
April 7 – Shannon Chappell

April 7 – Kansas Lee
April 7 – Priscilla Monroe
April 8 – Angie Lawton
April 8 – Jackson Rosson
April 8 – Sharon Coots
April 9 – Josh Goss
April 10 – Brittany Bain
April 10 – Newly Ingram
April 10 – Paul Ethan Blackwell
April 10 – Lindsey Webb
April 10 – Lisa Moore
April 11 – Jordan Beasley
April 11 – Joey Garrett
April 11 – Josie Crider
April 12 – Kyle Coots
April 12 – Haley Battles
(in memory of)
April 13 – Brian Blalock
April 14 – Carl Tubberville
April 14 – Georgette McGee

(in memory of)
April 15 – Tim Carden
(in memory of)
April 15 – Barbara Busby Rape
April 16 – Preston Kirby
April 16 – Danny Hopper
April 16 – Al Blackburn
April 17 – Ann Cash Harrell
April 18 – Taylor Verdon
April 18 – Shan Smith
April 19 – Butch Manifold
April 20 – Lane Ingram
April 20 – Brenda Clinton
April 21 – Charlene Smith
April 22 – Thelma Coots
April 23 – Lauren McGee
April 23 – John P. Smith Jr.
April 24 – Courtney Meadows
April 25 – Cooper Kirby
April 26 – Molly Manifold

April 26 – Eloise Lance
April 26 – John Moore
April 26 – Phyllis James
April 27 – Kaden Johnson
April 27 – Emily Miller
April 28 – Stacey Bowman
April 28 – Austin Reed
April 30 – Mandi Browder Goza
April 30 – Shane McMahan

April Anniversaries

April 1 – Raymond & Sharon Coots
April 7 – Milton & Gail Chambers
April 11 – Nathan & Lacie Keith

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Rhododendron Festival 3rd Weekend in May

Spring is fast approaching, in spurts of rain and mist, cold and sunny days. Flowers are beginning to pop up everywhere, and this promises to be a great year for our special native blooming shrub, the rhododendron. MAPA volunteers are feverishly working to match rhododendron blossoms with our own festival blossoms of Mentone art, music, dance, food and talent.

In addition to events already announced, two new events have been added. On Friday evening, May 16th, young ladies from throughout the county will compete in a talent/beauty pageant for the title of Miss Rhododendron. Joseph Hall has volunteered to coordinate the pageant. Age brackets have been established, Judges have been assigned, and the location has been arranged. The pageant will be held in the Life Center of the

Mentone Community Church beginning at 6:00 pm. An entrance application is included here or it can be downloaded and printed from www.mapa.mentone.com.

Saturday evening, the parents, teachers and students of Moon Lake School will serve hot dog plates at the outdoor pavilion of the Mentone Inn, as a fundraiser for a school trip. They begin serving at 6:00 pm. Immediately following the meal, music will be dished out by the Debbie Bond blues band from 7:00 until 9:00 PM at the Mentone Inn pavilion. Debbie is from Tuscaloosa, and MAPA is proud to be able to schedule such a talented group of blues musicians for this fun event. Remember to bring your own lawn chair!

The Rhododendron Festival brings our residents and visitors together to celebrate the

joy of spring in this special part of the world. Mentone volunteers and sponsors make it all possible. We still need folks to volunteer, and we always need more sponsors. If you can't volunteer, you can show your support by becoming a sponsor.

Festival volunteers meet every Wednesday at 1:00 pm in Kamama Gallery to review and organize plans for this year's festival. Detailed information will be posted on MAPA's website www.mapamentone.com, and on several Facebook pages: Mentone Festivals, Mentone Area Tourist Information, and Mentone Area Preservation Association.

We look forward to seeing all of you at the 2014 Rhododendron Festival!

Miss Rhododendron 2014

Friday – May 16, 2014 at 6:00pm
Mentone Community Church, Family Life Center / 90 Summerville Road, Mentone, AL 35984

Baby Miss / 0-3 years old -- Tiny Miss / 4, 5 & 6 years old
Mini Miss 7, 8 & 9 years old -- Pre-Teen Miss / 10, 11 & 12 years old
Teen Miss / 13, 14 & 15 years old -- Miss / 16, 17 & 18 years old



Miss Rhododendron is presented by the Mentone Area Preservation Association, as part of the annual Rhododendron Festival, May 16th – 18th.
Entry Fee \$40 & Photogenic Entry \$5 per photo up to 5 photos.
Miss Rhododendron will receive a Scholarship.

Rules & Info

- Winners will receive medallion, crown and sash. Alternates will receive a medallion.
- Open to everyone, no residency restrictions.
- Deadline: Monday, May 12, 2014 at 5:00 p.m.**
- We accept, cash, check, money order. **(Make Checks Payable to MAPA.)**
- Registration will begin at 4:00pm., after you check in you will be shown the stage and given stage instructions.
- Auditorium doors will open to spectators at 5:30pm and pageant to begin at 6:00pm. **NO** one will be allowed to enter before 5:30pm to allow time for the girls to practice.
- This is a semi-natural pageant. Pageant dress is strongly recommended. Hair and makeup should be "age & stage" appropriate. Absolutely, **NO** flippers or hair pieces allowed.
- We reserve the right to combine age groups with less than 3 contestants. Any age group with more than 15 will be split.
- Contestants plus one female adult entered free.**
All others \$5.00, **No Exceptions. Five and under free.
- Please bring photogenic picture to registration or mail it in with registration.
- Only 1 person allowed in dressing room per contestant.
* No men allowed in dressing room. * No food or drink allowed in dressing room.
- Bad sportsmanship by contestant's or family WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**
Anyone exhibiting such behavior will be asked to leave and forfeit any monies paid, and will not be allowed to participate in future pageants.
- No refunds will be given once paid.
- Winners should stay for group photo at end of pageant. Winners are Encouraged to Stay in Mentone on Saturday and Sunday for the Rhododendron Festival Festivities.
- No Score Sheets will be given. NO Exceptions! Please do not ask.**
- Teen Miss & Miss Contestants will be asked to arrive earlier than other contestants. So you can do short interview with judges. You will need a dress for Interview and your Evening Gown for stage; you will get an email of the arrival time.

1

Miss Rhododendron 2014

Friday - May 16, 2014 at 6:00pm
Baby Miss / 0-3 years old -- Tiny Miss / 4, 5 & 6 years old
Mini Miss 7, 8 & 9 years old -- Pre-Teen Miss / 10, 11 & 12 years old
Teen Miss / 13, 14 & 15 years old -- Miss / 16, 17 & 18 years old

Name	Age	Grade	
Hair			Eyes
School			
Hobbies			
Future Ambitions			
Sponsored by			
Parent's Names			
Address			
Phone			
Email			

I will not hold the directors, judges, volunteers, MAPA or Mentone Community Church responsible for any injuries or damages incurred while participating in the pageant. I have read the pageant rules and agree to abide by them at all times. If I am found in violation of the rules I understand that I will be asked to leave the pageant and no refund of any monies will be given.

Parent Signature & Date

PLEASE RETURN THIS PAGE WITH ENTRY
(PLEASE, Make Checks Payable to MAPA)

2

ALL OF THE ABOVE FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS, PLUS OTHER NECESSARY FORMS, CAN BE DOWNLOADED AND PRINTED FROM THE WEBSITE, WWW.MAPA.MENTONE.COM.
ENTRY DEADLINE IS MAY 12 AT 5:00PM. ENTRY FEE: \$40
PHOTOGENIC FEE: \$5 PER PHOTO, YOU CAN ENTER UP TO 5 PHOTOS.
(PLEASE BRING PHOTOGENIC PHOTO TO REGISTRATION THE DAY OF PAGEANT OR MAIL PHOTOGRAPHS WITH REGISTRATION.)
MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO MAPA.
MAIL ENTRY FORMS & ENTRY FEE TO: J. HALL, 889 COUNTY ROAD 749, VALLEY HEAD, ALABAMA 35989
PLEASE EMAIL MISSDEKALBJACKSON@GMAIL.COM OR RHODODENDRONFESTIVAL@GMAIL.COM FOR MORE INFORMATION OR QUESTIONS.

