

the GROUNDHOG

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Remembering Maggie

Friends And Family Reminisce



Maggie Cordell

By Rebecca Terrell Rish

At 1 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 14, 1990, as I sat at the beautiful, capacity-filled funeral service for Maggie Cordell, which was held at the Wilson Funeral Home Chapel in Fort Payne, I remembered the first time I had had the pleasure of meeting her and how she was one of those rare, special people whom you could meet only once, yet never forget. Maggie made a lasting impression on you that remained with you always — almost as if she sent a little piece of herself with you. She was such a friendly, genuine, caring and sharing lady who spread love and good cheer wherever she went.

While listening to the minister, the Rev. Clayton Crowe, who was related to Maggie by way of being her husband's nephew, speak, I was again impressed by Maggie's faith, which was the source of her strength and solitude.

As Rev. Crowe so aptly stated: "You know that the light in heaven shined a little brighter Thursday night because God had called one of His own home. He always takes care of His own — Maggie's soul is with God."

"Maggie loved everyone and everyone loved her. She enjoyed having her loved ones and friends around and everybody loved to be with her. She was one of the most prominent persons to look after other people I believe I've ever known. She loved everybody and that goes back to God's word when He says, 'If you say you love me, and love not your brother, you are a liar.' So, Maggie wasn't a liar because she dearly loved everybody."

"When Maggie was sick, she didn't call on others unless she absolutely had to. She was a very independent person, but she knew where her strength and power came from. She looked to the Lord, her God and His son, her Savior, Jesus Christ."

While the organist, Cathy Crowe, played and Bernice Crow sang, "Amazing Grace," I tried to picture Maggie as a child, whom I felt sure, even then, was filled with that independent spirit and positive attitude.

America Magdaline Gifford (Cordell) was born on Jan. 18, 1912 in Valley Head, AL. Known as Maggie, she was the third of eight children and also the third daughter of George Edward Gifford and Martha Jane Bunnell Gifford. She spent most of her growing-up years in Valley Head, Mentone and Sulphur Springs, AL.

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Come Heck Or High Water — Skies Fell On The Tri-State



The Dam at DeSoto Falls.

The bottom fell out on Thursday, Feb. 15, as over 10 inches of rainfall in a few short hours sent some residents in the valleys seeking higher ground.

Nearby Fort Payne felt the most pressure in the south end near interstate 59. The Baptist Medical Center was an island unto itself, with personnel unable to get to work, and others unable to leave. Rowboats were used to ferry people to dry ground. Usually placid Wills Creek became a mighty tributary, overflowing its banks into nearby fields, woods, businesses and homes.

Thunder was rolling and lightning flashing Thursday night in Mentone as buckets of rain saturated the earth and spilled over into Little River. The river was the mouse that roared Friday when residents awoke to realize just how serious the situation was becoming. Landslides on all sides closed highways as heavy equipment cleared mud, rocks, debris and trees from the main arteries leading from Lookout Mountain. Muddy water, swift-running and dangerous, lapped at the bridges in the area, washing out many in the valleys, but leaving those on the mountain intact.

DeKalb County schools were closed Friday because buses were unable to navigate submerged roads and destroyed bridges.

The dam at DeSoto Falls proved once again its sturdy construction as millions of gallons of violent water plunged over the top and down to the basin below, hitting the surface so hard that plumes of spray shot into the air.

Clean-up operations are still underway in nearby areas, with many long, rough days ahead as residents try to clean up the mess and get their lives back in order.

From Mentone To The Big City

What does Mentone, Ala., have in common with one of the most exciting and innovative art galleries in the southeast? Two very important elements: One of the owners of *Aliya: The Gallery of Morningside* is Lynne Browne who has a summer home in Mentone and who has been enjoying the mountain for years; Lucy Mitchell, one of the gallery's most prominent artists, makes her home here year around and uses many local scenes for some of her most popular works.

Ms. Mitchell's work has become well-known in the Mentone area and is fast-gaining recognition in larger metropolitan areas such as Atlanta, where the *Aliya Gallery* is located. She is one of the top five sellers at *Aliya*.

The grand celebration of the 1st Anniversary of *Aliya* began on Feb. 3-4 with Lucy Mitchell and two other artists, Stephen Wolverine and Aaron Hequembourg, forming a trinity of talent highlighted for the month-long event.

Since moving to Mentone over two years ago, Ms. Mitchell has captured the sometimes subtle, sometimes stark, beauty of the area on canvas. From rippling fields to views of the mountain from the valley, she uses a blending of subdued and intense shades and hues to suggest rather than demand. There is a feeling of soft warmth in her landscapes, but with a misting of melancholy lingering in the background.

Her floral works, however, radiate emotion; it is obvious, it is poignant and it is almost glaring in a demand for attention. Her canvas of irises is vibrant with color and rich with texture.

Another facet of Ms. Mitchell's work is darker, more introspective and brooding. These works seem to come from internal forces rather than from external images and their attraction lies in their uneasiness, their mystery.

Stephen Wolverine uses concern for and love of the environment to bring scenes from nature onto the canvas. His pieces are soft and flowing with few harsh skeletons showing in the body of the work, but one senses that they



Lucy Mitchell, Local Artist.

are there. His technique of muting and blending layer upon layer of color gives an almost air-brushed quality.

Stephen Wolverine's work bears a message about the earth and his, as well as our, need for it. His goal is to recreate the stirring beauty of nature so that those who view it will feel its majesty as well as its vulnerability, and in turn, its value.

He characterizes himself as an American artist, and feels his work has evolved from his earlier, more somber works influenced by the Wyeth school, to his present prolific use of the colors of nature. It is as if Stephen Wolverine is a prism through which the light and essence of the elements is reflected onto and into the canvas; the emotion dictates the work.

In contrast, Aaron Hequembourg is an artist who uses techniques and medium to create energy and emotion. His work is almost explosive in intensity, yet there is quality of logic and design that brings together sanity and madness in one fell swoop. His "Black and White" series captures movement and light, sun and shadow. From a fear-faced gambler to exotic dancers on mulberry paper, Aaron Hequembourg controls his element, but just barely. It is excitement, it is fear, it is motion, and in that definition is represented the movement of life, as, full of sound and fury, it struts and frets its hour upon the stage.

