

the GROUNDHOG

A Publication of the Mentone Area Preservation Association



“Alabama’s” June Jam — *Feels So Right*

One hot day many years ago I was driving in downtown Fort Payne, Ala., listening to WFPA, a local radio station. The music was loud, the southern sun was rolling into the open windows in shimmering waves. The d.j. announced an upcoming song, but I didn't catch all of his words. I was lost in contemplation of the cool mountain I had just left behind. Softly, almost like a lullaby, the music began to fill the car. Gone were worries about the heat, the day, the time. I was mesmerized, surely these were not the local boys who had played in and out of many bands over the years in our area. The song was “Lady Down On Love” and I listened attentively as the announcer gave the names of the group and told how they were playing regularly at a small club in Myrtle Beach, S. C. The thought raced through my mind that I ought to drop everything and go to Nashville and make important people listen, even if I had to set up housekeeping on their doorsteps. The song was sweet and simple, with a hometown charm and was written by two members of the group. Later, I remarked to a friend that if this group did not become a household word within a year, something was sadly amiss with the music industry.

I moved away, and could not follow their progress. Then, one hot day while driving through the cornfields and coal mines of southern Indiana with an Amish friend, I turned on the radio to a local station and “Tennessee River” came on. “An upcoming new release by some boys from down south,” the d.j. said, “in a group called the Alabama Band.” I almost wrecked the car. I told everyone I saw for weeks that I knew them, that I had gone to school with Jeff. My old high school annual became a popular book, with pictures of him and his first high school group, El Rotcho's Rangers.

I invited friends to my rambling house on Capehart Farms, and all the people from Alabama cried when the Amish Lengacher sisters sang, “My Home's In Alabama.” I went to the Banks of the Wabash Festival and was so proud when the crowd began to scream for the local band to play some “Alabama.”

An Indiana friend of mine, Joyce Carpenter, took our sons to an “Alabama” concert in Evansville, and when the band sang “Old Flame” the audience held up cigarette lighters and the lights were dimmed to a soft glow. It was a special time, for my son Roy felt a real kinship and a

Continued on Page 4

Town Council Urges Water Conservation

Water was an important issue at the June 6 town council meeting. Once again Mentone is faced with a situation that could have a disastrous impact on the community. Mayor Rob Hammonds and the other members of the council urge all residents to use the threatened water supply sparingly, and only as absolutely necessary. All citizens of Mentone must be part of a cooperative effort and can help by refraining from using water for gardens, lawns, autos, and all else that is not a necessity.

A large group of Mentone residents attended the meeting to address the problem of animal control. The problem of unrestrained animals has gotten out of hand, and is to the point that it has become unsafe to walk or ride

bicycles on certain streets in our area. Unrestrained animals are also causing damage to property and on recent occasions have attacked people.

The council will adopt an animal control ordinance in the near future, and the group has consulted a lawyer about possible lawsuits against individuals who disregard the safety and property rights of others. There are already laws governing this sort of negligence that can, if invoked, result in serious consequences for those who insist upon infringing upon the rights of others. All citizens in the area are asked to act responsibly in order to prevent harm to property and people, and to avoid litigation.

Shriners And Coca-Cola

Gov. Hunt announced that the Montgomery Coca-Cola bottling facility has been chosen to produce a special printed 24-bottle series exclusively for the North American Shrine membership.

The Shrine Commemorative Series will feature each of the 22 Shriner's Hospitals for crippled and burned children, and the other two bottles in the series will depict International Shrine Headquarters in Tampa, Fla., and "The Editorial Without Words," which reflects the heart and soul of Shrinedom.

"I can think of no more worthy organization than the Shrine to take part in this wonderful effort with Coca-Cola to raise funds to assist in the medical care for America's children," Gov. Hunt said. "I salute Shriners internationally for their devotion to the crippled and burned children, and I am extremely proud to be a part of this undertaking. And to Coca-Cola, I say thank you for caring. Coca-Cola is a wonderful example of the kind of good corporate citizens that make all of Alabama and the nation proud."

The special series will be made available to Shrine membership through the 189 Shrine Temples internationally. The bottles will cost \$3.50 each, of which \$1.50 will go directly to children's hospitals. The special series will be sold only throughout Shrine membership.

New Owners At Whatley's



Sam and Toots Whatley have sold their Whatley's General Store and Service and have gone into the towing business exclusively. The new owners of the business on 117 about two miles from the Georgia line near Mentone are Sheila Wells and Marcus (Andy) Husky.

Sheila and Andy were over-the-road truck drivers and learned a lot about how to serve the public. "When we were on the road, we talked about how if we ever owned a place we would give good service and treat the customer the way we wanted to be treated," Sheila spoke of the often shabby treatment they received at places of business, "and we intend to treat our customers with the kindness and respect they deserve."

Sheila likes Mentone for its quaint style and quiet atmosphere. She is originally from Dayton, Ohio, and "does not miss the snow and hustle and bustle of life there." Andy was born in Tennessee but reared in High Georgia. He has lived off and on in Mentone for 10 years. In fact, he worked for Sam several years ago, so he knows Sam's style of service — warm and open and be a friend to everyone. "I like Mentone's hospitality and special feeling. You don't find that everywhere," Andy remarked.

The store will be called Lake Exchange, because Lake Lahousage is so near. Lake Exchange will offer the same quality items as ever, such as groceries, gifts, gasoline, fireworks, fishing and hunting supplies, work boots and lots more. Also, there will still be auto repair and service for Andy is a qualified mechanic.

"We have some special plans," Sheila laughed, "but we will announce them later."

Sam and Toots are an important part of our community life, and all of Mentone will be glad to hear that they are not moving to Florida. "We are going to stay right here," Sam told *The Groundhog*, "for this is our home and where our hearts are."

In Memoriam

Mentone lost one of its most beloved citizens in June, and with her passing go volumes of history about the mountain and its people. Mary Alma Key Strickland Winn was 93 years of age and had seen the times change as the seasons, and knew most of the people who lived here. Her later years were spent watching the world go by from the front porch of her small green house on DeSoto Parkway, but for most of her life, she traveled the pathways of Mentone on her way to a job or to comfort someone who was under the weather or just to visit.

Up until a few years ago, she would walk to Mentone every day and just last Fall she was out raking leaves in her yard with her faithful companion, a big red mutt named Stub, watching nearby. He still lies in the yard waiting for her return.

Mary Strickland Winn is survived by her daughter Evelyn Hunt, of Valley Head, Ala., a son, Gordon Strickland of Mentone. She was preceded in death by two sons, Russell and James. She leaves nine grandchildren and several great-grandchildren.

Mary Key Strickland Winn was a descendant of Francis Scott Key, author of "The Star-Spangled Banner." Her family tree taps deep into the soil of this nation, and it is people like her who are our real national treasures.

It was once said that each time an old person dies, it's like losing a library. No truer words were ever spoken.

Howard's Chapel Pastor Speaks To MAPA

The Rev. Bob Thacker, pastor at Howard's Chapel, was the speaker at the June 7 meeting of MAPA at the Town Hall Meeting Room. He spoke of his varied careers, particularly with the American Association of Retired Persons and with the Alabama Highway Patrol. His talk was punctuated with folksy humor.

Thacker, assistant state director of AARP, has eight chapters in his area. He urged those present over 50 years of age to become active in the Fort Payne AARP chapter, which meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 10:45 at Black's Best Western Restaurant. "To serve and not to be served" is AARP's motto. There are some 28 million members nationally and an active lobby in Montgomery.

Reads Groundhog



THE GROUNDHOG was delighted to hear from a reader from Pittsburgh, Penn. Richard LeBeau recently sang at Carnegie Hall in New York with the Pittsburgh Symphony, and will join the Pittsburgh Opera for the 1988-1989 season. Richard found THE GROUNDHOG to be "perfect reading for relaxing on the balcony in the sun." Richards father is Dick LeBeau, a coach with the Cincinnati Bengals football team. He hopes to visit Mentone and see some of the places and meet the people he reads about in THE GROUNDHOG.



Leaving For Europe

Lt. Jim Epik and wife, Lori, are leaving for Pirmesseyce, Germany on July 15. Lori is the daughter of John and Joyce Strickland Blankenship of Mentone. She received a B. S. in Psychology and English at Jacksonville State University, then a M. S. in clinical psychology. Lori recently held the position of Habitation Treatment Coordinator at the Lurleen B. Wallace Developmental Center in Decatur, Ala., where she wrote and developed programs for the mentally ill. She is currently at work on a new book for military spouses which is basically a "how to" manual for initiation into the military way of life.

Jim is a native of Pittsburgh, Penn. He joined the army after high school, then attended Jacksonville State University where he obtained a B. S. in Criminal Justice. He served for a time as a police officer in Kansas before returning to Jacksonville for a M. S. in Public Administration. He was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Military Police.

Lori and Jim are looking forward to living in Europe, as they have many friends there, some Lori met through her work as counselor at the International House at Jacksonville State. Lori's sister, Tracy Plah, husband Webb, and daughter Emily, and soon-to-be brother or sister are also a military family living in Germany.

Lori and Jim plan to live "out west" upon their return to the United States.



How To Get A Groundhog
To Your Home or Office

The Groundhog is the official publication of the Mentone Area Preservation Association. It is provided by them as a service to the community at large. Dues are ten dollars per year which will insure the arrival of the Groundhog to your doorstep, come rain or shine. For your very own copies send ten dollars to: MAPA, P. O. Box 50, Mentone, Alabama 35984.

* MAPA MEMBERS *

Time to Pay Your Dues:
Mentone Area Preservation
Association Dues Are
\$10.00 for one year
and should be paid in July.

To MENTONE AREA PRESERVATION
ASSOCIATION, BOX 50 in support of the ob-
jectives of MAPA, desiring to join with
others in preserving and protecting the
heritage, natural environment and other uni-
que qualities of life in the Mentone area, I
enclose \$10 for voting membership for one
through June 1989

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

From The Editor

By Mickey Strickland

We thought we were special, that we would never die, that we would change the world. We were born just after one of the worst wars in history — so full of hope that it would never happen again — then before the smoke had blown away, the march to death and glory began again and again. We grew up in a time of awful uncertainty and unlimited promise, a time such as will never come again, and it seems the fear of the final war and the hope of an unlimited future served to bring out the best and the worst in each of us. Those who went to duty returned without honor, and the shame of their plight will forever stain the fabric of our society.

But to the class of '65 anything was possible. At Fort Payne High School in Alabama we were made to believe that with the right amount of effort and perseverance we could accomplish any goal, that we were unique. I remember Mr. Hickman's Literature class, and for all his rambling humor about his days with Jim Nabors in Sylacauga, he was an inspiring teacher who offered pragmatic insight that serves me even now. There was Mrs. Speer who wrote a note that I would go far if given the opportunity. I was made to believe in myself in that room, and have always felt if she believed in me, I would someday prove her correct. I'm still trying.