What To Do Around Here!

April 2014 Community Calendar

Apr 1 - Plants of the Pocket. Join DeSoto State Park Botanist Brittney Hughes and JSU Field Schools Asst. Director Renee Morrison for this trip to The Pocket on Pigeon Mountain. Excellent photo opportunities of unique and beautiful plants. Easy to moderate short boardwalk hike with optional moderate to difficult hike to waterfall. Meet at Nature Center and shuttle to site. 9:30am-2:30pm. \$10 per person (transportation included). Call JSU Field Schools at 256-782-5697 for details.

Apr 1 - Orienteering Class. True Adventure Sports. Basic yet essential skills for survival navigation are brought to you in map reading, compass reading, and topography. Bring your own compass or you may purchase one at our store. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. 256-997-9577.

Apr 2, 4, 7, 15, 23, 29 - Wild Cave Tour. True Adventure Sports. Go beyond where the average tourist explores! This 2.5 hour adventure is for those of you ready to explore on your knees, on your belly, in the mud and through tight tunnels. Explore in one of NE Alabama's most unique all-weather caves, Manitou Cave, in the heart of Fort Payne. Adventure includes helmet, cave lamps plus a fun informative guide. 5p.m.-7:30 p.m. 256-997-9577.

Apr 3, 8 - Zip Line Adventure. True Adventure Sports. All our zip lines are set up just before the adventure to ford a gorge or cross from one high point to another. Pre-registration required by 6 pm the day before the adventure. 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. 256-997-9577.

Apr 3 - Kamama Music Series. Kamama's. Doors open for dinner at 5pm. Concert starts at 7pm. Concert \$10 per person. Reservations requested for dinner and concert. 256-634-3001.

Apr 3 - Flowers of The Pocket Program. Parish Hall, St Joseph's Episcopal Church. Jay Clark, naturalist and author of Wildflowers of Pigeon Mountain will present a slide show introduction to the flora of The Pocket. 7 p.m. \$10 per person. www.mentonearts.org.

Apr 4 - Tour of the Shirley Miller Wildflower Trail at The Pocket. Led by Jay Clark. The Pocket in Pigeon Mountain, Walker County, GA. 9am central. www.mentonearts.org.

Apr 5 - Run for Uganda 5K. Rainsville Community Church will host a 5K to raise money for Uganda. Cost of the race is \$20 before March 21 and \$25 on the day of the race. Registration forms available at Straight

Up Barber Shop in Rainsville, or register online at http://www.racesonline.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=public.race_detail&race_id=18020. Visit the Run for Uganda Facebook page at www.facebook.com/Run4Uganda5k. 8:30 a.m.-256-638-7793.

Apr 5 - Mentone Clean-up and Community Picnic. Meet at the corner by Mentone Inn. Bring a covered dish. 9 am.

Apr 5-6 - Bugging Out Weekend, Part 1. Hosted by DeSoto State Park and provided by One World Adventure. What is a bug out bag its purpose? A 2-part class on how to make and pack a bug out bag and strategies for a bug out plan. Learn different type of caches, what should and shouldn't be cached and small hints about hiding the location of a cash on a map. Saturday 9 a.m. to Sunday 3 p.m. \$185 per person includes meals and all camping equipment. \$135 per person includes meals (must provide your own camping equipment), \$105 per person includes instruction (must provide on camping equipment and food). Upon registration, you will be sent a packing list. Call 256-634-8370 for details or to register.

Apr 5, 19 - Rock Climbing/Rappelling Adventure Combo. True Adventure Sports. Nestled in the NE corner of Alabama are some of the best and unique sandstone cliffs in the country. Come experience first-hand what rock climbing and rappelling is all about with guides who are fun, safe and energetic. This trip includes all the gear plus basic instruction. No prior climbing experience is needed. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. 256-997-9577.

Apr 5 - Spring Frog Pond Adventure. Join "Dr. Frog" George Cline for an evening of romance and songs from the first amphibian voices of the season. Learn to identify frog songs and get a hands-on experience with these slippery creatures. Participate n Frog Watch USA. Subject to water level/drought conditions. 6-8p.m. \$3 per person. Call JSU Field Schools at 256-782-5697 for details and locations.

Apr 5 - RTI Movie in the Park. Bring your lawn chairs, blankets and picnic for an evening with your family under the stars while watching the movie "Frozen". Free admission to all and free popcorn to the first 500 people. Rainsville City Park. 7:30 p.m. 256-638-7800.

Apr 6 - Cystic Fibrosis BBQ Benefit. Help find a cure for Emma and Eli. Lunches include baked beans, bread, dessert and tea. Dine

in and enjoy live music or carry out. The Barnyard at Fisher Crossroads. 11a.m. to 2 p.m. 256-996-2461.

Apr 7, 12, 26, 28, 29, 30 - Rappelling Adventure. True Adventure Sports. Come experience the thrill of rappelling down the sheer sandstone gems of NE Alabama. No previous experience necessary. Each trip includes all the gear plus basic instruction. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. 256-997-9577.

Apr 8-10 - High Adventure Trip. True Adventure Sports. This is a 3-day adventure including a wild cave tour, rock climbing, an extreme night hike and end with a relaxing canoe trip. Price includes all activities, attractions, permits, fees, gear, and guides. \$137 per person. 256-997-9577.

Apr 8 - Chamber of Commerce Celebrity Roast. Join us as we celebrate the 1st Annual Fort Payne Chamber of Commerce Celebrity Roast. Probate Judge Ronnie Osborn is entertainment. You will enjoy a night of laughter, food and entertainment. Tickets are \$30 each or 2 for \$50. DeKalb Theatre. 6 p.m. 256-845-2741.

Apr 11, 14 - Rock Climbing Adventure. True Adventure Sports. Nestled in the NE corner of Alabama are some of the best and unique sandstone cliffs in the country. Come experience first-hand what rock climbing is all about with guides who are fun, safe and energetic. This trip includes all the gear plus basic instruction. No prior climbing experience is needed. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. 256-997-9577.

Apr 11 - Sky Swing Adventure at Night. True Adventure Sports. This is an adventure of a lifetime. Enjoy the thrill of the swing. Pre-registration required at True Adventure Sports by 6 pm the day before the adventure. 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. 256-997-9577.

Apr 12 - First State Bank 5K Run/ Walk For Fun. Come and have some fun while supporting Relay For Life. DeKalb Lake in Sylvania. Registration begins at 7 a.m. 256-845-6101, ext.111.

Apr 12 - Blow Your Own Ornament & Open House. This has become very popular here at Orbix Hot Glass. Come design and blow your own ornament with the help of one of our glass artists. No reservations are needed - it is on a first come, first serve basis. We welcome people of all ages (at least 5 years old). 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Cost is \$35 per ornament blown. 256-523-3188.

Apr 12 - Northeast Alabama Arts Council presents Crossroads to the Arts. Enjoy music, visual arts, pottery and presentations by authors and storytellers. Rainsville City Park and Tom Bevill Enrichment Center. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Free admission. 256-638-7800.

Apr 12 - Bunny-Palooza. Little River Canyon Center. Celebrate the season by visiting the Bunny Factory. Learn how to hop, decorate eggs and more. Children's Spring Art Show, storytelling, music, baby animals, bunny games, egg hunt with prizes, fairy tales and fairy houses workshop. 10:30am-4pm. Free. Some programs may have limited space so pre-registration is encouraged. Call 256-782-5697 for details.