The *Aliya Gallery* is a moveable feast of diverse works with subtle common ingredients. Each artist, and there are over 20, is presented simply, without fanfare, and they speak for themselves.

Aliya offers something to appeal to most tastes. The gallery owners, Steve Fleenor, Gary Alembik and Lynne Browne, themselves avid collectors, have brought together a wide range of interests and talent and the result is individuality in medium, but symbiosis in presentation.

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From the Editor....

by Mickey Strickland

I am on a metaphysical mailing list. It all began when I subscribed to the **New Age Journal** and ordered a bunch of free pamphlets and catalogs from its pages. Now, a never-ending trickle of transcendental junk mail finds its way into my mailbox — some of it interesting, some of it weird and some of it downright laughable.

There are catalogs offering everything from natural-fiber clothing to Celtic jewelry of Ireland; from self-realization (whatever that is) tapes and books to catalogs listing more catalogs. It seems many organizations of the New Age now stand ready to help me in my spiritual quest. If it can be had with hype and goods — it is mine.

Some are "witchy" groups and I promptly sacrifice these offerings to the wood burning stove. Others are puzzling and not worth the effort of trying to figure out just exactly what they are trying to say or do. Some, however, are intriguing and do a lot to break the monotony, so these I keep and read.

Now, another approach has come to me and I think it worthy of a little more consideration. It is called **Avatar**.

They sent me a glossy, four-color magazine with beautiful cover art depicting a man-phoenix rising from the earth. So far so good. The **Avatar Journal** looks interesting.

Page one quotes the editor and founder. His words, like the lead sentence in a **Watchtower** pamphlet — striking a chord, touching something. "Great," I think, "I believe just like that." The hook is home, almost set.

Then come the testimonies from extremely satisfied individuals who smile in happy peace and glowing love from the pages while attesting to the way **Avatar** has changed their lives; so much so, in fact, they have become "masters" so that they might teach it to others. A doctor says he couldn't help enough people by being just a physician, he can do so much more teaching **Avatar**.

Still sounds fine. I wonder where one might get in touch with this group of sincere people and find out more. I begin to notice ads for seminars, by **Avatar Masters**, which are taking place all over the world: Switzerland, France, Los Angeles, among others. Something doesn't seem quite right here. These are slick ads.

Then, a center spread of **Avatar Masters'** business cards unfolds. Suddenly, what my friend Tom Cook calls "the audible click" — a sound in the mind made when a realization hits home.

First, there is a little course, one to two days, to become enlightened for a mere \$500.00 (from an **Avatar Master**, of course, who just might be an ex-doctor). Second, a more intensified two to four day experience to the next level of self-discovery for a trifling \$1,500.00.

Then the ultimate, by invitation only — plunking down \$3,000.00 for the super-duper, top-of-the-line, massive, introspective learning course that enables you to become one of the chosen few — an **Avatar Master**.

Now you, too, can spread the good word, and pack in the mega-bucks to boot.

It is the same old salvation shell game; inner peace for a price, and it has paid to packed houses for centuries. **Avatar** is a kind of mystical Amway without the detergent.

I'm not surprised at these new twists on an old rope. I'm just amazed at the number of New Age necks in the noose.

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SUNRISE WEDDING



Collette Forrester, owner of the Log Cabin Deli, and Kim Dale Kerby were united in marriage in January. Guests assembled in a meadow on one of the highest points on Lookout Mountain. Vows were read just as the sun rose over the rim of the mountain.

The Groundhog

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Valley View

By Eloise Brown

Barbara and Harvey Morrow had a neighborhood get-together during the holidays. Among those who attended were Mae Card, Bess and Tom Bauerle, Susie and Scooter Clark, Evelyn and Samp Clark, Addie Hall, Ruth and Bert Pickett, Gladys Cobble, Edna and Paul Swearengen and daughters, Virginia and Joann, and Billie Pickett.

Gladys Cobble has returned from Chattanooga, Tenn., where she visited her son, Mickey, and his wife, Linda, and sons.

Ruth and Bert Pickett were guests of their daughter, Patti Spencer, and Sid and Brandi in Chattanooga, Tenn. Among those visiting Howard Finster in Summerville recently were Sue and Foyle Cooper, Betty Brown and Tillie Schlicher, Ann and Elvis Watkins, Evelyn, Robert and Tim Phillips.

Jennie Stott has returned to the University of Alabama at Birmingham after spending the holidays with her parents, Becky and Jesse B. Stott Jr.

Laura Margaret Alison has returned home after visiting Ansley and John McGinnis and Courtney who were home from Clemson University. Laura Margaret had accompanied Peachie and David Cearley of Houston, Texas who had been visiting her.

Margaret and Donald Cobble of Columbia, S. C., are guests of his mother, Gladys Cobble.

Sadie Cooper visited her aunt and uncle, Ida Wilson and Melvin Smith at Ider, Ala., and Lois Hawkins at Cartersville, recently.

Addie Hall is at home after treatment at B.M.C.-DeKalb for a heart attack. Among her visitors last Sunday were Jimmie and Tom Hall of Trifonia, Bob and Mike Hall from Trenton, Margarite and Olan Hall of Lindale, Susanne and Lweis Allen from Rome, and Eloise Brown.

I spent Christmas with my granddaughter, Robin Darby; her husband, Ray and little ones, Sharon and Kirsten in Sylvia, Ohio. We were joined by my daughter, Eldona Root; her daughter, Laurie, and Laurie's husband, Andy Dell from Pasadena, Md. Believe me, there was plenty of snow to make snow cream! We had a good Christmas.

Death has claimed so many good and useful friends and relatives in the last few days: Mary Childers, Rev. Woodward Cook at Henagar; Mildred Hale Shrader in Rossville; Vesta Eickoff in Chattanooga; Maggie Cordell and others, including my sister-in-law, Alba Brown. My sympathy goes to all the families. They will all be sorely missed.