Could anyone ever forget Coach Harris in our Freshman year, and how beautiful he was? He would put his feet upon his desk, lean back and make history come alive. We couldn't keep our eyes off the hole in the bottom of his favorite loafers.

Mrs. Biddle scared us to death, she expected us to learn for she believed in perfection and the elements of style before Strunk and White's became the journalists' Bible. I remember Miss Crye and how all the boys fought for the front row desks in her class. She was our "Abigail Beecher" only she taught English instead of history. There was cool, calm and collected Mrs. Green, formidable but caring Mrs. Featherston, the irrepressible Mrs. Malloy who hasn't changed a bit, Coach Bloom and white one-piece gym suits (and sneaking to the store from class, and getting caught). The first typewriter I ever used was in Mrs. Long's class but it was not nearly as fascinating as Jimmy Chambers, the upperclass Adonis two desks down. Mr. Rotch, Ag teacher, gave Jeff Cook, an underclassman, his first big break by lending his name to "El Rotcho's Rangers," the forerunner of Jeff's band, "J. C. and the Disciples." I hear Jeff's in another group now, named "Alabama."

I think I spent more time with Mrs. Thomas than I did at home, for she was the librarian and held the keys to the kingdom as far as I was concerned. I can never forget the dimunitive and intense Mrs. Cavin who caught us passing around a great work of literature called *The Art of Kissing* and who decided then and there that Donna Moses and I were Juvenile delinquents.

There can never be another Mrs. Hawkins with her sweet smile and devoted attention.

There were many others who taught and helped during those years, and as I look back now I realize how terrific each one was. The school at the foot of the mountain colored our perception of the world forever, and it is through the colors painted there that we view the life we live, and the lives of others.

Tragedy has touched our class with a heavy hand, and at every reunion I attend, I try to etch each face into my mind for I know that I might never see some of them again.

Coach Wells gave us a winning football team, and put our pride on the map. He attended the last reunion, and was as salty and tough as ever, and I was glad he came.

So many of the class of '65 have fulfilled the potential that was recognized and nurtured so long ago. And we learned from one another for the talent was evident even then. Our class has everything from politicians to business executives, from storekeepers to supermarket owners, from musicians to authors, from farmers to social workers. The class of '65 produced lawyers, preachers and carpenters, dieticians and deliverymen and everything in between. Those were changing times, and riding the tide of that change or getting caught in the backwater, each person of that era was shaped by it, and in turn, shaped the next one.

I guess one of the people who had the most impact on my thinking and perception of truth was not a teacher but another student. Tommy Cook was the only person I knew who carried a briefcase to class. He was stubborn in search of the bare bones of truth, and allowed no excess flesh to get into the way of the ideal of pristine reality. And now he is a famous published author, living and working in New York.

I remember walking into a little drugstore in Washington, Ind., and finding a copy of his first book on the shelf. "Thomas H. Cook" it read, and I was not surprised, for it was not a question of "if" with Tommy, but "when." Tommy and I were on the same debating team once, and we were to argue against capital punishment. He chafed at my disorganized presentation, but gave me some of the best advice of my life when he, in a measured, chilling tone, said, "Don't argue religion, Mickey, argue the law. That is your only obligation and that is your right."

I never have forgotten those words, and just as clearly in my mind and soul I remember those painful, joyous, deadly, enlightening beautiful and tragic days of my youth; those halcyon days just before the world changed forever.

Thanks Craft Festival

The Mentone Dixie Youth Baseball would like to thank you for sponsoring our team this year. We were in need of new uniforms and this enabled us to purchase them.

We would also like to thank you for the substantial donation made to us each year. This is the only financial support our baseball team receives therefore the Crafts Festival plays a large part in the livelihood of our team.

Thanks again for your continued support.



The Groundhog

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MAPA Minutes

Director Bill Riedesel called the meeting of the Mentone Area Preservation Association to order at 7:04 p.m. and welcomed guests Lydia Speed and Bob Thacker.

The nominating committee made its report (see elsewhere). Dues of \$10 per voting member are payable at the July meeting. Jack Jones thanked everyone who worked to make the Rhododendron Festival a success. Harrel Jenkins asked for help at MAPA's June Jam tent. Grace Howard reminded members of the vacuum cleaner she donated to the Town Hall. It is in the smaller room. Rev. Bob Thacker, pastor at Howard's Chapel, spoke of his varied careers, including those with AARP and with the Alabama Highway Patrol (see elsewhere). Jean McGehee served refreshments.

Condensed from the minutes of Jean McGehee, secretary



The Alabama Reunion is a two-year plan to increase economic development and tourism while making Alabamians more proud of their home state.

In 1988, the year of preparation, Reunion entities are being asked to develop three primary projects:

Pride — Anti-litter campaigns, pick up, paint up, cleanup programs.

Preservation — Preserve family and community history, restore old buildings.

Progress — Organize professional economic development teams in all 67 counties.

In 1989, the year of celebration, families, communities, churches, etc., are being asked to hold as many reunions throughout the year as they possibly can.

On the statewide level, at least one major event is planned each month in 1989.

More than 160 cities, counties, businesses and other organizations have signed up to participate since late January.

The Lookout

"Atop Lookout Mountain"

CLOUDLAND, GEORGIA

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MOUNTAIN WATCH

By Charles White McGehee

By Charles White McGehee

Despite that I was born in a small town and chose to spend my retirement in one, I have always been fascinated by New York. Once I went there for a job interview as writer for a network. Often I've pondered how my life would have been changed had I been accepted. New York is truly the capital of the world. If you can make it there you can make it anywhere. Boat trips around Manhattan Island give a dynamic perspective that ranges from the immigrants to the skyscrapers, from art at its greatest to violence at its most tragic.

Recently I read an article about Gramercy Park, in mid-Manhattan. It has been a haven for writers. Herman Melville lived there in obscurity, after having written *MOBY DICK* and while working on *BILLY BUDD*. Horace Greeley, the dynamic editor, lived there, as did Henry James. In more recent years Hart Crane, O'Henry, and S. J. Perelman lived and wrote there.

Jean and I had a privileged weekend in Gramercy Park in the summer of 1968. After driving our son McGregor to Boston where he registered in Boston University, we visited our friends Ralph and Frances Patton, who had moved from Jacksonville to New York and were living in an apartment building just across the street from the greenery of Gramercy Park.

Various reservations had been made in advance. The Pattons' son Hank, home from college, served as chauffeur — waiting with the VW bus at the curb, underneath the marquee for each expedition. No circumstances were ever better for a perfect visit. Here are the things we remember we did during that one weekend at Gramercy Park:

Attended the play *ROSENCRANTZ AND GILDENSTERN ARE DEAD*, by Stoppard. (These *HAMLET* characters depicted as though they were off-stage in the play) . . . A Saturday night visit to fabulous Greenwich Village, buying balloons, eating ice cream cones, and ending up at a jazz place called Slugs.

A late-night trip on the Staten Island ferry, enjoying watching the characters, and above all feeling a sense of reverence at the sight of the huge Statue of Liberty . . . A Sunday morning visit to the Lower East side, browsing among the shops and peddler's carts. (I bought a hatchet which is still in my tool shop).

We ate out twice, at a restaurant with sawdust floors that specialized in lobsters (Jean's favorite dish). A full-course meal at the fabulous Mama Leone's: antipasto, spaghetti, lasagna, etc.

Sunday morning Ralph announced, "I'm going to introduce you to the finest omelets ever made." They were. "The secret is this omelet pan," he said proudly, holding a genuine Rudolf Stanish pan. That Christmas he sent me a Stanish omelet pan and I began my own career as omelet-maker — one of my greatest distinctions. It all began in Gramercy Park.

When I was in graduate school at Tufts University in Boston, a classmate wrote a paper on "Sounds in Thoreau." I never read the paper but I can well imagine its content. Particularly in "Walden" Thoreau wrote of the lonely sound of the loon on Walden Pond and the eerie wind whistling through the telegraph wires along the railroad.

All of which causes me to consider the various "Sounds of Mentone." They are varied and yet significant, with their own cadence and poetry. Let us consider some of them. Perhaps you have your own additions.

The chainsaws, powerful and grinding, accumulating firewood in the fall as a prelude to winter or clearing land in the spring.

The haunting whistle of the trains down in the valley, Birmingham to Chattanooga and back again.

Undisciplined dogs barking in the night.

In the twilight, the plaintive cooing of the dove.

Around midnight, the hollow hooting of an owl, nearby, just across the fence.

Throughout the day, at any given moment, the songs of birds, some unrecognizable except to experts, reminding us of the wonderful fact that our town is a bird sanctuary, one of our proudest claims.

Something strangely ominous about the engines of the huge trucks, struggling up highway 117 on their way to Georgia.

Or an airplane in the night, not a jet but piston-driven, headed for a mysterious destination.

The humans, always the humans, a neighbor's child, happy or confused, a mother, someone at the door.

Loud radios in good ole boys' cars.

The whirring lawnmowers, usually on Saturdays.

A hammer, driving a nail, knocking loose a board — something building somewhere, a new home or a barn.

A siren, the threatening sound of the law, or an ambulance, signifying someone somewhere seriously ill.

The crash of thunder across the brow, signifying perhaps a much-needed rain.

The chimes of St. Joseph's, the theme of a hymn, the tolling of the hours — holding it all together.

AUDITIONS

The Alabama Reunion will hold its Montgomery auditions for the Alabama "Celebration," an eight person traveling group, at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival rather than at Alabama State University.

The auditions will be Aug. 7, from 12:00 until 4:00 p.m.

This cooperative venture will be the first of a series of activities co-sponsored by The Alabama Reunion and the Alabama Shakespeare Festival. "We have made the promotion of tourism one of the top priorities of the Reunion," said Candy Capel, Assistant Director. "And one of the best draws the state has is the Shakespeare Festival, which is second to none."

Our Town With Linda Brown

"You never miss the water 'til the well runs dry." So goes a line in an old country song. The shortage of water in a large part of the nation is of great concern to all of us. The shortage that Mentone will probably face very soon is of grave concern to us. At this time water is being pumped into the storage tank at night only. Even by pumping all night Leroy is not able to maintain a very high level of water in the tank. This means that water is being used faster than the system can pump. Unless there is a lot of rain soon, the situation will become much worse. I have written all of this to urge everyone to start now to conserve water. I know that it is nice to have a green lawn and pretty flowers but it is more important to be able to shower or bathe when you want to. Put a quart jar filled with water in your commode tank, this should save a quart of water each time you flush. Save the water you use to wash vegetables (in a dishpan, remember them?) and water your flowers or vegetables. I remember drawing water from a well and also using a hand pump to pump water into a bucket. It was easy to conserve water when you had to get it this way. We can get through this crisis but it will take the cooperation of everyone. One more thing, let's maintain our sense of humor and not gripe and complain. This situation is really no one's fault and everyone is doing the best they can.

