

the GROUNDHOG

VOL. 2 · NO. 7 · OCTOBER 1984

A Publication of the Mentone Area Preservation Association

A Town, A Hotel, A Birthday

Nine days of celebration for some 36,500 days of existence.

The town of Mentone reaches its one hundredth birthday at a time when more and more people can make that boast. Yet it's young in comparison with New England towns that have passed the three-hundred mark.

The town celebrates, beginning October 13th, amid autumnal splendor, this small Appalachian community which according to the 1980 census had 477 citizens, 306 houses, and 311 water customers.

Without the Mentone Springs Hotel there most certainly would be no recognizable, incorporated town. Probably there would be several smaller communities such as Moon Lake, Berry Patch, or even Tutwiler or Vernon's Gap.

There it stands, built in Queen Anne architectural style, twin octagonal turrets reaching to the sky, three stories tall. Nearby is Mineral Spring, once covered by a two-story gazebo, and just up the brow is Beauty Springs. Believed once to have curative powers, they attracted tourists to the town which was named for Mentone, France, a famous resort place. In French, the name Mentone means "musical mountain spring." Once healthy and free-flowing, Mineral Spring and Beauty Springs are now only trickles.

Farther up the mountain is Brow Park, where people go to view stunning sunsets, to enjoy



Painting By Chic Maris, 1969

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the GROUNDHOG

One Hundred Years Of History Celebrated In Nine Epic Days

The turning of the leaves is in tune with the turning of the years as the nine big days of celebration of the birthday of the town of Mentone and the Mentone Springs Hotel begin on Saturday, October 13, with a gala parade through Old Hotel Square. Plans are rounding into shape for the festivities when the citizens of Mentone will be joined by many out-of-town visitors.

The parade, with its bands and antique fire trucks and cars, is followed during the week by community singing, specials at Mentone's businesses, crafts exhibits, an old-fashioned political rally with barbecue,

costume contests, and dinner-on-the-grounds, ghost story telling around a bonfire, the exciting Groundhog Classic Run, and a special tea honoring descendants of the founders of the town. Tours will be conducted of the Mentone Springs Hotel, now on the National Register of Historic places.

There is broad community involvement in the various events, with many hours of preparation by the Centennial Steering Committee which is composed of the following leaders of local organizations, chaired by Bernise Crow: Linda Brown of the Crafts Festival as secretary-treasurer; Helen Hill, Rhododen-

dron Garden Club; Homer Crow, Mentone Area Preservation Association; Leonard Shigley, Rescue Squad and American Legion; Sammy Cash, North Lookout Mountain Fire District; Ray and Sandra Padgett, owners Mentone Springs Hotel; Donna Buckley, Rhododendron Festival; Marty Griffin, Groundhog Classic Run (and many others).

Brochure, Bruce Bon Fleur; publicity, Donna Buckley and Charles McGehee; events, Ray Padgett; museum and information center, Bernise Crow; Logo, Marty Griffin and Mayor Rob Hammond.

Saturday, Oct. 13, 1984

Children's Day

Children of all ages will delight in the opening event of the Centennial celebration, which begins at 1:00 o'clock Saturday. Sponsored by the North Lookout Mountain Fire District and the Mentone Rescue Squad, exciting plans are underway.

Shriners from Chattanooga have been invited. Forty persons from our sister city, Mentone, Indiana, will bring the antique fire engine which was a feature of their Centennial celebration in 1982. Area high school bands will be asked to participate.

Following the parade, at 3:00 o'clock, at the Mentone Springs Hotel, George Jones, an Abraham Lincoln look-alike, will present a half-hour performance of Lincoln readings.

Anyone with ideas for the parade should contact Sammy Cash, fire chief, or Leonard Shigley, captain of the Rescue Squad.

Sunday, Oct. 14, 1984

Church & Singing Day

All Mentone churches are cooperating in a Community Singing at 2:00 o'clock at Brow Park, against the backdrop of one of the most beautiful scenic spots in the area. Coordinating the event is Jane Meadows.

Among the groups participating in the event are the Moon Lake Baptist Church choir, directed by Bob Crow; the Church of God choir, Johnny Bain, director; and the Community Chorus under the direction of David Mays.

Mrs. Meadows states that other choral groups are welcome to participate. This includes quartets, duets, and soloists. "Be there at 2:00 o'clock," Mrs. Meadows says, "with your song books and a folding chair. If you like to direct group singing, let it be known."

A sound system will be set up at Brow Park. The event is planned to last an hour, but if volunteers are interested it may run a bit longer.

Monday, Oct. 15, 1984

Merchants' Day

Monday, the third day of the celebration, begins with breakfast at the Mentone Inn. Hostess Amelia Kirk Brooks invites everyone to drop in from 8:00 to 10:00 for a fabulous breakfast which just may represent some of the breakfasts of the era around 1884.

Who could resist, for only \$3.00, a bill-of-fare beginning with juice and fruit, then climaxing with biscuit, eggs, grits, and ham.