Apr 12 - RTI's Community Easter Egg Hunt. Your children can have their picture made with the Easter Bunny. There will be separate hunts for different age groups up to 11 years of age. Free face painting and golden prize eggs. Held at the RTI Building. 1 p.m. 256-638-7800.

Apr 12, 19, 21 - Extreme Night Hike. True Adventure Sports. This end-of-day adventure does not slow down just because it's dark. Intended for a large group team-building exercise, this hike has a bit of bouldering, some scrambling, some spelunking, and a whole lot of required working together. Headlamp and enthusiastic guide included. 7:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. 256-997-9577.

Apr 16-17 - One World Backpacking Series. Trail navigation with a map and compass: Second trip in the series. Bring a good compass. Ages: Adults and youth 14 and up. Youth under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Cost: \$110 per person includes meals and all equipment. \$85 per person includes meals (must provide your own equipment). \$65 per person includes instruction (must provide on equipment and food). Group max: 6. Upon registration, you will be sent a packing list. To register, call 256-634-8370.

Apr 17 - GPS Basic Training and Navigation Class, Part 1. True Adventure Sports. Learn how to use a map, compass and a handheld GPS. Learn basic navigation and how to pinpoint a location for quick return or quick rescue. Also learn how to search by waypoints or coordinates. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. \$45 per person. 256-997-9577.

Apr 17 - Kamama Music Series. Kamama's. Doors open for dinner at 5pm. Concert starts at 7pm. Concert \$10 per person. Reservations requested for dinner and concert. 256-634-3001.

Apr 18, 23 - Mountain Bike Tour. True Adventure Sports. This tour explores some beautiful trails and paths atop Lookout Mountain or Sand Mountain. Come have an enjoyable ride without the fear of getting lost. This three-hour tour includes a mountain bike rental, instruction and a guide for safety, direction and information. 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. 256-997-9577.

Apr 19 - Community Easter Egg Hunt. MERF House. Bring Your basket and parent(s). Dress suitably for the weather. There will be an egg hunt, a hot dog lunch, cotton candy, several gift cards to give away and lots of fun. All FREE! 10am-noon. Due to limited parking, we ask that you park in the school parking lot and walk to the MERF House. This event is sponsored by the Mentone area churches.

Apr 19 - Sculpt Your Own Flower. Orbix Hot Glass. Have you ever wanted to actually sit at the gaffer bench and feel what it is like to shape hot glass? It's all about hands on experience in a safe and fun atmosphere with a final product we know you will love. Minimum of 3 people and a maximum of 5 in each class. 9-10 a.m. Reservations are required. 256-523-3188.

Apr 19 - Make a Pucker Pouch. DeSoto State Park Nature Center. Join Robert Wilson for a class on how to make a Pucker Pouch, which is a simple bag that can be made into a necklace and even a belt pouch. 10am-noon. \$10 (includes all supplies). Pre-registration is required as class is limited to 10. Call 256-997-5025 or email brittney.hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for more details.

Apr 19 - Make Woven Pouches - DeSoto State Park Nature Center. There are many handy things that can be made by weaving paracord/cordage. Join Robert Wilson to learn how to make basic-weave pouches that can be used for many different things. 1-3p.m. \$10 per person (all supplies included). Pre-registration is required as class size is limited to 10. Call 256-997-5025

or email brittney.hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for more details.
Apr 19, 25 - Night Zip Line. True Adventure Sports. All our zip lines are set up just before the adventure to ford a gorge or cross from one high point to another. Enjoy the thrill of the zip line at night. Pre-registration required by 6 pm the day before the adventure. \$50 per person. 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. 256-997-9577.

Apr 21, 25 - Afternoon Rock Climb. True Adventure Sports. Come experience first-hand what rock climbing is all about in the afternoon with guides who are fun, safe and energetic. This trip includes all the gear plus basic instruction. No prior climbing experience is needed. 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. 256-997-9577.

Apr 22 - Administrative Professionals Day & Literacy Luncheon. Show your appreciation to your staff by bringing them to our luncheon. The luncheon is sponsored by Altrusa and Edward Jones. Guest speaker will be the First Lady of Alabama, Dianne Bentley, and entertainment by NACC Show Choir. Deadline to register is April 15. First United Methodist Church Life Center. 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tickets are \$25. Make checks payable to Altrusa, P.O. Box 681536, Fort Payne, AL 35968.

Apr 22 - Bouldering Adventure – Atop Lookout Mountain. True Adventure Sports. Come experience first-hand what bouldering is all about with guides who are fun, safe and energetic. This trip includes all the gear plus basic instruction. We will climb on some of the best boulders atop Lookout Mountain. No prior climbing or bouldering experience is needed. 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. 256-997-9577.

Apr 23–27 & 30–May 4 - “Les Miserables.” Northeast Alabama Community College Theatre. Call 256-638-4418 for more information.

Apr 23 - Administrative Professionals Day Luncheon. Enjoy a catered lunch, gift

bags and entertainment. Several door prizes will be given away. Held at the Tom Bevill Enrichment Center Sponsored by the Rainsville Chamber of Commerce. Lunch at Noon. 256-638-7800.

Apr 24, 26 - Treasure Hunt Adventure. True Adventure Sports. Do you enjoy trying to solve riddles and clues? This 5-hour adventure will take you deep into the heart of Manitou Cave. You will have to solve and follow each clue in order to find the next one, and ultimately the Treasure! \$65 per person. 3 p.m.-8 p.m. 256-997-9577.

Apr 25 - Wildflowers in DeSoto State Park. A guided tour for Mentone Area Arts Council members and guests by Brittney Hughes, park naturalist and horticulturist. Meet at DeSoto State Park's Country Store. 3 p.m. www.mentonearts.org.

Apr 26 - Little River Canyon Trivia Challenge. Little River Canyon Center. Join Dr. James Rayburn for trivia challenge which includes questions about the natural history of Little River Canyon and Lookout Mountain. Participants will be divided into teams and use “clickers” to answer questions during this competition. Prizes awarded to top performers. 10a.m.-noon. \$5 per person. Pre-registration required. 256-782-5697 for details.

Apr 26 - Earth Day Fly Fishing for Beginners. Little River Canyon Center. Join Conservation Coordinator and master outdoorsman B.J. Johnson for a fly fishing workshop. Learn the basics to get started on your own fly fishing adventures. Workshop will be on dry ground,; but by the end of the workshop, you will be river savvy! 10a.m.-2p.m. \$20 per person. Pre-registration required by April 18. Call 256-782-5697 for details.

Apr 26 - Gardening with Heirloom Seed and Seed Saving Class. This class can teach you to save on groceries, have the freshest food available, better health, and best practices for the earth. Our main speaker is Dove

Stackhouse with the Sand Mtn. Seed Bank. This class is to educate about heirloom seed and seed saving. You will also learn about heirloom, organic, hybrid and GMO seed. Please plan to attend the gardening class at Mentone Library. 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Apr 26 - Paperweight Class. Orbix Hot Glass. This class is designed for those who really just want see what molten glass is all about. Feel the heat, gather from the furnace, sculpt the glass into you own design. It is ultimately about the experience, some experimentation and a couple nice paperweights to take home or to the office to show your friends. Maximum class size is five students so everyone has adequate time to work at the bench. There will be material provided before the class for you to review and become familiar with concerning safety and basic glassblowing vocabulary. Please join us for some in-depth discovery. Reservations required. \$130 per person. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. 256-523-3188.