Not long ago I was talking with a person new to Mentone; she was not sure how to pay her water bill as she worked during the hours the office is open. I told her about the slot in the door and that it was safe to put her payment there. This made me realize how we take things for granted and assume that others know what we do. Let's be more open to the problems of others and more willing to help each other.

Of course the Mentone Crafts Festival is very much on my mind at this time. This will be our 12th year and I think the best ever. Mark your calendar now for MCF on July 9 and 10, 9:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Last year we used part of our profit to sponsor a Little League baseball team. We bought shirts and other equipment for them. This is the kind of thing we like to do, especially for our young people.

Next time you are in the meeting room at the city hall, look at the quilt hanging on the wall. The squares were pieced by local women in memory of someone. It was then sewn together and quilted. All of the squares have a great story behind them. Grace Pullen can tell you most of them and I'm sure she will if you ask her.

Lately several people have told me that they really enjoy this article. I think this must be because I care so about Mentone. Maybe this comes through in my writing. I hope so. My daughter in Florida recently made the statement that if you ever live in Mentone it will always be home no matter where you go. This may be the secret of Mentone's charm.

The American Legion meets on the second Tuesday of every month in the hall behind Mentone Superette. Howard Carson, commander of the local post, urges all members to attend. They have erected a new flagpole at the hall and will soon fly the flag on all appropriate occasions.

If you have an interesting way to conserve water, let me know. It might be fun to see who has the most unusual suggestion. I've always found that the best way out of a bad situation is to keep your sense of humor. Nothing lasts forever.

Randy And Annie Still Open New Restaurant



Randy and Annie Still are opening a new restaurant in Chattanooga on July 11, and invite all their friends from the area to join them there. Annie gave up her position with the Holiday Inn at the Convention Center in Chattanooga in order to work at Park Place full time. Randy will keep Cragmere as it has always been, and divide his time between the two establishments.

Randy took *The Groundhog* on a grand tour of the restaurant, and it was very impressive. Park Place is located underneath the Tallon building and the Krystal Building also has access to it. With its thick carpets, overhead stained glass, wood and leather bar and enclosed courtyard, the Park Place Restaurant offers the comfort of simple elegance set in cool sophistication.

Randy and Annie will offer a light breakfast menu, a hot plate lunch with potato and salad bar, with "country gourmet" style.

Some of the staff from Cragmere will work there part time: Roy Strickland, Jr., Dora Hawkins, Dena Wright and Tim Carden will commute to Park Place during the week.

Angela Jones Weds Barry Wood



Angela Jones, daughter of Jack and Olive Jones of Cloudmont Resort in Mentone, Ala., was united in marriage to Barry Douglas Wood of Rome on June 4, 1988 at 2 p.m. in St. Joseph's Episcopal Church.

The church was resplendent with spring flowers, from outside the chapel to the altar. Officiating was Rev. Bob Blackwell. Organ music was provided by Lynette McCary and violinist Toby Ward added a special touch.

Marsha Hair, sister of the bride, served as matron of honor and wore a tea length gown of ecru satin accented by yellow roses in her bouquet.

Angela was radiant in a tea length gown of ivory lace. The bridal bouquet was of yellow roses and baby's breath, with yellow roses in Angela's hair.

Best man was Bradley Woods, brother of the groom. Ushers were Gary Jones, brother of the bride; and Gregory Williams.

The bride was given in marriage by her father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Jones.

The reception was held at Cloudmont Resort, with many family members, local friends and out of town guests of the couple attending. Angela's niece, Becky Jones of Miami, Fla., was in charge of the wedding book.

The bride and groom toasted their new life together with silver goblets given to Angela's grandmother, Billie Cox, at her wedding years ago.

There was a traditional wedding cake and tables filled with foods served buffet style. There was also music for dancing.

The couple will reside in Rome after a honeymoon trip to Disney World-Epcot, the Florida Keys and to the Bahamas.

News From Valley Head

The Valley Head Class of 1948 celebrated their forty year reunion on June 18, 1988 at DeSoto Park Lodge. The following were present and shared many happy memories. Margarite White Brown and Bill — Smyrna, Ga., Lou Ann Phillips Weatherly and Walter — Fort Payne, Ala., Dorothy Turner Williams and Bill — Chattanooga, Tenn., Hazel Harris McKeehan and Mac — Soddy, Tenn., Marion Vaughn Odell — Henager, Ala., Irene Kukler Henry and Don — Valencia, Ca., Ed Tatum — Tucker, Ga., George McMahan — Hopkins, S. C., Wayland Goza and Doris — Cleveland, Tenn., Gladys Blalock Crane and Bill — Winston-Salem, N. C., Doris Ferguson Steward — Fort Payne, Ala., Thada Lyons Duncan — Birmingham, Ala., Paul and Coleen White — Alexandria, Va., LeBron Wilkes — Victorville, Ca., Doris Helms Carmichael and Jim — Valley Head, Ala. Special guests were: Mr. and Mrs. Robert "Lefty" Johnson — Glencoe, Ala., Rachel Manning and Brownie Tuttle of Valley Head, Ala.

Zack Bernard has returned from Fort Myers, Fla. He reported that Tom Huron, a former well-known resident of Mentone, died on April 9.

Rudy and LaVic Gustafson of Altoona, Fla., and former residents of Mentone, visited Eloise Brown and other friends recently. The couple had just returned from Guam and were planning a trip to Sweden.

Bonnie Phillips is ill at her home. We wish her a quick recovery.

Ruby Oaks has returned to her home in Jemison, Ala., after a visit with her sister, Alba Brown, who is much better after a serious illness.

Gladys Stott attended decoration services at Tenbroek where she enjoyed fellowship with many relatives and friends.

Congratulations to Dr. and Mrs. Stephen F. Johnson (formerly Elaine Ashe of Fort Payne). They have a baby son, Stephen Fielding Jr., who was born on June 21. He weighed 7 lbs., 5 ozs. Doris and Jim Carmichael kept John and Lucy, their grandchildren, while the children's mother, Emmy, went to Lexington, Ky., to visit the Johnsons and baby Stephen.

Alice Davenport is now a resident of Collinsville Nursing Home. Jessie Manning is at Crossville Nursing Home.

The family of Willie Phillips entertained him on his 78th birthday with a picnic at the family lake.

Blanche and Lt. Col. (retired) Bill Fuller of Madison, Ala., visited their cousin, Eloise Brown. They toured the scenes of Mentone and the canyon. They picked up a Groundhog. This little paper really gets around — to Baltimore and St. Louis. It would be interesting to know just how far it goes. They also bought one of Zora's books. That book gets around, too!

Zula Waddell of Guinn, Ala., has been the guest of her sister, Venna Livingston.

Our community has lost another fine man in the death of Roy Cobble. Heartfelt sympathy is extended to his family.

The Sunshine Club met at the home of Eula Chadwick with Evelyn Clark assisting. The Vice-President, Sue Cooper, presided. Ruth Pickett gave the secretary's report and Eloise Brown gave the devotional. Others present were: Evelyn Phillips, Bess Baurle, Vernice Young, Pat Baurle, Willie Mae Palmer, Addie Hall, Geraldine Hawkins, Tillie Schlicher and Jewel Palmer.

The Valley Head Baptist Church took 12 youths and seven adults to the Baptist Youth Rally at Belmont College in Nashville, Tenn., then rode to a two hour rally at the Opry House. Then enjoyed rides and music and entertainment at Opryland and report a wonderful and memorable time. Valley Head no longer has an Order of the Eastern Star Chapter. At the last meeting, June 22, the members voted unanimously to surrender the charter. It was a sad occasion after 34 years. Much good was done and many loyal friendships made all over the state. It was not easy to give it up, but we have to accept the changes the years bring. The Worthy Matron read a letter which she had written to the Masons. It was approved and applauded for its content.

There are many changes taking place in the valley — buying, selling, building, moving. Let us hope it is all for the best.

Crossing The Flat Landing

By John Baty

My mother was born in 1900 a short way south of Menlo. When she was age nine, the family moved to a farm on Lookout Mountain on the bluff a short distance up from the Flat Landing Ford on the East fork of Little River. Grandmother was apprehensive about crossing the river as she had heard stories, even in Menlo, of people and conveyances being washed down while attempting to cross during flood water.

Not long after the family had settled in its new home, Grandpa had occasion to visit relatives near Holly Springs and he and the eldest son hitched the team to the wagon and prepared for the trip. It had rained all the previous night and grandmother was much concerned about the river crossing. As she was admonishing them to be careful and check the ford and to turn back if it was bad, a neighbor walked into the yard and said good morning. Grandmother seized the opportunity to learn of the condition of the river firsthand and asked the man to ride down to the ford with them, then return and report to her as to how the crossing went. The neighbor good-naturedly acquiesced and climbed aboard.

That is how they said it happened near Mentone.

Soon he was back and Grandmother was waiting at the roadway to get the news. "How was it?", she said. "It was rough," he replied. "I begged him not to try it but he was stubborn. At mid-stream the team was swimming, the wagon bed was floating free of the bolsters. Your man was kneeling in the spring seat praying to the good Lord, while your son was standing knee-deep in muddy water holding onto the brake pole. They hit the far bank twenty feet below the road. I tell you they should spend the night and not try to return today!"

The remainder of the day Grandmother literally walked the floor and wrung her hands. She spoke sharply to the little ones and kept an ear out for sounds of a returning wagon.

Finally, about 4 p.m. there came the sound of wagon tire on rock and Grandmother rushed out to meet them a 100 yards down from the house. When she recounted what she had been told, Grandpa said, "Oh Mother! That was just your neighbor's falsehood. The crossing was uneventful. No trouble!"

closeness to home that night. His friend Neil became an avid "Alabama" fan and recently brought his wife and baby to the fan club in Fort Payne. Jordan Carpenter has to be one of their youngest fans. Neil's graduation gift was a shirt with the "Alabama" logo, and Jordan's first gift from me was a little blue "I Love Alabama" shirt.

The boys in the band have earned every moment of glory they have. They paid their dues, struggled to make it when the hardships and rough times would have stopped others. They persevered, and in doing so have woven a new thread into the fabric of country music. Their music is their own for it comes from their roots, their talent and their souls.

But they did not do it alone, and they know that. They never intended to take and not put something back, so the idea of the June Jam was born. It started on the back of a flatbed trailer, and has grown to be one of the largest outdoor concerts in the country. "Alabama" was holding

spectacular concerts for charity long before Farm Aid and the others made headline news. The concept of "We are the world" was happening on a football field in a little valley in Alabama before the world took notice.

After signing with RCA in 1980 the band has sold more than thirty million albums and put together a string of number one singles that may never be equalled. They are the first band to win the Country Music Association's "Entertainer of the Year" award for three years running. They won the West Coast-based Academy of Country Music's top "Entertainer of the Year" award for five consecutive years. They own a multi-million dollar fan club and museum, plus run mega-businesses aside from their association. Yet they are not so wrapped up in the glitz that they forget the ground, the place from which they came and the people who helped them reach the top.