It is expected that all merchants will be giving discounts on merchandise. Already, Bernise Crow, Centennial chairwoman, announces that an overall reduction of 20 percent will be in effect that day at the Crow's Nest.

Troubador Tony Goggans will be in town all day, announcing the special discounts and other events of the day.

Tuesday, Oct. 16, 1984

Crafts Festival Day

Crafts exhibits in the style of yesterday and today will be available beginning at 1:00 p.m. at the Mentone Inn Parking Lot.

Linda Brown, coordinator, announces that exhibitors from Mentone, Valley Head, Fort Payne and the surrounding area are invited to set up booths at this prominent location at Old Hotel Square.

Especially prominent will be quilters, potters, woodworkers, blacksmiths and many other types of craftspeople.

The Annual Mentone Crafts Festival held in July at Brow Park goes into its 9th year in 1985.

Wednesday, Oct. 17, 1984

Political Rally

Speeches, flag waving, singing, and good old timey fun will be featured at Wednesday's 4 p.m. political rally, sponsored by the Town of Mentone and the American Legion Post. Judge Randall Cole and others have been invited to speak.

The festivities will take place at the Brow Park. Commander Leonard Shigley and Mayor Rob Hammond are busy with arrangements.

Friday, Oct. 19, 1984

Ghost Stories & Bonfire

A Halloween preview is the general theme of Friday's Centennial observance. At 5:00 o'clock at Old Hotel Square there will be a bonfire and ghost story telling contest. A hot dog concession is being arranged by Maggie Cordell.

Various story tellers are being contacted by Lydia Speed. One star will be the well-known Alabama story teller Glenn Baty. Volunteers are welcome to spin their ghastly and ghostly yarns.

Saturday, Oct. 20, 1984

Groundhog Classic Run And Mentone Springs Hotel Day

Indications are that the largest of the crowds will gather for Saturday's events, principally the Second Annual Groundhog Classic Run and the tours of the Mentone Springs Hotel on the occasion of its 100th birthday. This also is the day of the state meeting of the Live-in-a-Landmark Council.

Saturday begins at 9:00 a.m. with a special one-mile fun run, followed at 9:30 by the Groundhog Classic Run, sponsored by the Mentone Area Preservation Association and *Runner's World* magazine, which has given the event nationwide coverage.

Coordinators of the run are Marty Griffin and the staff of Saddle Rock Camp. Local merchants have contributed to the T-shirts, with merchants' logos to appear on the back of the shirts. Course of the run is from Old Hotel Square to the DeSoto Falls turnoff, and return.

In the afternoon beginning at 1:00 p.m., tours will be conducted at the Mentone Springs Hotel which recently was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The upstairs west wing will be open. Many of the rooms have not yet been decorated.

Sandra Padgett is a board member and Dr. Stephen Brewer of Fort Payne is president of the Live-in-a-Landmark Council, which is expected to attract from 60 to 70 participants from throughout the state to its "Old House Revival." Workshops in stenciling and finance will be held in the morning. Afternoon tours are planned of such scenic spots as the Falls and Nippersink.

Sunday, Oct. 21, 1984

A Special Tea For Special People

The entire town of Mentone is invited by the Rhododendron Garden Club to attend the special tea in the dining room of the Mentone Springs Hotel from 3 to 5. To honor special descendants of founders of the town, costumed ladies will serve sandwiches, cookies, and punch.

This is the final event of the Centennial. Helen Hill, president of the Garden Club, expects a happy turnout for this significant occasion.

Thursday, Oct. 18, 1984

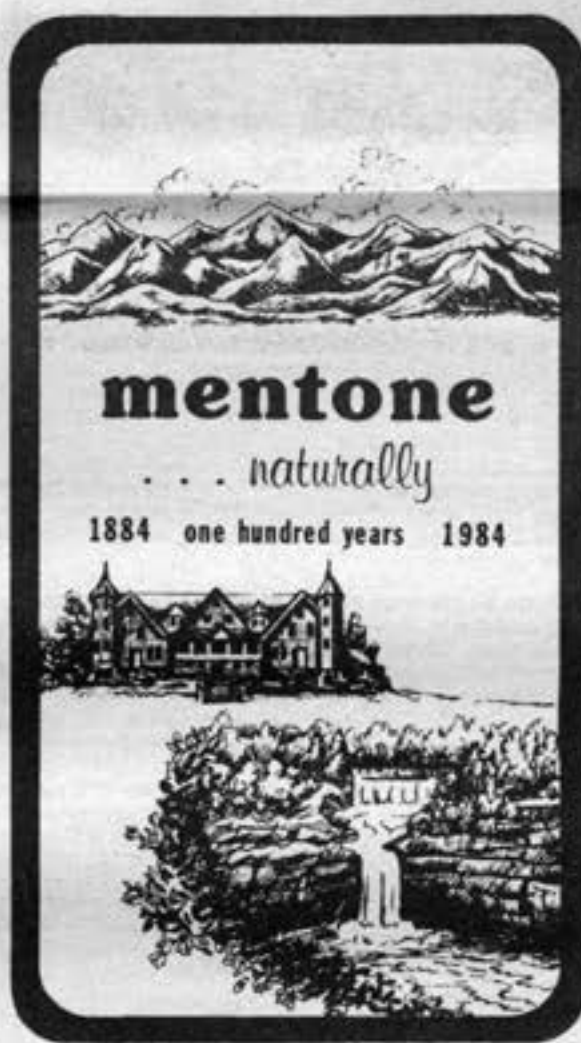
Community Day

Although people from throughout the universe are welcome, the emphasis on the fifth day of the Centennial Celebration is the community, local citizens, families. All families and individuals are urged to bring food to the dinner-on-the-grounds at Brow Park at 5:00 p.m.