Apr 26-27 - Trail Navigation with a Map and Compass. Hosted by DeSoto State Park and provided by One World Adventure Company. DeSoto State Park. Second trip in a series. Brief land navigation crash course for trail hiking. Learn the ins and outs of the compass and basic map understanding and how to mark trails so you don't get lost. We will hike out and do some hands-on training and will even touch on some night navigation if the sky is clear. Bring a good compass. Adults and youth 14 and up. Youth under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. \$110 per person includes meals and all equipment. \$85 per person includes meals (must provide your own equipment), \$65 per person includes instruction (must provide own equipment and food). Upon registration, you will be sent a packing list. To register call 256-634-8370.

Apr 30 - GPS Basics Training and Navigation Class, Part 2. True Adventure Sports. You will learn to find a beacon placed in the woods as a SAR attempt while knowing your position, and the position of your teammates. \$45 per

Ongoing Calendar

MAPA Members meet on the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30pm at the MERF House in Mentone.

Gluten Free/Diabetic All Natural Cooking classes with Brenda Trace will be held at Little River Hardware at 6pm on Wednesdays. Classes \$10.

Lookout Mountain Parkway Association meets every 3rd Wednesday of the month at 11am. Call to find out how to get involved! 256-845-3957.

Karaoke every Saturday Night. 6-10pm, The Blue Lantern. Nice, clean family entertainment. Located on Co. Rd. 642 in

Mentone, 0.7 mi No of Hwy 117.

DeKalb Quilters meet every 4th Tuesday, 9:30am, Second Baptist Church in Fort Payne.

DeSoto Rescue Squad meets the 1st Saturday of the month at 9am at the MERF house in Mentone.

Free Square Dance Lessons offered most Thursdays, 6:30pm, at Tom Bevill Center in Rainsville by Duos and Solos Dance Club. 256-638-2780

Moon Lake Elementary School PTO meets every 3rd Tuesday of the month at 6pm in the Gymnasium.

FREE FOOD for eligible persons and families. Hours: Tuesdays, 9 AM to noon. New applicants welcome during these hours. Joint effort between St. Joseph's on the Mountain Episcopal Church (Community Outreach Ministry) and the Food Bank of North Alabama.

Mentone Fire Department meets the 3rd Monday of every month at 7pm.

Mentone Town Council meets every 2nd Tuesday at 6pm.

The Lookout Mountain Wholistic Center meets the 1st & 3rd Wednesday of every month at Rock Ridge Retreat Center in Valley

Head at 6:30pm. Everyone is welcome! Mentone Farmers Market open year round every Saturday, 10am-1pm.

Storytime at the Canyon Center every first Saturday of the month. 11am-Noon. Free. 256-782-5697.

NPS Green & Gray Saturday every second Saturday of each month at the Canyon Center. 10am. Free. 256-782-5697.

Little River Canyon Center River Rhythms Nature & Art Family Fun Program every fourth Saturday from Jan-Oct. 1pm - 3pm; No Fee. Call Renee Morrison at 256-782-5697.

Mentone Springs Hotel - Early Years



Photo By Ray Padgett - 1980

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Mentone Wedding Chapel



Nestled in the woods atop Lookout Mountain, near Mentone, Alabama, this quaint little chapel is surrounded by ferns, forest and flowers. The chapel is a scaled version of traditional Appalachian churches of days gone by. Stained glass windows filtering soft forest sunrays and soft organ music accent an ambience fitting the wedding ceremony. Inside, wooden pews will seat approximately 60 guests. Linda Patterson, owner of the chapel, said the idea for it began with a bell, and now that bell rings as newlyweds exit the door of the chapel.

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MABEL CROW, INSET

A WALTZ AT MENTONE SPRINGS

THE YEAR WAS 1920, AND MABEL CROW WAS A YOUNG GIRL OF THIRTEEN. SHE HAD JUST GOTTEN HER FIRST JOB AS A MEMBER OF THE HOUSEKEEPING STAFF AT THE MENTONE SPRINGS HOTEL, AND LIFE WAS PROOVING TO BE VERY EXCITING.

"I TOOK FRESH LINENS TO THE ROOMS AS THE GUESTS NEEDED THEM," MABEL SAID, "AND I DUSTED THE FURNITURE IN THE LOBBY DAILY." THE PAY WAS ONE DOLLAR PER DAY, AND THE HOUSEKEEPING STAFF LIVED AT THE HOTEL.

THE HOTEL WAS PROSPERING IN THOSE DAYS, AND ACCOMMODATED ABOUT 200 GUESTS. GAS LIGHTS WERE USED TO ILLUMINATE THE BUILDING, AND THE PEALS WERE PREPARED BY A COOK NAMED ROSA WHO "MADE THE MOST DELICIOUS PIES AND YEAST BREADS."

THAT SUMMER, YOUNG MABEL WAS INTRODUCED TO THE BEAUTY OF CLASSICAL MUSIC. SHE WOULD HIDE BEHIND THE DINING ROOM DOORS AND LISTEN TO THE ORCHESTRA PRACTICE FOR THE EVENING PROGRAM. THE FURNITURE WOULD BE PLACED ALONG THE WALLS, AND GUESTS WOULD DANCE BENEATH THE GAS LIGHT ON POLISHED WOODEN FLOORS.

ON ONE PARTICULAR EVENING, AS MABEL LISTENED IN HER USUAL PLACE, THE YOUNG DOORMAN SPIED HER THERE AND SPOKE, "WOULD YOU LIKE TO DANCE A WALTZ WITH ME?" "BUT I CANNOT DANCE," MABEL REPLIED. "OH YES YOU CAN," TONY ZIEGLER SAID AS HE REACHED HIS HAND TO HER. "COME."

MRS. PHILLIPS, THE VIOLINIST, BEGAN TO PLAY THE LITTING STRAINS OF THE BLUE DANDED, AND THE BROWN-EYED BOY OF FIFTEEN, FAR FROM HOME, WHIRLED THE YOUNG MOUNTAIN GIRL.

THESE GIRLS ASSISTED MRS. MILLER, HOUSEKEEPER AT THE HOTEL DURING THE SUMMER, 1920. FRONT, MABEL CROW, INSET.



Article published in The Groundhog, May 1987.



Photo By Doug Hoyt - 1982

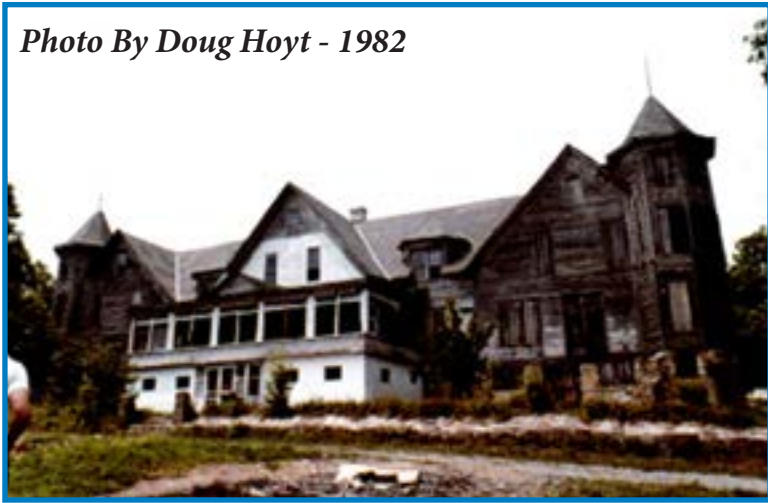


Photo By Dorma Hutcheson

James Bryan and Terry Hutcheson playing in back of hotel - 1983.





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“Thank you to everyone for the kind words of support and sharing wonderful memories of the Mentone Springs Hotel and White Elephant. Please keep them coming--we, and everyone in our little mountain town--mourn this loss and take comfort in the stories and photos you’ve shared of great times had by all. A special thank you to all of the firefighters and police from Mentone and surrounding towns who have so much heart and tried to save an icon.”