"Alabama" believes in happy endings, in take-it-down country, in family and the values they learned as children on the farms and mountainsides they called home. The

money raised by the June Jams and given to the area has made a big impact on everyone who lives here — the new gyms at the schools, the community organizations who have been helped, the youth clubs, the students who receive scholarships, the children at Christmas and all the others have been able to enhance and develop their programs and lives through this undertaking. And it is not an ego trip, they seem to seek more privacy now, not less.

I do not know what is in store for "Alabama," but if they never made another song, never wrote another word, never held another Jam, the impact on the lives of millions of people and the changes they have made in the place of their birth would outlive them.

"Alabama" believes in happy endings, not just for themselves but for others as well, and that is what makes all the difference.

Many thanks to The Times-Journal in Fort Payne for assistance with photos and for their special "Jam" Edition.



Jeff, second from left.



Teddy gives his autograph to a young fan.

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What Is Alcoholism?

What is alcoholism? Alcoholism is an illness. The American Medical Association accepts it as such. People who are alcoholic usually start out with the same intentions as the nonalcoholic: to have no more than one or two drinks. The nonalcoholic or social drinker can stop when he chooses. The alcoholic cannot. For the alcoholic, drinking is a compulsion, so he is a victim of his own compulsion.

How does alcoholism start? No one knows why people become alcoholic. Some start out as social drinkers, and then become, for some reason that physicians have not yet been able to define, physically dependent on alcohol. A person may become an alcoholic if he drinks regularly to forget a problem, to calm his nerves, or for any other reason. Eventually, he loses control over his life and actions.

Is it the number of times a person drinks each week, or the quantity of alcohol he consumes that means he is an alcoholic? Neither. There may be periods of weeks or months when an alcoholic does not drink. The important thing is that when he drinks he loses control. The drinking may damage him physically and mentally, yet he continues to drink. It can keep him from performing his job and from getting along with his family and his neighbors.

If the alcoholic knows he can't drink, why doesn't he just get hold of himself and stop drinking? Giving up alcohol is very hard for the alcoholic, and it cannot be done overnight. After all, he did not get in his condition overnight. Many times, the person cannot give up drinking on his own. He needs help.

If the alcoholic needs help, why doesn't he ask for it? In the early stages of alcoholism the alcoholic is usually not aware that he is ill. Alcoholism is a progressive illness. Even when the alcoholic becomes aware that all is not well with him, he may still be the last one to connect his illness with his drinking. Even if he does he refuses to admit what the problem is. He tries to rationalize and deny. This is part of the illness. This is understandable, since alcoholism is a three-fold illness, physical, emotional and spiritual.

Vivian Nappier
Certified Addictions Counselor
Council Coordinator on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse
Activities Building, Fort Payne, AL 35967
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On The Home Front

With Bill Pillson

Picture this: The temperature is 'way below zero and the wind chill factor makes it seem as if Alabama has been transplanted to the Arctic. The floor is like ice as you run from a warm bed to put more logs in the fire. Then when you try to get water for coffee to warm those chilled bones, nothing comes from the faucet. You put on the warmest thing you can find and head into the wind to try and find the trouble. It's frozen pipes again, and when they start to thaw, water pours from the cracks in the pipe like Little River in early Spring.

Sound familiar? But there's something new, Polybutylene, and although it cannot keep the pipes from freezing, it won't crack up when it thaws. This pipe is approved for hot and cold water systems and is designed to withstand continuous operating pressures of 100 PSI at water temperatures of 180 degrees Fahrenheit. It will not corrode and is impervious to mineral buildup within the pipe.

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The time to think about replacing old piping with PB is now, before the cold wind blows.



Abandoned Mines To Be Reclaimed

Gov. Guy Hunt Tuesday announced a \$3.2 million grant was awarded to Alabama for 20 abandoned mine reclamation projects.

Gov. Hunt said the projects, located in nine counties, are financed by the Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) Reclamation Fund which is administered by the Interior Department's Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE).

"This multimillion dollar grant will help our state reclaim lands that were mined and left abandoned before the 1977 surface mining laws were passed. Alabama has received more than \$31 million from OSMRE to restore land and water resources affected by abandoned mines since 1977. This grant pays all of the state's cost in connection with the 20 reclamation projects," Gov. Hunt said. DeKalb County work will be done at Smith Gap where the high wall will be eliminated and 20 acres of mine refuse will be reclaimed.

The fund is supported by coal company production fees of 35 cents per ton of surface mined coal and 15 cents per ton of coal mined underground.

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Lucy Mitchell, Resident Artist - Mentone Springs Hotel



Lucy Mitchell was born and reared in Cleveland, Tenn. From her earliest recollection, she has loved painting and there was never any decision to be made as to the career she would choose, art was just naturally a part of her life from the beginning. Even when as young as two when Lucy was taken to an art gallery, she would stand and gaze at paintings when other children would have been bored. "It was just taken for granted that I would go to art school when I graduated. We were a small-town family in Tennessee and the other family members had no special interest in art. My parents always provided me with art materials but I did not have lessons until I was older and in this I feel I am very fortunate because I could freely develop my own techniques and style without someone else influencing me with their style. I could experiment with the different mediums, and I sometimes feel it is better to have no instruction unless it is of the highest quality."

After graduation, the young artist attended Harris Art School in Nashville, Tenn., and then the Central Academy in Cincinnati, Ohio, then did three years of commercial artwork before beginning to paint exclusively in oils. Lucy began to exhibit her work in 1967 in Indiana where she lived at the time. The competition proved to be an education in itself. "It was several years before I began to do work that reached the standards of excellence required to be selected as a part of the exhibits. Even to be exhibited was an honor. By the early 1970's, my work had become accepted and quite often I received awards or mention."

Lucy has many awards for her painting including such works as: **The Racing Horses**, 1972, selected for AMERICAN IN PARIS 1977, and selected for the Award of Excellence, Anderson Society of Arts, 1975 and Second Award at the Indiana State Fair, 1976.

Still Life With Blue Plate, 1977 — selected for Exhibition south, 77, and interstate exhibit open to southern artists and received third place and special remarks by the judge.

Also selected for second place award at the Pensacola Arts Festival 1978. **Iris & White**, 1978 — selected for second award at Art Happening 78 in St. Louis, Mo., an exhibition open to all artists in U. S. and Canada. Also, honorable mention, Coco Beach Arts Festival, 1978; Second Award at the Cedar Kentucky Annual Art Festival, 1978.

In 1970, Lucy gave a one-artist show at the Pendleton Art Gallery, Pendleton, Ind. At the end of 1978, she decided to enter competitions no longer but to send her work directly to her agent, Don Bennett of Waycross. She now enters selected competitions, such as the recent Cedar Valley Festival at Cedar town, where she won Best of Show.

Lucy calls her work impressionist, but it has a very realistic quality also. "My paintings have a great deal of my own vision, my own feelings in them. I work in all mediums, even collage, but right now I am working in oils. For the last eight years, I have worked with paints and glazes, layering them into a built-up effect that gives depth. After moving here, I have allowed more of the washes and glazes to show because I like the effect of the color. Brightness and translucence play against each other, and one of my standards is that my work must be lasting, so I work toward development of paintings that will last forever."

"Art is central to my life — I cannot imagine myself without it. My work has evolved over the years, even though it will always have the same quality and be recognizable as mine. As I learn, I change, and my work changes."

Lucy came to MAPA's Octoberfest last Fall as an exhibitor. "I turned around and saw the Mentone Springs Hotel — I just couldn't believe it. And the area was so beautiful. I had been looking for a studio for some time and I immediately felt the hotel was where I belonged." John Hildebrand worked out a deal with Lucy helping with renovation. Then when John moved, Sandra Padgett graciously allowed Lucy to remain at the hotel.

Lucy selected the garret room on the third floor for her studio and she and her daughter, Nancy, occupy bedrooms downstairs. Nancy attends school at Valley Head.

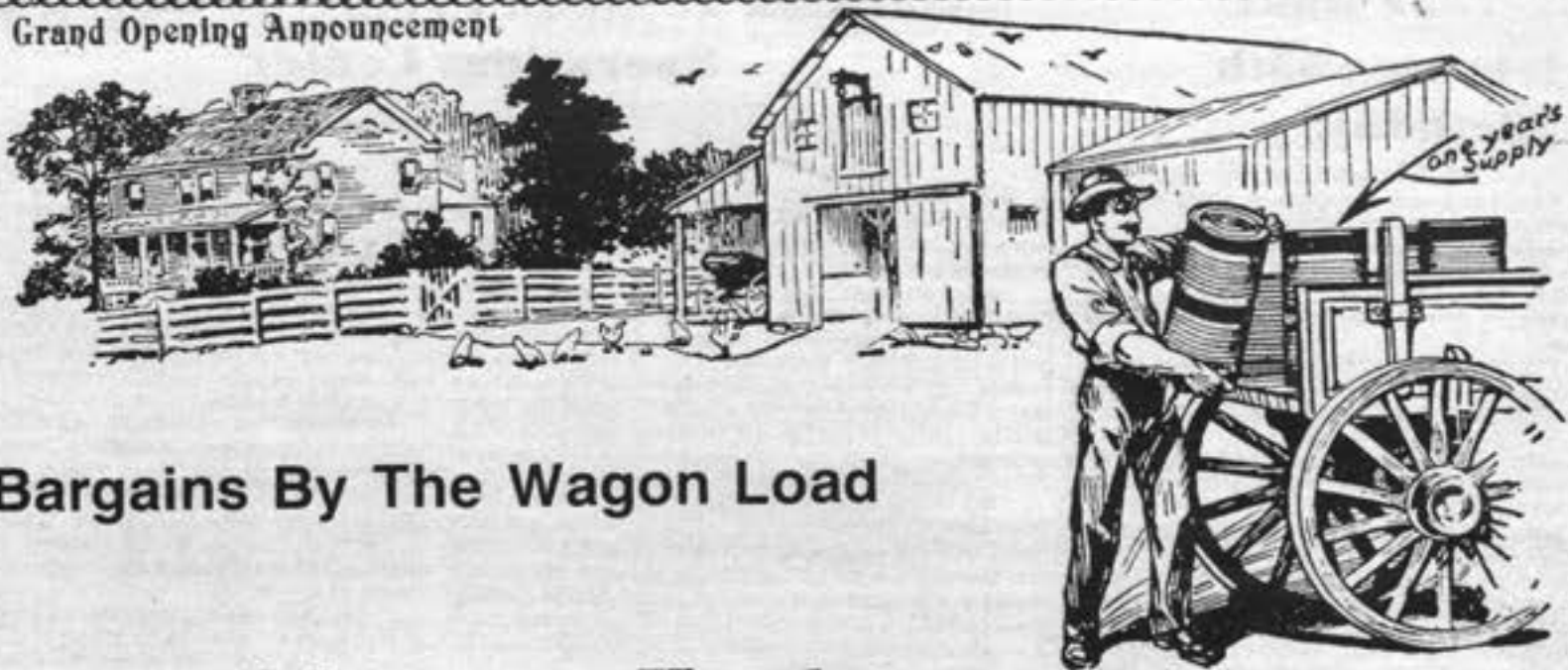
"I feel like it was meant to be that I am here. The people are so friendly, there is a warmth and I feel very privileged to share it. I had never done landscapes until I came here." There is a mystical quality to Lucy's work. She did a painting before coming here that very closely resembles Beauty Springs. It is a hauntingly lovely work called *The Secret Place*.