Enough Talk— Enough Tears

I often hear people remark: "There is no reason for anybody to be out of work now. There are jobs for all who want them." "Most of them really prefer to live in the streets. It's really their own choice."

I imagine this kind of talk makes them feel better about living in relative plenty while someone else lives in want, but these are lame excuses for non-involvement at best, and a mockery of the poor and helpless at worst.

There are menial jobs available at an appallingly low wage, but one must have transportation to get to them, appropriate shoes and clothing, and usually a verifiable, permanent address.

Harvard University researchers recently did a study which showed that almost one-third of America's poor children live in rural areas, and astoundingly, come from two parent homes. Appx. one half of the destitute youngsters, one in five of America's children, live in two parent homes. There is at least one full-time worker in over half of these homes.

IN 1987, the Federal Poverty Level for a family of four was \$12,000.00 in annual income. At our present minimum wage of \$3.35 per hour, if one family member works a full time job and another a part time one, the family is still \$2,000.00 a year below the poverty line.

A recent television program stated that many of the homeless, particularly those with children, are employed. They simply cannot make enough to afford food and housing. If the minimum wage were raised to five dollars per hour, the annual salary of the working head of family would still be well below the line of poverty that separates the hungry from the satisfied.

There are programs to help provide shelter, but they have been sharply curtailed and have become increasingly more restrictive. Also, the very programs developed to help our most disadvantaged, such as HUD, are poorly organized, ineffectual and rife with graft, theft and corruption. There is an attitude of "take it from the stupid poor, they won't miss what they don't have." In a society that measures worth in dollars and cents, homeless and hungry children obviously are not of much value.

As for choosing to live in the street, the majority does not prefer to be homeless, cold and destitute. Those who do so have dropped out of the mainstream of life in disgust or have mental or physical problems, or both, that render them incapable of caring for themselves or making responsible decisions. When our observant system of justice decided our mental institutions were overcrowded and inhumane, not to mention costly, thousands of patients were turned into the streets with nice centers built for them to visit regularly. Nothing was done to find them homes and care. They wander the streets in confusion now, treated, and acting like, whipped dogs — sometimes subservient, sometimes snarling, ever pathetic and lost.

The reality is that there are over a million people in this country, many of them children, or child-like, who have no home and no hope of ever having one.

Enough tears — enough talk. There are practical, reasonable, compassionate solutions, and here are a few of them:

1. **More government housing** — From low interest homes available to more than a select few to apartment projects, shelter must become a top priority.

2. **A dramatic increase in the minimum wage.** It is a national shame for such huge profits to be made while our people go hungry and without their basic needs met.

3. **An increase in food subsidies,** with more supervision and assistance in usage. Better, more nutritional lunches at schools, and breakfast there for those who want and need it. In areas where there are many homeless people, school lunch rooms could provide a third meal in the evening for hungry families on an ability to pay basis. Instead, our president is asking for cuts in the school lunch program.

4. **A national, consistent system of child care** in which the government, local, state and federal, together with business and parents, provide good, safe child care for those least able to care for and protect themselves. Where possible, there should be a child-care facility on or near the job site so that at least one parent can be with a child during breaks from working and can be personally involved in the child's care. Each facility should have an area for children too sick to go to school. If the parent could depend on this, and could be nearby, there would be fewer lost man hours. Smaller businesses could form a child-care co-op, centrally located. Businesses, government and parents would fund the program. Mothers, and fathers, on government assistance who could not hold jobs because of the cost of child care, could work in these facilities and have their children with them. They would be paid a decent wage and given free child care for hours spent in school or in a training program when not on the job.

5. **More funding for schools, properly applied.** Many of our public schools are in a deplorable condition and overcrowded. They have not kept up, and too many lives and minds are being wasted in a fragmented, inconsistent, educational system which has placed priorities on the mundane, while being unable, or unwilling, to emphasize the human being behind the statistics. This cattle-call education is churning out students who cannot communicate except with force, and who are being herded into the streets while politicians and educators alike bemoan their loss. We need more teachers who are better paid and better educated themselves. There should be more counselors, empowered with authority and finances who can intervene in defense of the child who needs emotional, mental and/or physical support. From compassion to clothes — positive reinforcement equals increased self-esteem. Innovative, individualized learning systems must be provided, with rewards for those teachers who develop new concepts and programs. Society must become more involved in the education of its children, with businesses

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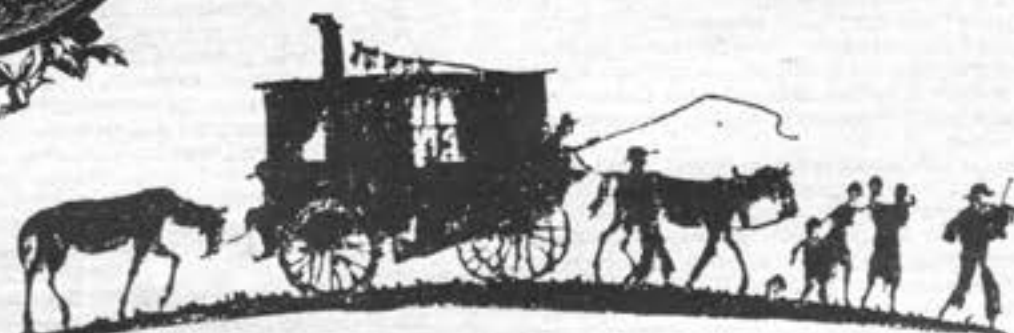


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Of the eight Gifford children, only three survive, her brothers Jim and Willard (Pec) and her sister Mary Lyons. She was preceded in death by her brothers, Paul Edward and Richard Ozke and her sisters, Alliea Ladora and Lula Genevieve. They grew up with and were very close to lots of cousins which made them feel as if they had many extra brothers and sisters. Those were carefree, untroubled, memorable days.

Maggie was a happy, precocious child with a determined independent, if only so far. When she was about 17, she met James Floyd Cordell, a local young man who was born at Pea Ridge on Sand Mountain, and who grew up at the forks of the river where his Daddy owned and operated a farm.