Darlene & Jim Rotch



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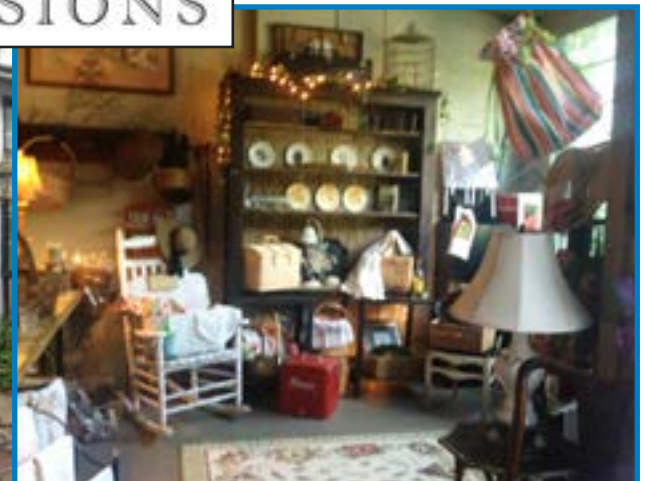
Photo by John Dersham



Photo by John Dersham



Thank You Jim and Darlene Rotch for allowing us to use photographs from the Mentone Springs Hotel Facebook Page.



Request for Films of the Mentone Springs Hotel

We are considering the production of a DVD of the Mentone Springs Hotel. Its history and beauty have been the heart and soul of Mentone. With stills and film combined, we can preserve it's history in a DVD. Any format can be duplicated and returned. Please contact Cloudland Productions, Chuck Peters, cloudland@mindspring.com, 706-398-0078.

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for Komen 3Day Walker
Cheri Pless
April 26, 2014, at 6:00 PM ET

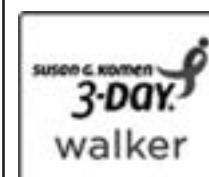
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Worship

The Sunday morning services at **Winston Memorial Presbyterian Church** are held at 9AM each Sunday, except no services on 5th Sunday. Rev. Jerry Davis is our minister for these services.

The Valley Head Baptist Church invites you to attend Sunday School at 10AM; Worship Service at 11AM; Sunday Evening Worship at 6PM; Midweek Service (Wednesday) at 6PM; Women on Mission meets at 1PM the second Tuesday of each month at different homes. Everyone is welcome to come.

Lea's Chapel Baptist Church welcomes you to worship with us. 10AM Sunday Bible Study, 11AM Morning Worship, 6PM Evening Worship. Wednesday 6-8PM Awana (ages 4 to 18); 6:30pm Praise and Prayer time. Located at 4212 County Road 751, Valley Head. 635-1001.

Visitors are always welcome at the **Valley Head United Methodist Church**. Please join us each Sunday morning for a traditional worship service at 9:30AM. Tony Gunter is the Pastor. All are welcome.

Wildwood Seventh Day Adventist Church, Mentone Chapter, is currently holding services in the Woodmen of the World Hall in Valley Head. All are invited to attend! Sabbath School and Song Service: 9:30-10:45AM, Worship Service 11:00-12:15. Pastor - Wilbur Atwood; Lay Pastors - James Hartley and Ryan Bunnel.

Our Lady of the Valley Catholic Church on N. Gault Avenue in Fort Payne holds Sunday mass in English at 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. in Spanish. Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. in English, Wednesday at 5:00 p.m. bilingual, Thursday at 6:00 p.m. in English, Friday at 9:00 a.m. in English and Saturday at 6:00 p.m. in bilingual.

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 1519 Smith Gap Road (County Road 85), Fort Payne. Regular Worship Services are at 10AM Sunday. Bible class or Lent/Advent services every Wednesday at 6:30PM. Steve Schrader, Pastor - 845-4314. Everyone welcome.

Walnut Grove Baptist Church on Highway 11 North of Fort Payne, welcomes everyone at Sunday School 10AM, Worship Service at 11AM, Wednesday night youth meeting at 6PM, and Wednesday night Prayer Meeting at 6:30PM.

The Fort Payne Christian Center and Pastors Ken and Elaine Hollman invite everyone to join in Worship on Sunday at 10AM, Wednesday evening at 6PM. God Bless You.

Grace Presbyterian Church (PCA), 5760 Gault Ave. NE, Fort Payne, AL. Sunday School 9:45AM; Sunday Worship 10:55AM. Church office: 256-845-4756.

Menlo Church of Christ invites you to attend the 10AM and 11AM services and evening services are at 5PM on Sundays and Wednesdays. Visitors are always welcome.

Mount Calvary Baptist Church, Cloudland, GA, welcomes everyone to come and take part in our church services. Sunday School at 10AM; Worship Service at 11AM, Sunday evening at 6PM, and Wednesday evening at 7PM.

DeSoto Church of Christ invites you to attend Sunday Bible Study at 10AM, Worship at 11AM, Wednesday Bible study at 5PM.

Howard's Chapel (Church in the Rock) has regular services 10AM each Sunday. You are invited to attend these services or visit the church at other times. Casual dress is always acceptable.

St. Joseph's On-The-Mountain Episcopal Church, 21145 Scenic Highway, Mentone. Everyone welcome to 10:30AM Sunday service of Holy Eucharist. Open for daily prayer and thanksgiving. Supporting our community with outreach. Call for more information, 256-634-4476, <http://stjosephmountain.dioala.org>

Mentone United Methodist Church, 415 Cutler Avenue, Mentone, Alabama invites you to come and worship with us. Each Sunday, our Worship Service is at 11AM and Sunday School is at 10AM. Tony Gunter is the pastor. The service of Holy Communion is celebrated the first Sunday of each month, the second Sunday is Youth Sunday and Fifth Sunday is a service of music and pot-luck lunch. Bible Study

Wednesdays at 6:00PM.

Moon Lake Baptist Church invites you to worship with us. Sunday School begins at 9:45AM, with classes for all ages. Morning Worship is at 11AM. The Lord's Supper is observed on the first Sunday of September, December, March and June at the morning worship hour. Discipleship Training is at 5PM and Sunday Evening Worship at 6PM. On Wednesdays, Team Kids, Youth Bible Study, Adult Bible Study and Prayer Meeting are all at 6:30PM. Rev. Terry Turner is the pastor.

Alpine Community Church, 115 Hwy. 337, Menlo, GA. Pastor and Rev. Tommy Pledger welcome each and everyone to worship service Sunday morning at 11AM GA time; Sunday School 10AM GA time; Wednesday night Bible Study 7PM GA time.

Cove Road Baptist Church, County Road 631, Mentone, Alabama. Brother Marlin Stames, Interim Pastor, welcomes all to Sunday School at 9AM (10AM GA time) and Sunday night services at 5PM (6PM GA time).

Summit Church of God invites you to be in service Sunday morning 10:45AM, Sunday night 5PM, Wednesday Bible Study 6:30PM. Pastor Lance Kincer invites everyone.

Mentone Church of God of Prophecy - regular service times are Sunday School at 10AM, with Worship at 11AM. Evening services begin at 5:30PM on Sunday and 6PM on Wednesday. Bro. Whitney Smith invites everyone to attend.

Mentone Community Church, 90 Summerville Rd., Mentone, AL 35984. Sunday Services: Sunday School 9:15AM-all ages; Sunday Service 10:30AM; Bible Study Wednesday

6PM; Youth Services 7PM Sunday and 6:30PM Wednesday (Meet at Mentone Revival Center Building). Pastor Tim Miller.