Lucy has several of her paintings on display in the hotel, and they are well worth the trip there. Most of her work is for sale, and at present, she is involved in a painting of Alex Glover's house and English garden located near the Hitching Post. "My studio is perfect with its high ceilings and tall windows. In the winter, I work in my room on pastels and smaller pieces. This has caused me to work in other than my favorite medium, and this is a learning experience."

Lucy's work is continually changing in subtle ways: "I feel an artist has to grow and change and as you acquire knowledge that manifests itself in change and development in your world. It is so exciting to discover a new dimension in yourself and on the canvas. I don't analyze those things, they just come in a natural manner and I accept it as something that comes to me. I am into today, who I am today, where I am today and that makes each day precious."



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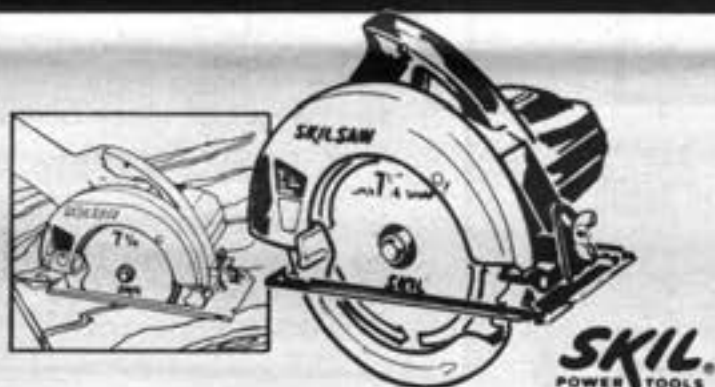
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Governor Hunt Celebrates 55th Birthday

Celebrating his 55th birthday in June, Gov. Guy Hunt told family, friends and staff members he could ask for no more because "I've got everything."

Carrying a walking cane given him in jest by an unidentified staffer, Gov. Hunt was treated to a country church-style lunch at the State House and showered with gifts to mark the milestone that he said officially makes him a senior citizen.

"I guess I'm a senior citizen now because I keep hearing all these special offers on television and radio for people who are 55 or older," Gov. Hunt said. "I didn't even know I was about to be a senior citizen."

Gov. Hunt received a birthday cake and a chorus of "Happy Birthday" from high school girls attending Girls State functions at the State House Friday morning. He got two more cakes from the staff at a special party at lunchtime Friday.

The governor's new pastime passion — softball — was reflected in the gifts. One of the cakes was decorated with miniature softball players, and he was given a pair of white softball cleats and a softball autographed by the members of the new Governor's Office softball team. Gov. Hunt manages the team and is its leading hitter after intrasquad games and contests against other state departments.

Gov. Hunt also received an empty coffee cup from a fast food chain that gives free coffee to senior citizens. Joined at the party by First Lady Helen Hunt, the governor praised his family, friends and staff for sticking by him during the first 18 months in office.

"I don't know of anything else I could want," he said. "I feel like the most blessed person in the world. I've got everything."

Alabama To Build Prototype Emergency Operations Center

Gov. Guy Hunt Wednesday announced funds are available in fiscal year 1988 to match \$1.1 million in federal funds for construction of the nation's prototype emergency operations center.

"When emergencies or disasters occur, various state government departmental representatives assemble in a 'command post' type center to coordinate state resources and personnel. With these federal funds provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), we are taking advantage of the opportunity to locate the finest facility in the nation in the state of Alabama. This underground center also will be beneficial in case a national state of emergency occurs."

"The people of Alabama expect the state to assist them when local resources are exhausted or a disaster is of such magnitude that state assistance is necessary. It is obvious that there is a need for this center because the current facility in Montgomery is a one-story, flat-roofed partially glass building. If a disaster occurred in Montgomery, there is a good chance this center would be damaged leaving the central information center closed and Alabamians without coordinated assistance," Gov. Hunt said.

The center will be activated when hurricane and tornado watches or warnings are issued anywhere in the state; when a general emergency has been declared at one of the state's two nuclear power plants; when snow and ice close highways, knock out power or cut off emergency medical services; when citizens are evacuated due to industrial or transportation accidents involving hazardous material; and when other emergencies or disasters strike.

Examples of such disasters are hurricane Frederic in 1979, hurricane Elena in 1986, tornadoes in Coffee County in 1983 and 1986, a tornado in Montgomery in 1984, floods in Mobile County in 1980 and 1981, and a tornado in Cullman County in 1988.

"During the past year, 286 emergency notifications were telephoned or radioed to the Alabama Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) office. Times like these will come again and we must be prepared to assist those in danger while possibly saving their lives," Gov. Hunt said.

FEMA selected Alabama because of the state's great need for an Emergency Operations Center and by responding to a letter of intent from AEMA. The state will provide \$900,000 and the Tennessee Valley Authority will give \$200,000 totaling the \$1.1 million in matching funds.

The site of the center has not been determined. The AEMA will be submitting a detailed proposal outlining the design of the center for approval by the FEMA.

"I am especially appreciative to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, its director, Julius Becton and especially the associate director of FEMA, Grant Peterson, for making the federal match available to Alabama. I also am grateful to TVA Chairman Marvin Runyon who approved the state's request for reallocation of fiscal year 1988 TVA funds totaling \$250,000 to assist the state in meeting the federal match."



Helen Turner
Groundhog Advertising
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The View From Cloudland

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administration

The little one-room school house is a cornerstone in the foundation of American education, and its decline has been sadly noted by parents and educators alike. One of the best examples of this type of institution was Five Points School in Cloudland, Georgia. I was privileged to attend there, as were many members of North Georgia communities of Cloudland, Summerville and Menlo. All of those with whom I have spoken remember the school with fondness and nostalgia. Ms. Zora Strayhorn, Mentone historian, was a teacher at the school and she, along with the others who chose to serve in the rural often rugged and primitive areas of our country, are to be commended and remembered for their dedication and inspiration.

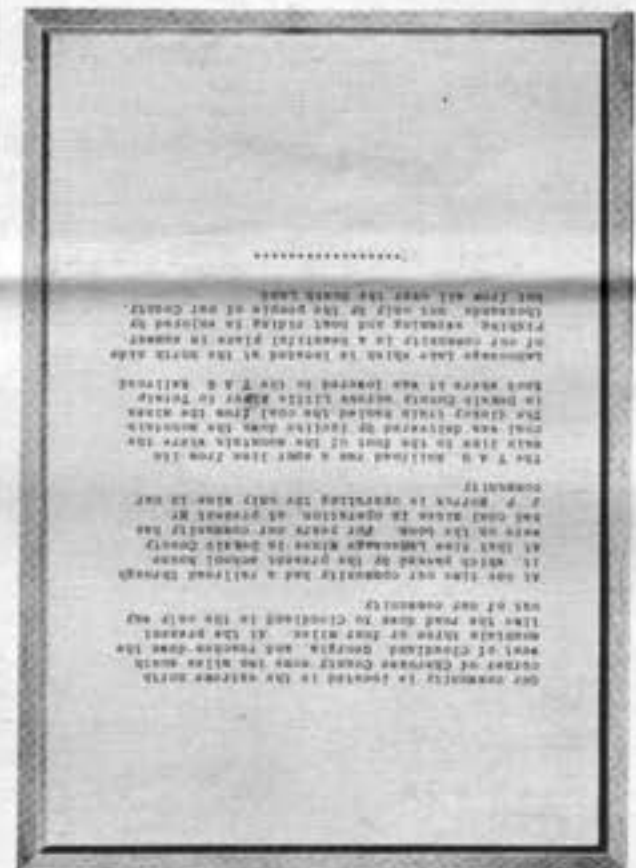
Jewell Maynard has kindly offered *The Groundhog* the use of the only annual the little school ever produced. It is a chronicle of sorts, of the times and of the people, and we are going to print it in its entirety as a series.

M. S.



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To all the crew at the Log Cabin Deli and to special friends: Thank you
for the great surprise birthday party, cards and gifts. You are all special
to me.

Collette

June Jam VII — MAPA Volunteers Have It All Together

The June Jam offers civic organizations, schools and such the opportunity to make extra funds by providing them the space, electricity and other necessities to provide food to the thousands of fans who spend the day at one of country's best concerts. The money made is divided between the Jam charity and the organization, so the good is two-fold.

The Mentone Area Preservation Association never misses an opportunity to secure funds to help the community, and the Jam extravaganza is no exception. MAPA sold hot coffee, corn on the cob and sausage and biscuits to a hungry crowd.

There are dedicated workers who always can be counted upon to make these sessions a success, and who devote long, tiring hours for the betterment of the area through the funds that are raised. Among these Ray and Shirley Froehlar must be counted, for they give a good portion of their lives to MAPA's goals and activities, often working long after others have come and gone. Also, Maggie Cordell and Hairell Jenkins always give 100 percent, no matter the problem or situation. Bernice Crow is ever helpful, as is Donna Buckley. Reba McKelvey comes from out of state to help. Homer Crow can always be counted as a member of the team, as can Bruce Bon Fleur, Jack Jones and Bill Riedesel and wife Bobbie. There are so many others who work tirelessly and we hope to list everyone at a later date. But for now, hats off to those individuals in MAPA to whom concern means action, and caring means taking care of. These people are examples of the best in community pride and spirit.

A special thank you goes to those volunteers who are not members of MAPA but who help in any way they can. They help because they care about others, and there is no better help than the truly unselfish kind.



A SPECIAL 'THANKS' TO



At June Jam VII — The Groundhog!

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With Governor and Mrs. Guy Hunt and Mike Mitchell.



With the Bellamy Brothers.



With Carl Perkins.



With Exile.



With Mel McDaniel.



With Eddie Raven.



With One of the littlest fans.



With Dan Seals!

By Bernise Crow

The old Mentone Springs Hotel was alive with music and laughter, good food and beautiful people on the night of May 17.

A group of friends organized a reception for Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Bon Fleur, newly-weds of the community. It was a most congenial group, all in a gala mood, and the event was a festive occasion. Bruce was happy to introduce his new wife, Susan, who hails from Albany. Bruce is now managing Cragmere Manna Restaurant here in Mentone, and Susan works as hostess at the Mentone Inn, part-time.

It was interesting to see the different types of people enjoying the evening. We had two attorneys, a psychologist, a teacher, a social worker, a builder, two artists, several business people, three local ministers, two fine composers and musicians — all very talented professional people. For a little country town, Mentone is blessed with gifted residents. In the country manner, we had good food brought in covered dishes by the guests. After the meal, the wedding cake was served with punch and gifts were opened.