It was practically "love at first sight" for these two special people. However, it was to be about 10 years before their dream of being together could be realized. They were kept apart for several reasons, one of which was the serious health problems Maggie endured for about six years, next because Floyd had to help his Daddy raise his younger brothers and sisters, and last, but by no means least, because Maggie's Mother wasn't quite sure that Floyd was the right man for her daughter (although Maggie's Daddy thought he was just fine). Finally, these "true loves" were united in marriage on Jan. 21, 1939.

Since Floyd was already employed as a teacher at Berry College, they started married life on the campus in Rome, GA where Maggie set up housekeeping at a store "Possum Trot." Floyd taught the students all they needed to know about becoming successful farmers — from management and day to day operation, to the techniques of raising different farm animals and planting and rotating crops, to fighting forest fires. It was a happy beginning.

From about 1940 until the plant closed in approximately 1967, Floyd was employed by the Celanese Corp. in Home as a valve operator on the Viscoac site. Floyd and Maggie lived in the Celanese Village where Maggie's priority was as a housewife and mother. They had two children, Joseph Edward and Reba Allen. Maggie was continuously involved in all of their activities, especially the Celanese School PTA, where she served as president, once and vice president, twice.

Maggie was respectfully nicknamed "Old Lady" by Billy Jack Ray, a contemporary of her children. Throughout the years, she was affectionately called in by most of her children's friends, much to her great pleasure.

Two of Maggie's and Floyd's dearest friends in Home were Agnes and Grady Warren. Floyd and Grady worked together at Celanese and Agnes and Maggie were like sisters — always doing everything together. Friendships like these are few and far between and are truly to be treasured.

Since childhood, Floyd used the skills as a carpenter taught to him by his Daddy. Around 1952, when Celanese was on strike, he used his construction talents to help build the Savannah River Plant. Throughout his regular employment he had built houses on the side, and after retiring from Celanese, he was a member of the Carpenters local in Rome and continued to work for himself and others as a builder.

Floyd and Maggie returned to Montone around 1974 where they continued to build houses and have a few more fulfilling and happy years together back home before Floyd died in September, 1979.

As much as Maggie missed Floyd, her indomitable faith and spirit took over and she continued to live life to the fullest until the very end, bringing joy to all who knew her and sharing so much of herself through her beautiful quilts and kindness to others.

Maggie adored her grandchildren, who were the 'apple of her eye'. As she was there, her grandsons used to spend many happy summers visiting on the mountain. She is survived by four grandsons and one granddaughter, Jeff and Ken McKelvey (Reba's boys) and Randy, Byron and Christina Cordell (Joey's children). How fortunate and blessed they are to have had Maggie and Floyd as grandparents.

As I searched for a way to pay a proper tribute to a truly great lady who dearly loved her community and who was beloved by all within it, it seemed the most appropriate way was with some special remembrances from some of those closest to her. Unfortunately, there is not enough room in *The Groundhog*, or any other paper for that matter, to include all those who should, or would, like to be heard from. However, Maggie knew of the love and devotion and hopefully the following "Scrapbook of Memories" will speak for everyone.

While talking with REBA MCKELVEY, Maggie's daughter, I was reminded of that special bond between mothers and daughters and how much the times we spend with each other are to be treasured. Reba always made the most of her time with Maggie and can look back with a sense of fulfillment and appreciation to the hours she spent being with and taking care of her, picking the beautiful quilts Maggie made and helping her sell raffle tickets for MAPA. They had quality time together on all occasions. Reba said her mother's attitude throughout her life could best be described by the following statement: "Mama was the only person I ever knew who could tell you how to swim, yet never even get in the water. She didn't know how to swim a tick, but could, and would, tell you exactly how to do it."

BERNICE CROW, who has known Maggie for 20 years and spent many happy hours with her, especially during the MAPA functions and at the Hitching Post, shared the following memories of Maggie.

"Maggie loved Montone with all her heart. She gave more free time to MAPA than anyone, spending many happy hours making quilts and selling chances on them. She made two quilts for MAPA each year for a total of 12. One was for the Rhododendron Festival in May and the other one was for the Colorfest in October.

"She donated the first quilt — and MAPA made a little over \$300.00 from sales of tickets — raffled. Every festival since then we have paid Maggie \$150.00 for the quilt, made especially for the festivals. Then Maggie sold most of the tickets on them. She would go to Fort Payne, AL

and Summerville, GA, set up a table and sell chances to just about everyone who went into Wal-Mart or Red Food. She loved to talk — she loved people and knew many of them in our area and in Georgia. We usually made \$1,000.00 on each quilt after she handled the sale of tickets.

"Quilting became her main occupation after her husband, Floyd, died. She made quilts personally designed for the customer and over the years, made approx. 61 quilts aside from those made especially for the MAPA festivals. She loved staying at the Hitching Post where she could meet and talk to new people, and they in turn, loved her. She would keep the store any Sunday afternoon, and did on many occasions."

"Maggie served as hostess for MAPA for about three years, and did it quietly and very well. If she could not get someone to do refreshments, she did them. Many times she made wonderful pies to feed as many as 30 people. Anytime MAPA asked for a volunteer, Maggie's hand was raised. She would follow through on any job she undertook. One could certainly depend on Maggie. She even got her daughter, Reba McKelvey, from Peachtree City, GA, involved. Reba helped with many of our festivals — whatever we needed done. Both Maggie and Reba worked selling coffee at the June Jam for three years."

"Maggie had a green thumb and grew beautiful Dahlias and other flowers. She usually won a blue ribbon from her Dahlia entry in the fair. She also made lovely ceramic novelties and gave them to her friends. She said this was a diversion from her quilting.

"What will we do without this dear lady?"

One of the last quilts that Maggie made on a commissioned basis was this past fall as a wedding gift for a local Montone couple. The following are the special sentiments expressed by the newlyweds and the bride's parents: TOM and TOOKIE ANDERSON, in appreciation of Maggie's everlasting gift and also as a tribute to a very special lady.