Cloudland Presbyterian Church welcomes everyone to come join us for services, with Pastor Roger Kvam. Bible Study Sunday at 9AM (EST) and Worship at 10AM (EST).

Since 1889 worshippers have gathered at the Historic **First Presbyterian Church PC** (USA) at 300 Grand Avenue North in downtown Fort Payne. We invite you to join us for worship this Sunday at 10:55AM. 256-845-2915.

New Oregon United Methodist Church located off DeSoto Parkway, would like to invite you to their services. Sunday School for all ages 9:45AM; Traditional Worship Service 11AM. Sunday evening youth activities 5:30PM. Evening Worship 6PM. We have a variety of activities for all ages including Wednesday evening youth activities; knitting ministry for ladies each Tuesday at 9AM; Elderberries for Senior Adults once a month for fellowship and meal. Pastor Jeff Davis, Associate Pastor Keith Davis. Address: 1203 New Oregon Dr., Ft. Payne, AL 35967. Phone 256-845-7446.

The Church of God 7th Day in Hammondville located just off Hwy. 11 N. at corner of Hwy. 117 and Palmer Road. Sabbath School classes at 9:30AM and Worship Service at 11AM. Visitors are always welcome.

Send any changes to The Groundhog at groundhognews@aol.com or P. O. Box 387, Mentone, AL 35984.



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NEW PRICE  FALLING LEAF LODGE. Charming rustic cabin nestled in the woods. Lots of porches to enjoy the outdoors of this 2 bdrm 1.5 bth with loft. Custom floors and doors, lots of windows, WB FP open living w sunroom dining area. Also a Workshop for the Hobbieist a must see. \$149,900 (22190)	 WILD RIVER LODGE on the East Fork of Little River. Custom Timber Frame, 5 bedroom, 4 bath, Great Room, Dining, Kitchen with full appliance package. Custom Oak cabinets. 2,000sq ft wrap around porch and deck. Screened porch with wood burning fireplace. Gas fireplace inside. Loft with end to end bunks with storage. Outdoor kitchen, 250 gal smoker, sink stainless counter tops. Dual fuel HVAC. Secure gated. 4 acres. So many amenities. \$650,000. (23021)	 "THE NUTHOUSE CABIN. Quaint Weekend getaway with open living kitchen design. 2 bdrm 1 bath, covered porch to watch the wildlife. 1 acre wooded with large Rock formations. small shed. located at the end of private drive. complete with furnishings. \$139,000. (22833)	NEW LISTING  MAINTENANCE FREE vinyl faux brick bungalow. 2 bedroom, 3 bath. Great room with rock, gas fireplace. Eat in kitchen/dining, full semi finished basement. Located on DeSoto Parkway, Mentone. \$169,000. (23036)	 9 ACRES located on the east fork Little River with 500 ft on river, and 550 ft on Gilbert branch. Old homeplace. Concrete slab, power, well and septic. Privately located. Great place to build that getaway cabin! \$138,500 (22148)	REDUCED  STUNNING MOUNTAIN HOME and Retreat. Newly renovated kitchen, 2 living areas, and Gas FP. Open loft above the 2nd living area and open kitchen design. MBR has separate entrance to the deck, guest BR, and 2 BA. 700 sq ft. 2 rm guest cottage and a glassed Greenhouse/artist studio. Many possibilities with this wonderful property. Now \$189,000 (20562)
 36 ACRES on the West Fork little River, 1250 ft on water. 700 ft drive, power and water to this point. Wooded, some clearing, rock outcroppings, and bluff views. One of a kind find. \$288,000 (22995)	 THE LOONEY BIN Cedar Cabin in the woods, open floor plan with Great rm, eat-in kitchen. Tiled island and counters. Stainless appliances, Loft area, 2 bdrm 2 tiled baths, Tung and Groove walls, FP, Covered Deck w/ Hottub. Furnished, Lovely setting and investment \$229,000 (22973)	 NEWLY BUILT cottage style, vinyl sided. 1 bdr 1.5 bath open floor plan with living dining combo. Hvac stainless appliance package, hickory cabinets. tung and groove walls throughout. covered front and side porch for outdoor enjoyment. 1.5 acres, garage shop and storm shelter. \$107,000. (23023)	 NICE LEVEL WOODED PROPERTY with partial drive and homesite cleared. Previous perk test. Easy access to the middle fork of Little River. Restrictive cov. apply. Located in Mountain River Estates. \$65,900 (20892)	 SOUTHLAND LOG HOME, on the East fork little River. 5.5 acres. Deck, lighted walkway to lower property. stone patio halfway to river steps and landing to river. 2 bdrm, 2 bths. loft. Vaulted ceiling with exposed beams. fully equipped kitchen with granite counters. stacked stone FP. 2 story with Basement. Separate 30x40 garage, large enough for motor home. Private but with all the comforts. Price reduction to \$295,000. (#19919)	NEW LISTING  PALM HARBOR HOME on 6 acres w/ artesian springs, fenced pasture land. 3bdr 1.5 bth living room w/ Gas log FP separate dining area, kitchen with island bar, all appliances CHA, full deck on rear of home. \$130,000. (23030)
 CUSTOM CREEKSIDE CABIN under construction. Mahogany windows, professional interior designed with rustic flair. Vaulted great room/kitchen. 2 bedroom, 2.5 bath. Plank oak flooring, 2 fireplaces, 2 screened porches. A must see! \$250,000.	 UPGRADED BLOCK BUNGALOW IN HENAGAR. Darling 2 bdrm 1 updated bth. Living, dining, Kitchen. new roof, totally re-plumbed. 2 storage buildings garage, carport, county water and underground utilities. 1 acre, quiet location. \$55,000. (22974)	 "THE APPALACHIAN CABIN is a furnished log cabin nestled in the woods in Crestline Park Subdivision. 3br/2bt with kitchen/dining combo, open floor plan, and loft. Amenities include CHA, gas log fireplace, hot tub, 3/4 wraparound covered porch, kitchen appliances, furniture, etc. Great investment opportunity or make this your weekend getaway! \$110,000 (23028)	NEW LISTING  ONE ACRE on Scenic Lookout Mountain Parkway. Level, great building site for that weekend getaway. \$30,000. (23037)	 1.8 ACRES on East Fork of Little River. Easy access to river from common trail that runs along the banks of the river. Bluff views. County water available. Gated community. \$115,000. (23022)	 3.8 ACRES located in East fork little River Estates. Nicely wooded with a portion of the historic Dinky Line Railway. 175 ft. on river (Cherokee Co. Mentone). covenants & restrictions. county water and power available. \$53,000

LOTS AND ACREAGE

WOODED 39.8 ACRES, level mixture of hardwoods and Pines, some trails through property. Over 2500 ft. of paved road frontage. Could be nice development opportunity. Build a few cabins in this spot. REDUCED TO \$163,800 (21649)

OLD HOMEPLACE next to Shady Grove Dude Ranch. 1.7 acres. Great building sites. Non-restricted. Reduced \$18,500 (21599)

5.7 WOODED ACRES with a beautiful view across from Lake Lahusage. The driveway has been started to build your Mentone getaway!

Paved road frontage, city water available, perc tested. Lightly restricted. Seller is very motivated! REDUCED \$49,900 (19865)

HEAVILY WOODED ACREAGE with wet weather spring. Paved road frontage along County Road 106, and just minutes from downtown Mentone. \$100,000 (22248)

6.4 ACRES. Partly open field and wooded tract of land in Oakwood subdivision. Lightly restricted. Surveyed, Perk. 2 lots 9, 10. \$45,000 (22650)

1.66 ACRE TRACT with septic, county water, well, and power. Lightly restricted. Cleared and ready to build that cabin in the woods! \$18,000. (22747)

3 WOODED ACRES on the parkway. Gently sloping to level with many hardwoods. Great location to build your weekend cabin between DeSoto Park and Mentone. \$25,000 (22918)

EAST BROW tract located Valley View Forest. Georgous views of Weiss lake in the distance. Camping shed, hot stove, outside deck, fire pit.