The most fun of all was music and singing provided by the very renowned actor-composer-banjo player-singer Jim Conner. Also performing with him was local attorney, Terry Hutcheson, who is an accomplished guitarist and vocalist. They performed singly and together, very well. Even Rev. Bob Thacker, Minister at Howard's Chapel, was tapping his foot to the music. Jean Elrod, Lynn Castleberry and Bernise Crow sang old fashioned gospel songs with them for a while. Then Terry sang his original composition of the "Ghost of the Garden" at the Old Hotel. Jim did a beautiful ballad about the Old Fiddler. They plan to have a concert soon, featuring these fine young men. Ya'll come. Someone asks me occasionally, what we do for entertainment way out here on the mountain. If we were any busier we couldn't stand it. There are always things to do — garden club, Women's Club, MAPA meetings, American Legion and Auxiliary, church gatherings. Homer and I are glad once in a while when there is nothing to attend for one evening. Lasting friendships are made here, neighbors are almost like family, in fact, most neighbors are family-related in a small place. It's a good feeling to know your neighbors would come to your assistance in time of need, and that you would not hesitate to ask their assistance. Then it's good to have a time like a wedding reception where we can celebrate and have fun.

Jimmy McCary has been kidding me about my "Country" column, when I was writing about Paris, Spain and Brazil. I said, "Jimmy that's another country!"

Now let's see if this is country enough. At the Hitching Post, we have old shuck mops, made for scrubbing wood floors. I can remember when country floors were scrubbed weekly with lye soap and the old shuck mop. Sometimes a little sand was sprinkled on the floor before mopping. Then the pine floors were rinsed in clear water and those boards were clean enough to use as a place to eat "off of." That was a thing of pride among country women. One would say, "Aunt Ida's floor is clean enough to eat off it." And now that the Scandinavian look is vogue in decorating magazines, the clean scrubbed look reminds one of grandmas floors. Of course, things have changed, and modern appliances have reached every country nook, but sometimes one yearns for the simplicity of a clean, scrubbed floor with a hand-braided rug in front of the fireplace where one could sweep that floor and be done with cleaning. What dirt didn't fall through the cracks in the floor were swept into the fireplace. There were no carpets, no vacuum cleaners and practically no dusting done. Ladies put starched scarves on tables and dressers and changed them occasionally when they became too dusty. Now, Jimmy that's country.

Please note a correction in a name in last month's column. It was Miss JESSIE Phillips who sold shoes, notions and dry goods instead of Josie.

Now, do you remember when we could swim in the river at Riverside Hotel? What a fine place to swim.

And what fun it was to shop at Son and Lib Woods store. They had about anything one could want to buy, from hardware to groceries, to nylon stockings. And Sonny and Lib were interested in everybody, and were always helpful in any possible. Those were the days.



It was time to wind the clock, put the cat out, turn off the lights and retire for the night. It is summertime, and days are long and filled with activity. We thought when our children had left the nest things would be less busy — no car pools, ball practice, piano lessons, slumber parties. But it seems we get more involved in other things and work harder than in our younger years. A garden full of vegetables keeps us in shape — hoeing and weeding — and hoping for a good harvest. We must retire early. Mornings in June are so very pretty — a slight mist on the meadow, birds singing, and busy carrying food to the little ones. I sit on the terrace and enjoy the bright-colored bluebirds flitting around in the garden. Homer built a huge birdhouse, shaped like a Chinese pagoda and installed it at the top of an old electric power pole. He hoped to attract some Martins, but instead the bluebirds have nested there! My brother, Don, said these were modern bluebirds that liked high-rise apartments. We had a good laugh about that. I had always heard that bluebirds want houses about five feet above ground, around the edge of an open field. So we built some and put them up. No bluebirds have used them. I went home from the antique shop one day last week; there were bright yellow Goldfinches in the yard. That brightened my day. And now I have the wonderful trill of the Mockingbird at home. When we first came back to Mentone from Chattanooga, I missed the songs of the Mockingbird that sing so cheerfully every morning there.

The summer brings us grandchildren to brighten our homes, the summer camps here are alive with the sound of youth — no wonder Miss Ruby O'Rear loved to put flowers on the tables at Camp DeSoto. It made her feel good to be with the young people. Life would be dreary without children. Of course when the time comes for them to go home, we are tired but ready for them to return later.

The flowers of summer are colorful and give us much pleasure. The day lilies are beginning to bloom, and the good old Geraniums bloom all the time. Petunias fill hanging baskets and they come in all colors. The shady areas hold beds of Impatiens and ferns. Queen Anne's Lace is blooming on the roadsides, just in time to replace the nice white and yellow daisies. Beauty surrounds us, even with the drought. We had some rain last week, and maybe some more will fall by the end of this week. I'm not a rainy-day person and have certainly loved these beautifully clear days. But rain is necessary for growth and life.

This is the tourist season and we enjoy meeting new people, welcoming old friends back to the Mountain. So many people who have never been here before are fascinated with the place. They just keep singing the praises of our little town. It makes me want to spruce up, clean the area better, and do some more landscaping.

This is our home, and when visitors come, I want to dress it up and show it off with pride. Last week Mr. Kirby was here from Oregon. He comes every year, if possible, to visit his half-brother, Woodrow Biddle. He always visits with us at the Hitching Post, and we enjoy hearing him reminisce about things here at Mentone when he was a boy. He wanted to buy a book of Mentone History by Zora Strayhorn. I was out of them and called Zora. She was very kind to bring some over and autograph one for Mr. Kirby. Mr. Kirby worked at the Mentone Springs Hotel when he was about 16. He said it was his job to catch the chickens from the pen and prepare them for the cook. He said one day they ran out of fryer-size chickens and he killed some of the laying hens! Of course, he didn't tell the manager about that. We hope to see Mr. Kirby again next year! He loves *The Groundhog*, said he reads every word of it, even the ads.

If the church Carillon at St. Joseph's Episcopal Church sounds a little onely of late, it's because we have lost our beloved minister, Bob Blackwell, and his beautiful family to a church in Talladega, Ala. They have been a blessing to us and we are very sorry to see them go.

The Fourth of July is coming next, and then the Mentone Craft Festival — so we have more activity ahead which we will enjoy. Homemade ice cream is on the agenda at our house.

Blueberries and blackberries are getting ripe, which means jelly-making time — and fresh cobbler pies. We have good green beans, lettuce, squash, Zucchini, yellow squash just for the picking. The beauty of nature surrounds us.

Coyotes— Marching East

By Seth Banks



Coyotes are now found in each state east of the Mississippi, including Alabama.

It is a scavenger, but it poses no serious threat to the deer population in this area because it feeds mostly on carrion and hunters kill more deer yearly than coyotes do. Coyotes do not pose any serious threat to the sheep population either, if the sheep are left protected.

The young Coyotes, born in April, usually come in litters of 5 to 8. They stay with their parents until fall. Only 30 to 50 percent of them survive their first winter.

A coyote is one of the few animals you must either love or hate. Do not be surprised if you hear the long, mournful howl of the coyote some evening. They have been seen and heard in this vicinity.

Drought Task Force

With some sections of Alabama more than a dozen inches below normal rainfall levels for the year and more than 55 inches below normal in rainfall over the last four years, Gov. Hunt ordered officials of 10 state agencies to work with authorities from Alabama Power Co., the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Army Corps of Engineers, the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the Farmers Home Administration to deal with drought conditions.

"The state of Alabama is currently experiencing drought conditions which have reached critical proportions and have the potential of producing severe and damaging results," Gov. Hunt said. "It is in the best interest of the people of the state of Alabama to bring together those officials and individuals who are knowledgeable and experienced in the manner in which drought conditions should be monitored and dealt with."

The task force will:

- Monitor the progression and the effects of the drought and secure projections of expected future conditions;

- Analyze drought information and formulate coordinated plans and recommendations designed to mitigate adverse impacts;

- Coordinate communications among state and federal agencies whose activities and responsibilities impact those sectors affected by the drought (agricultural, navigational, industrial and municipal interests);

- Make recommendations to the governor regarding both short-term and long-term actions available to mitigate drought effects;

- Serve as a clearinghouse for available information and respond to requests from the public and private sectors for information, recommendations and assistance;
- Coordinate efforts to be prepared to promptly respond to forest fire emergencies which may result from drought conditions.

The task force includes:

Danny Cooper, director of the Alabama Emergency Management Agency; Leigh Pegues, director of the Alabama Department of Environmental Management; Fred Braswell, director of the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs; Jim Martin, commissioner of the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources; Reginald Ray of the Alabama Development Office; Maj. Gen. Ivan Smith, adjutant general, Alabama National Guard; Albert McDonald, commissioner of the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries; Bill Moody, state forester; Ernest Mancini, state geologist; Dr. Earl Fox, state health officer; E. P. Byars, general manager of electric system operations of Alabama Power Co.; Col. Larry Bonine, district engineer of the Mobile District of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers; N. D. McClure, chief of the planning division of the Mobile District of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers; Richard Urban of the Tennessee Valley Authority; John Trotman, executive director of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service in Alabama; and Dale Richey, state director of the Farmers Home Administration. Dr. Don Hines, chief of the planning and economic development division of the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs will serve as chairman of the task force.



Gourdis

by

Sharon Baron

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Cragmere — Life In The Past Lane

The Heritage Room at Cragmere Manna is one of the oldest structures on Lookout Mountain still on its original foundation. It began as a small cabin built by Ned and Margaret Jackson, freed slaves from Virginia. From its beginning, the little farm on the brow was important in the life of the community. Ned and Margaret reared five children there, as well as operated a place for people to spend the night as they traveled through. (this first "motel" was located several miles from their home at Cragmere), farmed several acres, and provided a number of services to the citizens such as animal butchering, caring for the sick and elderly, and mid-wifery.

Race was apparently not an issue, for people of any color or creed were welcome to participate in the Sunday afternoon get-togethers the Jacksons held at their cabin. This was the beginning of the Cragmere tradition, for people came from miles around to enjoy the hospitality of the freed slaves who welcomed them all.

Cragmere has changed hands several times since the middle 1800s when the Jacksons lived there. At one time, it was a club for businessmen and wealthy investors. It was also owned by the George Giffords, a family of nine who farmed the land. Then it was purchased by F. L. and Nina Ferrel. He was known as "Hello" Ferrel because of his cheerful greeting to friend and stranger alike. He served as the district's representative in the Alabama legislature during the late 1950s. Nina Ferrel was famous for her country cooking done on a big woodburning stove. She was an avid gardener, and many of the flowers, trees and shrubs she planted still thrive at Cragmere. Jack Jones of Cloudmont Resort owned the property from 1961 until 1981. Jack Jones Jr., now deceased, made his home there with wife Ann and children. Bruce Bon Fleur from Daytona Beach, Florida developed the expanded structure into a gourmet restaurant. He conceived the idea of a country gourmet restaurant where warm hospitality and great food would combine with heritage in a beautiful setting to provide something different, yet hauntingly familiar.