"We had a wedding at St. Joseph's on Sept. 22, 1989 uniting in holy wedlock Bryan Green and Lindsay Anderson. They chose to have a barn dance the night before at Lookout Mountain Christian Conference Center. In honor of the occasion, the women of the church chose a beautiful quilt to bless the young couple. In the meantime, Maggie's needle had been busy creating "Grandmother's Garden." How perfect, since Lindsay and Bryan have always especially adored their Grandma's.

"Our memory of Maggie is that she was always offering her love and friendship to everyone and when we think of her we are reminded of Isaiah 51:3 — "Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody." It's a blessing to have one of her quilts in our family. Thanks for your priceless gift, Maggie."

LYDIA SPEED'S 14 year friendship with Maggie began when Lydia went to purchase some material at the cloth shop that Maggie owned in Valley Head. Because both have outgrowing, friendly personalities, they immediately hit it off and their friendship continued to grow through the years. Lydia shared the following memories of Maggie:

"I will always remember Maggie's enthusiasm. She knew it would overcome discouragement and really get things done. We who knew her saw that magic quality. The remarkable thing was — it was contagious."

HARRELL JENKINS, who met Maggie through MAPA about seven years ago, said he didn't believe there was anyone in this area that she didn't know or else wasn't related to — that she never met a stranger. He often took her around to sell raffle tickets and during her illness spent many hours taking her for medical treatments. His thoughts of her life are as follows:

"Maggie was such a wonderful person with a memory of this mountain community that equals no one's. She never forgot anyone — remembered everyone's name, their families names, birthdays, etc. and could recount more stories about this area than anyone I've ever known.

Her attitude was always positive, even throughout her illness. In fact, the afternoon of the evening she died, while I was visiting her in Atlanta at her daughter Reba's, she still retained that remarkable spirit and was determined she was going to make it.

She loved flowers and had the most beautiful dahlias, geraniums, Christmas cactus, etc. Maggie had a green thumb that was always successful and could absolutely stick anything in the ground and it would grow.

She always sold 85-90 percent of all tickets for her quilts that MAPA raffled off for the Rhododendron and Octoberfest Festivals. In fact, as far as I'm concerned, she was the hardest working and greatest single contributor of time, love and interest of any individual involved in MAPA and gave 100 percent of herself to the betterment of this community.

"Maggie was one of my favorite people and will be greatly missed by everyone."

MABLE KIRK'S friendship with Maggie began when they were children and continued throughout her life. Even though they were apart for a good many years, due to marriage and their husband's careers, when they both returned to the mountain they picked up their friendship where they left off and there never seemed to have been a gap in their relationship. Her memories of Maggie are warmly expressed by the following words:

"My first memory of Maggie was of a beautiful 2 1/2 year old, curly headed baby with dark, pinching eyes that sparkled like diamonds. Next, I remember her as a lovely, young woman with a personality of friendliness that charmed everyone.

"Maggie and I married men who had been buddies since early childhood. My husband, Frank, and I went west for 46 years where Frank spent 15 years in the U. S. Navy following a profession of Safety Engineering, Pattern Work and Craft Work with Aircraft Missile Work. Maggie and Floyd went to Rome, GA where Floyd was employed by the Celanese Corp. for close to 30 years and also became a building contractor, completing approx. 9-12 homes before retiring.

"We returned to the mountain to live in 1977 and Maggie and Floyd had also returned just before us. Our time spent together was a renewal of Frank and Floyd's time together of youthful days gone by. Joyful hours were spent reminiscing. I found Maggie even more charming than I

had remembered her. She had become more profound in her concern for people. She welcomed us back to the mountain as if we'd never been away. Maggie was imbued with a gift of handicraft and could keep a person entertained for hours.

"I admired her way of comments about people — never criticizing, but saying, "What the other person does is up to him. I am too busy to keep track of what someone else does." She meant that. She was a busy person — always helping those in need. This was an inherited feature of her personality. Both her father and mother, George and Jane Gifford, laid the foundation of service to their fellow man before their children.

The memories of Maggie's beauty, caring, sharing and concern for others were the qualities that made her life a channel of blessing for others. The gifts she gave will continue to live on in the community.

MARTHA STANLEY, Maggie's niece, painted a wonderful picture of Maggie when she shared some special family stories and her loving sentiments:

"One of the stories about Aunt Maggie that was my children's favorite, was about the time when Aunt Maggie was in the first grade. Her family lived near where the new Cooper's Mill is now located and the children all walked to school. One cold, winter morning, as the children walked along the railroad tracks on their way to school, Aunt Maggie placed her tongue on one of the frozen rails — it stuck! No one's quite sure how she got it unstuck, or how long it took, but obviously, she did.

"Another story, that is my favorite, is about the time when all the children were helping plant peas in the garden. Aunt Maggie got tired so she threw all her peas in an old stump, thinking no one would ever notice. However, she didn't get away with it and earned the hard way that "crime never pays" when she got caught because all the peas in the stump sprouted.

"One of the stories Aunt Maggie loved to tell on my mother, Genevieve, was that once she and Aunt Mary broke a cardinal rule and went to bed without washing their feet. My mother laid on them and Granny made them get up in the dead of night and wash their feet!

"Although the Giffords were of the Baptist faith, you could almost say they were non-denominational, since they always attended almost all of the churches in this area, especially when they were having all day gatherings featuring 4-note or Sacred Harp singing. Aunt Maggie really loved that type of music. When she moved to Home after she and Uncle Floyd married, Aunt Maggie became a "dyed-in-the-wool" Methodist.

"She never forgot anyone's birthday and always sent me a humorous card. She loved to have birthday parties, but usually only in January and February. Her birthday was in January and lots of other family members had birthdays during these two months, so I guess that's the reason for so many parties. However, it sometimes seemed all we did in January and February was to go to Aunt Maggie's for another birthday party. I don't think she had any or many during the rest of the year.