Parklike setting, rock formations. \$90,000.

3 ACRES located on the West Fork Little River above DeSoto Falls. Deep water for boating. level wooded property with native Holly throughout. Circular drive, perced, water meter installed. 70ft on water. \$110,000

Volunteers....We Depend On Them

By Kayla Worthey

March 1, 2014, started out like any other regular Saturday night for us. My family and I went to dinner at the Moonlight Bistro with friends, both of whom happen to be volunteer fire fighters. After ordering our food, we enjoyed some casual conversation among ourselves and with some friends who made their way into the restaurant. Our appetizers and salads were served while waitresses scurried around taking orders, refilling drinks and conversing with patrons. Then our food arrived and with it came a call across the fire radio. At 7:45pm, North Lookout Mountain Fire Protection District was being dispatched to a fire that appeared to be next door to us. The coordinated chaos that followed was indescribable.

Because the Mentone Springs Hotel and the White Elephant were both wooden structures, constructed of mostly pine, and so close in proximity, the NLMFPD had set up a pre-plan. According to Fire Chief Joseph Lee and Assistant Chief Toby Manifold, the fire department had begun planning about eight years ago, knowing that if it ever happened, they would need all of the assistance they could get. They walked through both structures to familiarize themselves with the layouts, planned truck locations in relation to hydrants, studied the surroundings, and met with many county officials, local departments and town business

owners.

That all sounds very easily coordinated, but when you actually take into consideration the vast numbers that makes up those county officials, local departments and business owners, that list becomes a whole lot more complicated. After confirming that "The Grand Ole Lady", as she was sometimes referred, had reported the fire in its building, NLMFPD arrived on the scene within minutes and began showering the building with water. All surrounding buildings were evacuated, which was part of the pre-plan as a precaution, and additional fire departments were dispatched. Those departments that responded were Valley Head Volunteer Fire Department, Hammondville Volunteer Fire Department, Ider Volunteer Fire Department, Henagar Volunteer Fire Department, Dogtown Volunteer Fire Department, Shiloh Volunteer Fire Department, Adamsburg Volunteer Fire Department and two Fort Payne Fire and Rescue squads.

Sand Mountain Electric Coop is always called to structure fires. This is necessary to disconnect the structure's power, separating electricity from the fire, making it safe for firemen to spray water on the burning building and to keep live power lines and service entrance wires from causing harm on the ground. Two SMEC crews were called to the scene.

Mentone Police, Valley Head Police, DeKalb

County Sheriff's Department and Alabama State Troopers were requested to assist with traffic control on AL Hwy 117 and connecting streets. Mentone and Fort Payne Water Departments were contacted for assistance with water capacities and pump distribution. Both departments had men on-site for hours. DeSoto Rescue Squad, DeKalb Ambulance Service, and DeKalb County Emergency Management Agency were all on stand-by and ready to aid if needed.

Alabama Forestry Commission was called in to handle some small fires that were started due to heavy embers blowing from the fires. They fought wood fires for many hours.

Chief Lee said, "On behalf of myself and my department, I would like to thank every department and individual who assisted us, and to the other Fire Departments, we really appreciate everything; you were the bloodlines to our heart. I am so proud and appreciative of everyone's effort."



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Cynthia Stinson of the Mentone Inn nominated the North Lookout Mountain Fire District for the "Pay it Forward" segment of WHNT Channel 19 in Huntsville. Clarissa McLain of WHNT presented David Tucker \$319 CASH on March 17. Stinson said, "These guys go above and beyond the call of community service." They are diligent in keeping our roads safe during ice and snow. They assist the Police Department and Rescue Squad. They are an all-around great group of guys, and we appreciate them. They deserve our gratitude.....all year! The segment aired on Monday, March 24, 2014, at 6:30 on WHNT.



Charlotte Gentry
Broker/Owner
256-996-5995



Holly Watson
Assoc. REALTOR®
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THE ESSENCE OF THE MOUNTAIN in stone and wood. One of the last remaining stone cottages, tucked into the boulder-strewn woods, in historic East River Park developed by Col. Milford Howard himself before it became Camp Alpine area. Little River is just across the road. Main house has 1BR/1BA, detached 1BR guest house; small shop/storage bldg. Fully furnished. \$125,000 (965674)



RUSTIC & BEAUTIFUL LOG CABIN with commanding view of gorgeous lake & Lookout Mtn. Perfectly set on 4 acres, 3BR/2.5BA, 2400 sq ft finished, 1800 sq ft full, walkout basement (currently used as shop). Rich wood interior w/25' vaulted ceiling in KI/LR. Main-level MA BR. Full, wraparound porch w/woven cedar branches railings. Intriguing stone, gas log Fpl. \$219,900 (425138)



WATER WONDERLAND! Build on this 3 acre, wooded, riverfront lot with a stream & waterfall. Just minutes from Mentone, with paved road access, on East Fork of Little River. Located just above Lake Lahusage for swimming, canoeing & fishing. Large trees, boulders and quiet (except for the waterfall!) create the perfect place for a weekend getaway. \$89,900. (815833)



WHAT A PRICE! It may not look like much, but it's a place to start in Mentone. Little house on 2.4 mostly-wooded acres. Started out life as a singlewide mobile home of unknown age, w/rooms and a porch added on. Kinda cute from the front. Great trees & yard w/garden spot. Sure, it needs work. No, it isn't perfect. That's the reason it is priced so reasonably. Now priced at only \$29,900 (707652)



GET AWAY TO LAKE LAHUSAGE, Mentone's own mountain lake where the East & Middle Forks of Little River come together. Beautiful, 3-level, cedar-shake-sided cottage with custom-designed granite kitchen; vaulted living area w/stone fireplace (gas logs); hardwood floors; 2BR/2BA with sleeping loft & full, mostly-finished walk-out basement for add'l BRs or games. Screened porch; outdoor deck area w/fireplace & stone BBQ; covered stone patio; stone walkway to dock. Best buy you'll find on the lake at only \$239,000 (558629)



40 WOODED ACRES, LOG CABIN & panoramic views across mountains & valleys. Private, secluded; a true getaway. Beautiful log home w/28' vaulted great room w/mtn stone, masonry Fpl & stunning wall of windows; cherry cabinetry; pro appliance pkg; peeled cedar tree loft supports; "man cave" basement (w/shop & garage); porches & decks. Hunter's dream. Minutes from I-59 & Hwy 11. Now \$375,000 (609396)

NEW LISTING! 3.01 ACRES W/270' RIVER FRONTAGE in West Fork Subdivision. Building site already prepared. Public water in place. Just the right place to build your riverfront retreat! Just listed for only \$48,500. (808634)

WOODSY WATERFRONT LAND. Solitude & nature await your getaway on this lightly-restricted 4.33 acres on Full Moon Lake, in Mentone's Laurel Creek Lakes. Walking trails and 3 lakes. Equestrian friendly. 2 lots sold as one & could be divided in the future. Priced to sell. \$49,900. (387932)

AFFORDABLE BROW LOT within walking distance of Desoto Falls. Large hardwoods. Recent survey & perc.test & permit for septic. Build your dream cabin today or tomorrow. \$79,900 (937836)

10.8 ACRES ON N. BROW. Approx 340' of brow frontage. Awe-inspiring views; interesting rock formations; large trees. You can see almost forever, but this large tract of brow property surely won't last forever at this price. \$199,900. (928654)



BROW-FRONT HOME with a breath-taking view of the valley, mountains beyond and those fabulous sunsets! Over 185' brow frontage. 4BR/2.5BA, 2-car attached garage, hot tub on back deck, 1.46 acres. Beautifully landscaped with view & seating areas outdoors. Great old stone work & ironwork at entry. New hardwood floors & SS appliances. Less than a mile to downtown Mentone. Residence, retreat or rental! No where else in the Mentone area can you find this much for this little. Only \$259,900 (580676)



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SOLD

Also look for our listings at AlabamaMountainLiving.com

Easter Blessings

A Newbie's Observation

By John Carr

I am a newbie to Mentone. My first visit to the mountain was on December 28, 2013. Within five short weeks I had closed on the purchase of a cabin on the western brow. When I first walked out on the property and looked over the valley below it grabbed me, and I said I must have this for my family and the generations to follow. And thus my family is blessed to have it.