Randy Still, Roy Strickland Jr., Nathan Manning, Tim Carden, Terri Haney, Lynn Castleberry, Dora Hawkins, Dena Wright, Bruce Bon Fleur

Anthony Zeller is the only male waiter. He was in Florida on vacation at the time the picture was taken off the staff. "He is a good worker," Dora said, "and we hate to see him leave, for he goes to college in the fall."

Dena Wright has worked at Cragmere for over a year, in between her senior activities at Valley Head High School. She also worked after school in the law office of John Cooper and Terry Hutcheson in Valley Head. She will attend college also, at Jacksonville in hopes of becoming a lawyer. She has served as a waitress at the restaurant on weekends and special occasions. Dena moved to the area from Texas and resides at Valley Head.

Tim Carden is one of the kitchen staff. He is a high school student from Valley Head and the son of Harold and Diana Carden. He is assistant chef. He is active in sports at school, especially basketball.

Nathan Manning lives at Fort Payne, but is originally from Pisgah, Ala. He plays football and plans to serve in the Navy as a nuclear propulsion plant operator. Nathan enjoys football and his job at Cragmere.

Roy Strickland, Jr. is the chef at Cragmere. He was personally trained in the country gourmet tradition by Randy. He prepares such dishes as shrimp provencal, chicken teri-yaki, steak, cordon bleu and fried chicken. He makes homemade desserts like chocolate derby pie, cheese cake, chocolate Amaretto mousse and strawberry pizza. Cragmere also serves ice cream from Rocky Hill Dairy Farms. The creamy concoction is so popular at Cragmere that Randy plans to transport it to his new restaurant.

Roy will be a senior at Valley Head High School and plans to attend college in Business Administration with a double major in Hotel and Restaurant Management. He enjoys cruising, cooking, fishing and pumping iron at the Steel Mill Gym in Fort Payne.

"I enjoy this type of work," Roy remarked, "and I think it is because Randy and I have such a good working relationship. He trusts me, and I appreciate the respect and caring he shows to me and to all of us."

Just making the trip to Cragmere is an experience in itself. Located south of Mentone on the Lookout Mountain Parkway, it sits near the brow, and the backyard commands a lovely view of the valley below and mountains beyond. The building is settled and weathered, with front porch swings and a huge mulberry tree in the front yard. Guests often stroll the grounds while waiting for the Sunday Buffet to begin at 12. The delicious smells of roast beef, baked ham and southern vegetables waft from the kitchen, tantalizing the eager diners. The meal is complemented by chilled salad fixings and cold gelatin molds, artfully arranged.

Cragmere is not just food — it is an experience. It is a moment in time, captured and held for those who seek life in the past lane. Cragmere is a warm and friendly place set in an atmosphere of well-kept memories and lovely things.



Tony Goggans, Mentone Troubadour, provides live entertainment every weekend.

Medicare System To Offer More Services

To Mothers And Children

Gov. Guy Hunt has ordered the expansion of Alabama's Medicaid system to offer more health care services to poor mothers and children, and called on the Legislature to make a full commitment to reducing Alabama's infant mortality rate.

At a State House news conference, Gov. Hunt said he will ask the Legislature in special session to fully fund the state's share of the cost of expansion of the Medicaid program for fiscal year 1989 and qualify the state to receive almost three-times as much in federal funds to help. The program will require about \$6 million from the state next year.

"Alabama has the highest rate of infant mortality in the nation. That is unacceptable," Gov. Hunt said. "Rampant infant mortality has no place in the Alabama of the 21st century, and we must move now to stop this modern day plague on our society. As governor of Alabama I will not rest until we win this battle, and I call today on the Alabama Legislature to make the same commitment."

The statewide expansion, made possible by federal Sixth Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (SOBRA), goes into effect July 1. At that time, Medicaid eligibility will be extended to pregnant women and children up to one-year of age in families with incomes at or below the federal poverty level. The federal poverty level for a family of three currently is \$9,690.

"The Medicaid expansion has the potential to reach thousands of pregnant women, who without those services, might receive little or no prenatal care," Gov. Hunt said. "These same women would be at high risk of delivering low birthweight babies or babies with birth defects."

Gov. Hunt said there is enough money in the current budget to fund the program through the remainder of fiscal year 1988, which ends Sept. 30. He said he will ask the Legislature in special session later this summer to fully fund the program for the 12 months beginning Oct. 1.

"I will not recall the Legislature to Montgomery for a special session until I am satisfied in my own mind that legislators are ready to put politics aside, behave in a responsible manner and pass both the General Fund and Special Education Trust Fund budgets that will serve every citizen of this state without regard to status or special interest," Gov. Hunt said.

"We are putting this issue now into the hands of the Alabama Legislature. We can begin this program to reduce Alabama's dreadful infant mortality on July 1st, and I will ask the Legislature in special session later this summer to fully fund the program for next year. I call on the Legislature today to confirm its support of Alabama's mothers and babies. Lawmakers should support bold and basic legislation to help these Alabama citizens who cannot help themselves, and they should do it without regard to tradition or partisan politics. I believe the Legislature will rise to the occasion and do what must be done."

Prior to the Medicaid expansion ordered by Gov. Hunt, most children and pregnant women qualified for Medicaid only if they received Aid to Dependent Children through the state Department of Human Resources. That assistance is just \$1,416 a year for a family of three. The expansion should allow the state to add almost 7,000 women and 13,000 children to the Medicaid program in a year's time.

Gov. Hunt also announced Wednesday the Health Department has received a \$1.2 million grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for a special project designed to improve child health care. The grant will allow the employment of 13 perinatal coordinators, improvements in the perinatal record system and pay for a major public relations campaign designed to encourage involvement in prenatal care programs. Gov. Hunt designated the state Department of Public Health to administer the program beginning July 1.



Chef Roy Strickland and owner Randy Still.

In 1983, Randy Still, already known in the Chattanooga area as "the Country Gourmet," purchased Cragmere. Randy is the perfect host for this type of establishment, for his laid-back style and y'all-come-back style is right at home among the treasures the building has accumulated over the decades.

From casual to formal, Cragmere welcomes all who wish to savor the old-time atmosphere and succulent dishes prepared from scratch. From the mauve damask of the Rhett Butler Room to the screened porch to the Heritage Room with its old quilts and big fireplace, there is a special niche for everyone.

The staff at Cragmere is devoted to maintaining the tradition of gracious and simple hospitality. Randy oversees the operations and is assisted by Bruce Bon Fleur who manages the establishment. Bruce is in the process of opening his own advertising agency, and recently married. His home is in Mentone. Lynn Castleberry serves the customers at Cragmere as a waitress. She is originally from Washington and moved to Mentone with husband Don about a year ago. Don is a brother to Bernice Crow and Jean Elrod who own the Hitching Post in Mentone. Lynn is an aspiring singer and talented artist whose line drawings of wildlife have earned her quite a reputation in the area. "I like working here," Lynn told *The Groundhog*. "We all get along and have a good time together. It is one of the best jobs I have ever had."

Dora Hawkins is also a waitress who was born and reared far from the southern mountains. She hails from a farm in Scottsburg, Ind. She and her husband, Billy Ray, moved to Mentone from Orlando, Fla. Billy was from Rising Fawn, Ga., and that is where they make their home now. "I enjoy working here. I meet people from all over the world at Cragmere, and through them I get to visit places I can never go. The staff is great to work with — we all help one another. Randy lets us do our own thing and trusts us to do our jobs without constant supervision. Bruce does a great job also." Dora loves flowers and hopes to have her own shop soon where she will offer special plants and arrangements and also sell parakeets. Dora will work for Randy and Annie at their new restaurant, Park Place, in Chattanooga. (Annie and Randy also have a son, Andy, who is almost two).

COUNTRY COOKIN'

WITH NOUR DEAN KILGORE



HAMBURGER SKILLET SUPREME

1 tablespoon shortening
1 pound ground beef
1/4 cup onion, chopped
Dash black pepper
1/2 cup Catsup
1 can (1 pound) pork and beans
Melt shortening in large skillet. Add ground beef and cook over medium heat until beef is browned, stirring with a fork. Add remaining ingredients. Mix carefully and cook over medium heat for about 10 minutes. Serve.
Serves 6.

FRANKFURTERS WITH NEW POTATOES AND PEAS

You serve main dish and vegetables all in one.
2 pounds very small new potatoes
Boiling salted water
1/2 pound frankfurters, cut in 1-inch pieces
1 cup cooked green peas
1/2 teaspoon dried basil
1/8 teaspoon pepper
2 tablespoons butter or margarine
1/4 cup light cream or undiluted evaporated milk
Pimiento strips for garnish (optional)
Scrape or peel potatoes. Cook, covered, in 1/2-inch boiling salted water until half done, or about 15 minutes. Shake pan frequently. Add frankfurters and cook, covered 10 minutes. Shake pan frequently. If necessary, add a little more boiling water to prevent sticking. Add peas and heat through thoroughly. Add basil, pepper, butter and cream and heat 1 minute. Serve garnished with pimiento strips. Makes four to six servings.

SOUR CREAM POTATO SALAD

6 medium potatoes
1 small onion, minced
1 teaspoon salt
4 tablespoons sugar
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
3 hard-cooked eggs
2 tablespoons cider vinegar
1 cup sour cream
1/2 teaspoon dry mustard
6 slices bacon, fried crisp
Dice potatoes and boil until tender. In large mixing bowl, combine potatoes and onions. Add salt, sugar, pepper, 2 of the eggs (diced), vinegar and sour cream. Sprinkle in mustard and stir again. Slice remaining eggs and arrange on top of salad. Crumble bacon over all. Makes six servings.

AU GRATIN POTATOES

6 red-skinned potatoes (baking size)
2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons flour
1 cup milk
1/4 teaspoon salt
Pepper to taste
Velveeta cheese
Fresh bread crumbs
Butter
Bake the potatoes and cool.
Cream butter and flour thoroughly; add milk. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until sauce thickens; cook for three minutes. Remove from heat and add salt and pepper. Peel and cube the potatoes into sauce. Add more salt for the potatoes. Place in baking dish. Grate Velveeta cheese over potatoes, completely covering them. Break slices of fresh bread into small pieces and place over cheese. Top with bits of butter and cover the dish. Bake in a 350 degree oven for 45 minutes, or until crumbs are nicely browned.

FROZEN COLE SLAW

3 pounds (12 cups) cabbage
1/2 stalk celery, chopped
1 tablespoon salt
1 cup vinegar
2 cups sugar
1/2 cup water
1 teaspoon celery seed
1 teaspoon mustard seed
1 green pepper, chopped
Mix the cabbage, celery, green pepper and salt. Let set for 1 hour. Squeeze out the juice as much as possible. Combine the remaining ingredients and boil or simmer for 10 minutes. Let cool and pour over cabbage mixture and freeze.