"Aunt Maggie enjoyed life to the fullest. Throughout her marriage, she and Uncle Floyd loved to travel, often just going wherever the road took them. They'd get in the car and go hundreds of miles without pre-planning anything. They especially enjoyed traveling out west and to Mexico. Even after his death, Aunt Maggie continued to travel by herself, often going to South Georgia and Florida, sometimes just to get peaches!

"Aunt Maggie loved butterflies and flowers. She also loved red, it was her favorite color to wear. Making ceramic gifts for all her family and friends was something else Aunt Maggie loved. She had her "social time" at Eloise Meehan's ceramic shop in Valley Head.



"Aunt Maggie was always positive about everything — always determined everything would be O.K. She was lively, fun, bubbly, mischievous and always had the last word. Throughout my life, she never missed an occasion that was special to me. She was like a second mother to me, as were my other three aunts. Instead of having one mother, it was as if I had four. It was a joy to have her as an aunt — she was just my dear Aunt Maggie."

JANIE LONGSHORE, who now lives in Valley Head, remembers when Maggie was born and had a lifelong friendship with her. She reminisced about her with great warmth and love:

"Maggie was one of the lucky few to whom God gave many talents, the greatest of which was her ability to make new friends while keeping the old ones."

"She first saw the light of day in Valley Head, AL, but spent her early childhood in Montone. Her family lived and farmed the land where the current restaurant, Cragsmore, is located. It's amazing to think of being able to farm successfully on that rocky brow! Maggie was always proud of having lived at Cragsmore.

"Her mother, who was thirty, taught her all the things a girl should know about being a good housewife, including the art of quilting. Her parents, George and Jane Gifford, always set the right example of how people should live and care about others and Maggie certainly carried on this tradition.

"Maggie married Floyd Cordell and they lived in Rome, GA where they raised two children. My husband and I also lived in Rome about the same time and, although Maggie and I didn't get to see that much of each other, we spent many happy hours keeping in touch over the telephone. She was so talented with her hands that she could go from helping Floyd build houses which they would live in awhile and then set to being creative with her quilting, ceramics or growing her beautiful flowers.

"When she and Floyd retired and returned to Montone to live, Maggie again mastered the art of quilting that her mother had taught her as a child. She loved her community and was a great supporter of MAPA — even walk-

ing quilts to be ramed off for their fund-raising projects. She had a little cloth shop in Valley Head for a few years and made many new friends while helping them find just the right piece of material for their special projects.

"She was always interested in everyone and one of the special gifts God gave her was her friendliness and unselfishness. If Maggie knew of a need, she would do her best to fill it. She also never forgot anyone's name, age, birthday, etc., and genuinely cared about others. Maggie was a very special person — loved and admired by all who knew her. We'll all miss her very much."

"She was like a second mother to me . . . She always brought flowers, even in the dead of winter, she brought flowers."

Randy Still

TONY GOGGINS, better known to many as **"THE MENTONE TROUBADOUR,"** spent many memorable hours entertaining Maggie with song. A few years ago, Maggie never missed a Sunday afternoon "get together" at Cragmere, which at that time was owned by Randy Still, a dear friend of hers, and where Tony, whom she adored, was the regular entertainer. Randy, who sang base, and Tony played and sang all of Maggie's favorites.

Tony said, "Her very favorite all time tune was 'The Long Black Veil.' She really loved that song. However, I'll always think of her when I play and sing, 'Have I Told You Lately That I Love You,' since that was another one of her favorites, mainly because that's what her husband, Floyd, always used to say and sing to her. I know she found Floyd waiting for her as soon as she got home."

"My nickname for her was 'The Quilting Princess.' She preferred Princess rather than Queen because she said it made her feel younger! I'll always remember Maggie, especially where there are quilts or music."

Maggie loved to be surrounded by music and spent many happy hours with her attorney and very special friend of 10 years, **TERRY G. HUTCHESON**, playing and singing for her entertainment. According to Terry, her taste in music transcended the ages, but probably her favorite tunes were old time country hymns and gospel. He eloquently expressed his love and admiration for her with the following thoughts:

"America Magdalene Cordell was my friend, but her friendship with me was not exclusive. She was a friend to all who crossed her path, regardless of their station in life. She was at peace with the universe and she was not ashamed to openly show her affection for her friends."

"During her illness, I helped her with some small legal affairs, and can tell you, without reservation, her faith sustained her to the bitter end, and I never once detected any trace of fear or regret. She was a dedicated, civic-minded lady of the highest order and her passing saddens my heart. I loved her and thankfully — I told her so."

"RANDY STILL, former owner of Cragmere Manna, spoke of Maggie: "She was like a second mother to me. She is gone, but never will be forgotten. She always brought flowers when she came to visit, even in the dead of winter, she brought flowers. I never let Maggie pay for a meal, and one Christmas she gave me a flower basket quilt and it is one of my treasures."

"Maggie's sister was born in the Rhett Butler room at Cragmere, and a week before her sister died, Maggie fulfilled one of her last requests and took her there again. Maggie and her family lived at Cragmere in the thirties, and she said it was like coming home again. She would talk to guests and tell them the history of the place. Maggie will be missed so much."

Maggie Gifford Cordell was a unique, one-of-a-kind, impossible to replace lady, who will be sorely missed by all who were fortunate enough to know her.

Her spirit will live on through the gifts she gave to the community by the good deeds she performed, her treasured quilts and her cheerful, friendly, winsome ways.

Maggie's epitaph could appropriately say, **"GONE, BUT NEVER FORGOTTEN — BELOVED AND ADMIRABLE BY ALL."** Thank you, Maggie, for bringing so much pleasure to so many through your unselfish love of others. The world has been blessed because you were here.

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Dynasty

Kevin White, who grew up in Valley Head, Alabama, and went to school there, wishes to invite all his old friends and neighbors and new to visit him.