I could write an article on being a newbie, and my first impressions of mountain life, of the diverse group of wonderful people I have met, of how a flatlander from Florida Gulf Coast fell in love with this mountain, and how his Jeremiah Johnson yearnings have finally been met; but with the events of Saturday March 1, I must say something about the tragic loss of the landmark Mentone Springs Hotel.

Since I only knew of the hotel for less than a month, I can speak without a long emotional attachment. On that night, I had left Mentone headed home to the Florida panhandle. I was approaching Montgomery when I got a call from my dear friend Sandra Padgett, telling me the horrific news of the fire. In her voice I could feel the pain and loss--it was as if a love one had died.

I immediately turned around and drove back to Mentone, if for no other reason then to act as a new member of the community and help in any way possible, even if that was just to give Sandra a hug. Arriving and seeing the smoldering ashes of this proud building was disturbing.

It was a sad time for this community, but as grand as the old lady hotel was, and she was grand, she did not define Mentone and this mountain community--and certainly her fire and destruction will not define this community.



By Ray Padgett - 1980

No, what has defined and will define this mountain community are the wonderful people who have lived their entire lives here and those who have decided to move here. The folks who choose to live on this mountain hear something others just do not hear.

Mentonians hear the music in the wind, feel the trees budding, search for wildflowers, and wait with anticipation to hear in the valley below the late afternoon train whistle. They embrace the cold and plan festivals for the spring flowers. They appreciate the natural beauty of this mountain and willingly take on the role of being good stewards for these natural beauties. But most importantly, they especially and deeply care about each other. Following the tragic fire, the hugs were often and everywhere--neighbor seeing after neighbor. In my humble opinion, that is what defines this beautiful mountain community of Mentone.

In a brief time, I have realized that along with natural beauty this little town also has personal dignity and a love for their neighbor. I am proud to be a newbie member of this community.

The Heart of Mentone

By Elaine Gauldin

Through the years when we visited Mentone, I sadly viewed the neglected and weathered shell, trying to imagine her past. The porch, completely fallen away, must have been a favorite place for ladies in white summer dresses and men in light suits and straw bowlers to sit enjoying the mild weather. It was the 70's when I first trespassed inside; the back door was the only human entrance. Obviously, animals had found other places to enter and birds flew in and out through the many missing windowpanes, building nests. Bird droppings and shells littered the floor from the hatching young. The leaking, sagging roof had allowed rain to damage the floors and walls. The building was destined to collapse from neglect.

Thankfully, in the 1980's Sandra and Ray Padgett rescued her and the arduous task of restoration began. Endless hours of loving labor as well as money began the slow recovery. Through the years, subsequent owners continued to build on the foundation of their dreams. Through borrowed years, we have enjoyed memories of meals, music and especially friends sitting leisurely on the porch.

Recently some unknowing soul said, "The heart of Mentone is gone." We live in a place of indescribable beauty and a mysterious aura of peace. Mentonians are uniquely unjudgmental and unpretentious. It is not important to know who you might have been or who you knew in your past life. Differences are embraced with an appreciation for artists, writers and dreamers. Volunteer spirit is evidenced around us with the attention to Moon Lake School, lunches for seniors, scout leaders, our dedicated Volunteer Fire Department and so many others. This is the true "Heart of Mentone."



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Mountain Fog: Good Times Ain't Over For Good

By DeSoto Red

I've got a lot of thoughts about The Mentone Springs Hotel swirling around in my old red head today, neighbor. It's pretty obvious that a lot of us are going to miss that old gal. She was, without a doubt, "The Grand Old Lady of Mentone."

I think it best to let some of them more eloquent speaking folks eulogize our fallen lady. I've got a different mission. I'm here today to tell you about Merle Haggard! Well, more specifically, I'm here to talk about a song old Merle wrote way back in 1981. That song has a lot to do with all of us here in Mentone today. The name of the song is "Are the Good Times Really Over for Good?"

Merle's song gives a few examples of wonderful times in the past and then asks if the good times are over for good. He gives a few more wonderful examples and poses his

question again. You remember. He had lines like "When a girl could still cook and still would" and "Back before Nixon lied to us all on TV." Anyway, the very last line of Merle's song is: "The good times ain't over for good". I'm here today to echo those same words: The good times ain't over for good.

Losing The White Elephant and The Mentone Springs Hotel is a tremendous tragedy for our little town. Together, these two majestic buildings were backdrops or stages for more than a century of good times and precious memories. They were backdrops and stages for the magic of Mentone. As close as they came, these two man made structures fell short of the natural beauty that surrounds our little town. And the magic, the real magic of Mentone is the people.

Today we need to tuck The White Elephant and The Mentone Springs Hotel into a special corner of our hearts and move on. They should never be forgotten. We need to also remember, as foreign as it might seem right now, the good times ain't over for good.

I'll see you next time neighbor.

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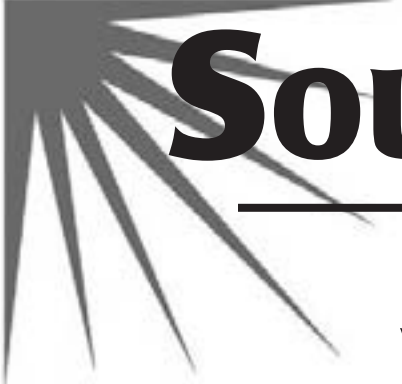
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With Fond Memories, We Say Our Goodbyes



“The daffodils bloom to remind us that there is always life after death; the flag hangs in the tree to remind us of the strength and resilience we have; the foundation remains as the core--the anchor. With all of these, Mentone will more than survive, it will continue to be loved by so many and be that little piece of heaven on earth.”

Chanelle Ciaccio

A Hearfelt “Thank You” to the stewards of The Mentone Springs Hotel over the years.



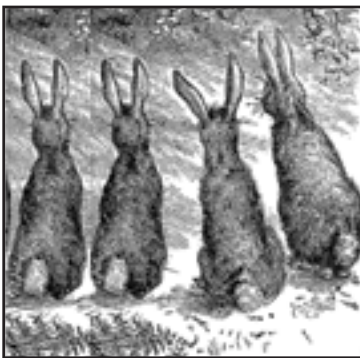
As we mourn the loss of both The Mentone Springs Hotel and The White Elephant, we would like to recognize those dedicated families who sacrificed their time, talents and finances to bring The Grand Old Lady back to life. After years and years of neglect and deterioration, Ray and Sandra Padgett were the ones who fixed her broken bones. They owned the hotel from 1980-1991 They sold the hotel to Charles Johnson, who owned it for five years. Then, in 1996 Dave and Claudia Wassum purchased it and sold it to Andy Talton in 2001. He continued to breath life into her until his death in 2009. Jim and Darlene Rotch bought the hotel in 2010 and brought the Lady into her prime of life at 130 years old this year. They had also owned The White Elephant for several years.



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