PIZZA DOGS

1 pound ground beef
3/4 teaspoon salt
2/3 tomato sauce
1/2 teaspoon garlic salt
1 cup American cheese (cubed)
8 hot dog buns
Brown meat and add remaining ingredients. Fill hot dog buns and wrap each one in foil. Bake 20-30 minutes at 350-degree oven. Makes enough for eight buns. May be made hours in advance and just heated at time of serving.



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Adams Outdoors Echota Campground — Keeping It Simple



Echota is the name of a spiritual place in the Cherokee language, a place where the wind, the earth, the sun's rays and the forces of nature come together to create holy ground. Bill and Rebecca Adams chose the name Echota for their secluded campground because it seemed to reflect the reverence they felt for the forest primeval — the woodlands and streams and craggy overlooks that make it seem as if the spirits of long-dead red-skinned children of the earth could return to the loved places of their birth.

Hidden deep in the forests of Lookout Mountain in North Alabama near Mentone, the Echota Campground is a far cry from the places where Bill and Rebecca grew up. Bill roamed the swampy lowlands of south Alabama as a youth. "The terrain is rougher there," Bill reflected, "not as pretty or easy as this area. I come from a family of farmers and woodsmen and learned early to respect and love the out of doors."

Rebecca lived by the sea and spent her younger years on Mobile Bay. The salt air, ships at sea, and sand as far as the eye could behold formed the boundaries of her world. She lived amid huge oaks, antebellum homes and French-influenced architecture.

Rebecca and Bill and daughter Sadie love the ocean and for a time lived in the Cayman Islands, running a charter boat service. The small island that was their home was ten miles long and two miles wide. There was no fresh water running there, and drinking water came from cisterns. When groups come to the campground from the islands, they are amazed at the fresh water streams fed by a cold spring laced with iron. Bill has piped the water and built a pool that is a fine example of his "Boy Scout technology." He can create the effect of a stream or waterfall with the turn of a faucet.

Each campsite is surrounded by woods so that the effect is one of complete privacy. There are primitive campsites, ones with hand-built screened huts, and two cabins available. Each hut and cabin has bed linens and warm blankets for the often-cool nights. One of the cabins is made from loblolly pine that Bill set out as a child, then harvested as an adult and hauled to the mountain. Also unique to the structures is the intermittent use of what Bill refers to as Bob Baty's funny lumber: planks sawed from logs that have not been squared off on the sides. Each piece is different and adds a unique, rustic touch.

Bill is in the process of readying a lodge-like addition to the bathhouse which will allow campers access to a kitchen to do their own cooking. Each campsite has a hand-laid rock pit built low to the ground to accommodate true campfire cooking.

When Bill and Rebecca found this place quite by accident several years ago, they could not stay away. Soon the idea began to form that they should try to come here to live. They purchased the Echota property and have been building and creating ever since. "I think that our ten campsites are enough," Bill told *The Groundhog*, "and now I just want to refine and maintain what we have. We can accommodate up to 28 people comfortably. That is as big as we want to be. We cannot take care of large motor homes, but for the people who want to really get the feel of the outdoors, we offer that experience." In addition, Bill will take groups on hiking, fishing or rappelling excursions to Little River, as well as serve as a guide on canoe trips when the river is full.

Bill, Rebecca and Sadie live in a two-story structure that they built themselves, all from logs harvested on the land and sawed at Baty's. The house is open, with a wood

stove and stoneware feeling that makes one feel at home immediately. The campground itself is an extension of the attitude of the Adams family: "We just want to live here at peace with our neighbors and as close to the green earth as possible, and we want to share that with others who feel the same."

(Adams Outdoors Echota Campground is located on Gray Road off the Lookout Mountain Parkway, Highway 89, between Fort Payne and Mentone — just a stone's throw from DeSoto State Park. To make reservations or for more information: 205-845-2988.)



Rebecca and Sadie Adams.

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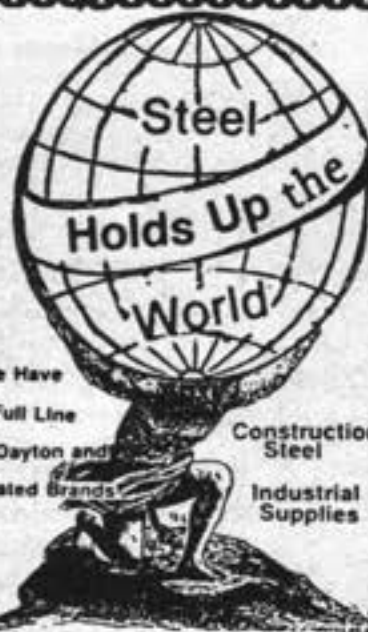
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Rocky Hill Dairy Farm – The Cream Of The Crop



Rocky Hill Dairy Farm is a family owned and operated business and has been that way since its beginning in 1943. William "Scooter" Howell grew up on the rolling slopes and rocky ledges of the farm at Fischer as have his sons Billy Tom and Kelly and daughter Dannie. Scooter's father, W. L. Howell, was reared on the Kershaw farm which encompassed the area where the Fort Payne High School now sits, as well as Merico, and the June Jam site. His family owned the huge white house known as Cherokee where Dr. Steven Brewer now resides. Scooter's grandmother Howell was a Kershaw before she married, and they had a home on the farm where the family of Royce Kershaw owned the big house.

There was a gap up the mountain from the Kershaw farm then; it went up by the Whitmire farm, and Scooter's father rode a mule along the old public road to court Rosalee Culpepper whose father owned a substantial farm at Fischer.

At their marriage in 1935, Rosalee's father sold the newlyweds 80 acres of the farm, and the Rocky Hill Dairy Farm became a reality. They started with three cows and a small barn on the first acreage, later adding cows and barns and land as they could. The Meadows place became a part of Rocky Hill, as well as the Jay Gilliam farm. More land was added until the Patterson farm rounded the acreage to 250. Electricity was added in 1949, but until then all milking was done by hand using big bucket milkers which had to be emptied manually when full.

In the late '50s a more modern pipeline system was added and now the milking room is called a double-four herringbone style operation. This means that the milking room has a pit in the center where the workers stand to attach the machinery. The cows are brought in four at a time, washed and started milking. While they are milking, four more are brought to the other side, washed and prepared for milking. In this fashion, one man can milk 30 cows in an hour.

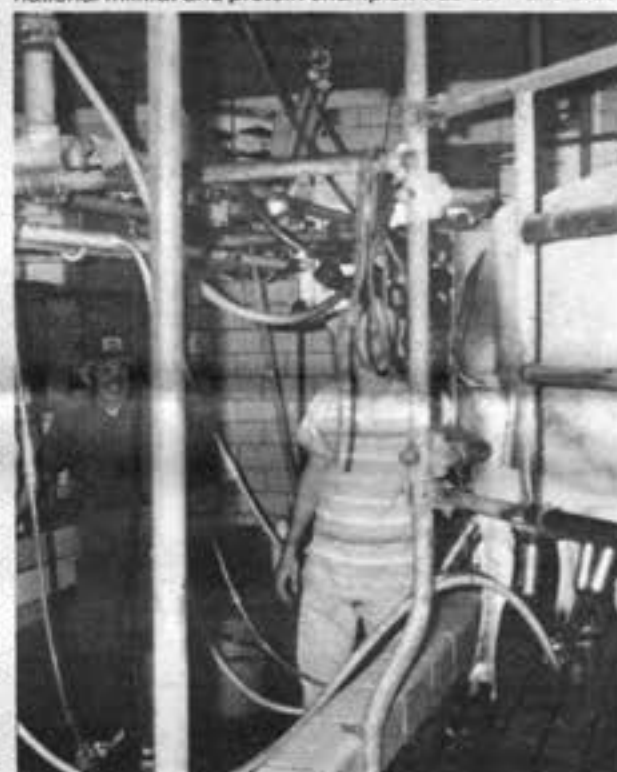
The milk goes directly from the cow to a 1,000 gallon stainless steel tank via a glass pipeline. The temperature stays about 38 degrees in the holding tank until it is ship-

ped to Spruiels processing operation every other day. Rocky Hill sends about 1,000 gallons on each delivery. Rocky Hill buys back its own product in the form of cheese, milk, buttermilk, chocolate milk and ice cream. Scooter's wife Charney, a former nurse who is very active in church and community, sells the products directly from the dairy in a little store building on the top of a hill. The dairy products are also sold at the Earth Grains store in Fort Payne. She also has lean government inspected beef for sale such as hamburger, roasts and steaks.

As an only child, Scooter got to know the dairy operation from the ground up. His father ran a milk route which serviced several dairies in the area. He would pick up the milk cans early in the morning and drop Scooter off at school on his rounds. At first the milk went to a processing plant owned by Jerry Roden. When it suddenly went out of business, other markets were used until Mr. Howell began to sell to Sealtest. Then he took it to the train in Fort Payne to be shipped to Birmingham. When the dairy went to the pipeline system, Sealtest sent trucks for the milk and the route ended. When Mr. Howell delivered milk to the train, he brought back processed milk to Minnie Eberhart's store which is now Roger's Han-De Mart, to Fischer Cross Roads Grocery, now Terri's Timesaver, and to the school.

Scooter showed his own stock at 4-H shows and fairs took many ribbons. In between milking, cleaning, driving the tractor and general work on the farm, he played football and was one of Fort Payne's star players. Although Scooter attended the Tennessee Military Institute and played football there and then played at Auburn, he did not make a career of it. He returned home to work at various jobs before becoming a part of the dairy operation again. "I have no regrets," Scooter told *The Groundhog*, "and would probably do it all again. I don't know how much longer I will stay in the business, but at least until my kids are on their own. Maybe one of them will want to keep it going when I give it up."

Rocky Hill has always owned Jerseys exclusively. The national milkfat and protein champion was born and bred



there. At one time, Rocky Hill had three cows who were the milk champions of the breed in the United States. At present, Rocky Hill's Favorite Deb is still milk and fat champion. She sold for fifty thousand dollars. Her niece, Rocky Hill Silver Lining Rockelle, still holds the record for national protein champion.

Scooter has sent three shipments of his cows to Japan and out of a group of 22 visiting farmers from Japan, at least four owned Rocky Hill stock.

Rocky Hill ice cream is served at the Alabama June Jam in Fort Payne and is served in such fine restaurants as Cragsmere Manna at Mentone. The texture and flavor is reminiscent of the creamy, old-fashioned kind that used to be available only after hours of hand cranking over a wooden bucket.

The days of specialty purchasing are numbered, and it is easier to purchase all of one's food needs in one place, but for those of us who remember it as it used to be and want to keep the best of what was, Rocky Hill's personal, family touch is well worth the effort. The farm is located on the Lookout Mountain Parkway near Desoto State Park, just a few miles from Fort Payne and Mentone and is open for retail business seven days a week from 1 to 5 in the afternoons.

Scooter wanted all the other fine dairies in the area to be recognized and he provided a current list. In honor of National Dairy Month just past, we take this opportunity to dedicate this column to them.

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