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COUNTRY JOURNAL

By Bernise Crow

We have had such nice weather all month, I have missed my days of seclusion due to extreme cold days. Usually we have two or three days of being snowed in, or iced in. On these days I relax, knowing I don't have to meet any appointments, open shop, or do anything! And on these days one can clean out closets, arrange dresser drawers, file papers that have accumulated in stacks around the house, and which have had no particular home. This is the only time of year that I can come near to being organized — and this year I blew that opportunity. Woe is me! For the next 11 months frustration will prevail because the weather did not cooperate. Oh well, we cannot possibly win them all. The beautiful spring-like weather has spurred an interest in gardening that is almost feverish. I want an English-type garden, complete with rock or gravel paths, statues, evergreens (at least 100 years old!) And I want waterfalls, fish ponds surrounded by lush ferns, beds of blooming plants, and an active herb garden. But I have neither the expertise, finances, nor physical energy to accomplish this feat. Homer and my brother Don Castleberry will assist me in doing all I can toward this garden. It just goes to show that one must start some things earlier in life.

We have a meadow area that is a constant source of enjoyment, year round. We want to plant some fruit trees, and generally landscape that area a little. Nature has taken care of that pretty well. The wildflowers are abundant from May through October. There is a space in the warmest months that we could use a few more plants. And we need paths to walk through and enjoy the area more fully.

Our only adventure this time was our Christmas holiday trip to visit our daughter No. 2 (Doreen) and her husband, Jerry Waters, in Steamboat Springs, Colo. This was truly an adventure. We had not seen a white Christmas in several years. And wouldn't you know — it snowed a little here on Christmas day? Enough to call it a white Christmas. We left Chattanooga at 3 a.m. Christmas Day, to drive to Birmingham to board a plane to Steamboat Springs, via Dallas, Texas. This was a first for us — traveling on Christmas Day. Ordinarily I would be immersed in food in my own kitchen. And I don't mind that. Things change with the years, and our family has scattered and cannot make it home every year. It was fun to watch other families carrying Christmas packages like us, trying to reach their loved ones on this special day.

We were amazed at the beauty of the Rocky Mountains viewed from the plane. All the majestic peaks were snow covered; looking remarkably well dressed. Our pilot pointed out various points of interest to us, which was nice. Vail, Colorado, was one of the main points — tohers were not as familiar to us. Our son-in-law, Jerry Waters, met us at Hayden airport, about 20 miles from Steamboat Springs where he and Doreen live. All the way to their home the scenery was exciting to us, who are not used to seeing everything covered with snow. All the lovely Aspen trees that are so brilliantly covered with golden leaves in autumn, were covered with a frosty icing of frozen fog. They were beautiful in winter dress also. They looked like flocked Christmas trees.

The whole town of Steamboat is like something in the Swiss Alps. It looks like a fantastic story — book land. Snow on the roof-tops was about 18 inches deep, and had slid over the eaves of buildings, making them look like gingerbread houses. Everyone was buzzing around in their four-wheel drive vehicles seemingly oblivious to the huge piles of snow that had accumulated on the roadsides, where snow plows had piled it. The temperature is cold, but it is a dry cold, and one is not hurt by it like our damp, humid climate. When it is 45 degrees here, and a damp chilling wind is blowing — it is cold! The week before we were there 99 inches of snow fell. It snowed seven days and nights. Some of it melts on top and packs the rest, so that skiing conditions are right. Lisa, our granddaughter, went with us and could hardly wait to take some lessons and get on the slopes. Jerry knew someone who could get tickets or we might not have gotten on the slopes. Christmas week is the busiest week of the season. College students take this opportunity to get in some skiing time, and others plan their vacations at this time of year. Homer went with Lisa, along with Jerry's brother and a Japanese ghirl, who was visiting there, to take lessons. I just observed. And I laughed until I hurt, watching Homer trying to come down a little slope. The instructor had been working with them for about two hours before letting them try it alone. There is no way I would try it, because of my arthritic knee, but I am sure I had more fun watching than I would have had skiing. Homer went back the next day, and said he did quite well. Of course I could not verify that. It took courage for one his age to try. He could have done it here in Mentone, but too many people who know him might be watching. Now he can ski at Cloudmont!

Doreen took us to eat at a neat little place, similar in atmosphere to our own Log Cabin Deli. And we went shopping! We saw beautiful Indian design pottery that was outstanding. Homer refused to let us load our luggage with too many souvenirs. We toured an art gallery, which we loved. The bronze western sculpture was very interesting, to say the least. And very expensive. Then one day we drove to a higher elevation and went snow-mobiling. This was the most fun of all. There were seven of us — some old and some young. But age was no barrier there. We rode up steep trails until we came to what our guide called a meadow. There we could ride around, up and down the area for about an hour. The boys were racing with Lisa, but we older ones just rode at moderate speed. They laughed at me, but that's all right — I had fun. Now that we are old enough to retire, we are doing things we never had time for before. And we are probably enjoying them more than the young ones. We consider all pleasures to be a bonus, and are thankful for each experience. So get out there and do some things you have always wanted to do.

Wet Willie Reunion

For those fans who have waited dry-mouthed for the get-down, turn around in the road sound of **Wet Willie**, a popular Southern Rock group of the seventies who disbanded 10 years ago, there was an opportunity to quench that thirst at the Mardi Gras in Mobile recently.

The nation's oldest Mardi Gras celebration formed the backdrop for the reunion of one of the best representative groups of the tuned-in generation — just after the hippies but before the yuppies. This event marks the first time the group has played together since one of the cornerstones, and the lead singer, Jimmy Hall, broke away to try it solo a decade ago.

In an interview in Atlanta recently, Jack Hall, Jimmy's brother, told **The Groundhog** that he was very excited about the reunion and he "would certainly entertain the idea of the old group getting back together for a tour."



Jack Hall

Jack Hall spoke of the reunion: "It is a chance for us to get together and to play some music we've not played in many years. There is a lot to remember."

The group will consist of Jack and Jimmy Hall, Ricky Hirsch, Michael Duke, John Anthony and T. K. Lively. Some of the group's most popular songs are "Keep on Smilin'", "Country Side of Life," "Street Corner Serenade," and "Weekend."

"We have a good, solid body of work behind us, with a lot of character about it," Jack Hall continued. "It will be great to see what each member will bring to the band now. It is wonderful to listen to these old songs and it may not be great art, but I feel we have made a contribution. When 'Keep On Smilin'' came out, people came up to me and said how the song helped them through."

"Even if we only get to do this one concert, it will be great; playing the music and seeing what might come of it — means a lot. Being in Mobile, our hometown, is like going back to our roots, to where we and our music came from, to get it all together again. We will stay as close to that old sound as we can, with the added expertise we have gained since those days."

"We want to recapture that soulful yet happy sound and to bring to it all that we have become."

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Talk Tears (Continued from Page 2)

and support facilities such as medical centers, cultural organizations and civic groups becoming involved. Children need interaction with the community and its movers, shakers and leaders. Learning seminars led by the most productive, creative and innovative in our society can only serve to enrich the lives of those who participate. Give the money to the schools and let the Air Force hold a bake sale to finance its next bomber.

Each child should be given regular interest and aptitude tests, not to dictate if he or she can move on to the next level, but to decide in which direction that level shall lie. Each child should be given an opportunity to develop special skills and interests.

7. **No one should be denied health care because of inability to pay.** We need a national health care system, utilizing veteran's hospitals which are in trouble financially, and local health departments. There should be a doctor at each health department. These doctors could come from a special program in which education and medical school is provided in return for service after graduation. The same for nurses.

We, as a nation, must reorganize our priorities. We are the biggest consumer of illegal drugs, one of the highest rollers in the uncertain, big-stakes game of defense spending, and a country with one of the highest infant mortality rates in the world.

We must trim our defense system and cut the lard away from the lean. We must reduce subsidies to huge factory farms, with a cut-off in federal funding for those farms making over \$50,000 per year in profits. Bringing home the bacon to a lot of politicians in the last few years has meant carrying it in bloated pork barrels while malnutrition runs rampant among a whole sub-class of our people. This is ridiculous and tragic.

According to R. A. Zaldivar, Knight-Ridder Newspapers, "less of the rich man's bounty and more of the widow's mite is subject to federal taxes."

That is the finding of a new tax study by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office. From 1980 through 1990, the poorest 20 percent of Americans have seen their real income drop 3 percent and their net federal tax rate go up 16 percent. Families in the poorest one fifth have an average pre-tax income of just over \$7,500. However, the richest one fifth, families with an average per-tax income of over \$105,000, have come away with a close to 32 percent hike in their income and a 5.5 percent drop in their net federal tax rate.

The CBO also concluded that 59 percent of Americans in the lower- and middle-income ranges will face a higher net federal rate this year than in 1980.

The CBO study spells out the unfairness of such things as President Bush's proposed capital gains tax, which overwhelmingly benefits the rich. A new report by the Congressional Committee on Taxation shows that 83 percent of the benefits from Bush's proposal would go to those making \$100,000 or more.

The poor give more, the rich give less and the old "let them eat cake" attitude is alive and well in the United States of America. Until we force those who represent us to wake up and smell the votes, nothing is going to change.

— Mickey Strickland, Editor



PROMOTING LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN — The Lookout Mountain Parkway Association's new officers are shown at the January meeting of the organization, which was held in Fort Payne, Ala.

They are, from left to right in front, Bernise Crow, secretary; Jack E. Jones, president, both of Mentone, Ala.; and Bonnie Jean Thomas of Chickamauga, Ga., treasurer.

On the back row, from left to right, are Joe Barnes of Gadsden, Ala., Alabama vice president; James Mackay of Rising Fawn, Ga., vice president representing Georgia; and Bob Elmore of Chattanooga, Tenn., Tennessee vice president. The group meets every fourth Thursday and welcomes new members. (Photo by Myrna McMahan)

Moon Lake 4-H Girls Meet



★★★★★★★★★★

MOON LAKE 4-H GIRLS MEET — Front row, left to right, are Crystal Bett's — chairperson; Mandi Browder, Kerry Blalock, Nikki Smith — Song Leaders. Back row, left to right, are Cayla Bell — President; Amy Crane — Vice President; Ginger Gray — Secretary; Renee Pruitt — Devotional Leader; Shirley Collins — Reporter.

★★★★★★★★★★

A Letter From The Governor

By Gov. Guy Hunt

When you fill out your 1989 Alabama State Income Tax return, I hope you will check line 31-D or 22-D. These lines provide the financial avenue needed for you to send money to the Alabama Children's Trust Fund. The trust fund has been a leading advocate in helping those affected by child abuse and neglect. I am encouraging Alabamians to check off these lines because the money will fund the many needed services the Children's Trust Fund provides to Alabamians.

The trust fund was created by the Alabama Legislature in 1983 to allow for the funding of prevention programs each year and for the establishment of a self-sustaining source of funding for prevention programs in the future. The Children's Trust Fund had gone through six funding cycles, awarding 168 grants for a total of \$1.1 million. The

money has funded prevention programs that utilize volunteers, thereby creating a grass roots network that help prevent child abuse.

When you take time to fill out your 1989 Alabama income tax return please help us prevent child abuse and check line 31-D or 22-D.

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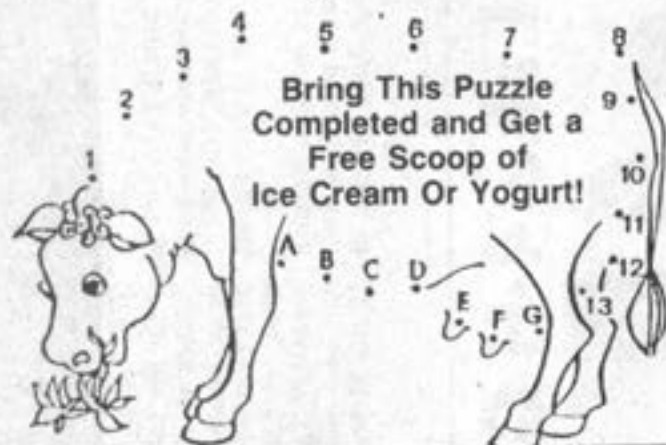
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