Sponsored by the Centennial Steering Committee, this event will highlight a costume contest. Come dressed any way you wish, but try and fashion something in tune with 1884.

Joint Meeting

On Tuesday evening, October 2, at 7:00 p.m. the Mentone Area Preservation Association and the Centennial Steering Committee will have a joint meeting to make final plans for the many events of the 100th Birthday Celebration. All possible citizens are invited to attend and share in making this one of the most significant events in the history of the town.



MAPA Minutes

On September 4 the Mentone Area Preservation Association held its regular meeting, with Director Homer Crow presiding. Following approval of the minutes, the treasurer reported a balance of \$3,516 as of Sept. 1. The Groundhog showed a balance of \$491.66.

Bruce Bon Fleur presented the layout of the brochure. Written approval from the state must be received before MAPA funds the monies needed for the printer. Maggie Cordell is putting together a Centennial quilt and hopes many persons will make one of the squares. It is to be auctioned or raffled off during the celebration.

It was suggested that the political rally be moved elsewhere. This is the day of a women's meeting at St. Joseph's and there would be no room for parking.

Former Director Bruce Bon Fleur installed the following officers for the upcoming year: Homer Crow, director; Donna Bukley, associate director; Amelia Brooks, secretary; Shurlee Froehler, treasurer.

Condensed from the minutes of Amelia Brooks, secretary.

Groundhog Finance Report

SEPTEMBER ISSUE

INCOME

Balance on hand \$536.33
Donations, Mentone Springs Hotel 1.62
Ad Sales 415.00

\$952.95

DEBITS

The Summerville News \$315.25
U. S. Post Office 53.49
Donna Bukley, sales commission
and delivery 92.55

\$461.29

Balance on hand \$491.66

Brow Briefs

Sincere apologies to Marie and Bill Shadgett, operators of Knotty Knots, for the omission of their crafts shop in The Centennial Tour of Mentone. It was pure oversight on the part of the editors. We wish the Shadgetts well in their venture, and Bill happy contentment in his retirement. They are currently on a visit to their native Canada.

Congratulations to Landmarks Players on their continued wisdom in reelecting the talented Harriet Sumner of Mentone as director-chairperson.

Thanks to Eleanor Moerlins for the many ways in which she made The Groundhog editors' work easier while serving as features editor. Several days before David's death she called and explained that she planned a long out-of-town trip and really wanted to simplify her life.

Although the Mentone Inn was a recent winner of the Groundhog Award, Amelia Brooks is especially to be commended for the creative landscaping — excellent stonework in the walkway and terracing. It gives a brighter look to Old Hotel Square.

According to Principal Elaine Keith the following Mentone players are contributing strongly to the vastly improved Valley Head High School football team: Scott Tate, John Bain, Jeff Bain, Jeff Harrison, Bill Millican, Jim Tate, Stacy Smith, and Steve Campbell.

Some \$350 was made by the barbecue at the Mentone Springs Hotel on September first. Dorothy Crow was the principal coordinator and worker, assisted by Avline Brown, Monica Price, Melvin Shaw, and by Maggie Cordell who made and donated pies and cakes. Ray and Sandra Padgett gave the money to the Centennial Steering Committee to aid in payment of the Mentone brochure.

Monday evenings at 7:00 at Moon Lake Baptist, the Community Chorus rehearses for a Christmas Cantata. Singers needed.

Nationwide publicity was given Mentone's Cloudmont Ski and Golf Resort by Bill Curtis of CBS News on Wednesday, September 19. He ended an interview with the Alabama makers of Redneck wine by saying, "You can ski in Alabama, too." This had to be about the Joneses' Cloudmont.

TO MENTONE AREA PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION, BOX 50 in support of the objectives of MAPA, desiring to join with others in preserving and protecting the heritage, natural environment and other unique qualities of life in the Mentone area, I enclose \$10 for voting membership for one through June 1985.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

The Groundhog

Published monthly by the Mentone Area Preservation Association. First conceived on Groundhog Day, 1982, and organized April 6, 1982, for the purpose of preserving and protecting the heritage, natural environment, and other unique qualities of life in the Mentone Area. Chartered as a non-profit organization by the State of Alabama.

Charles White McGehee, Editor
Jean McGehee, Associate Editor
Donna Bukley, Advertising
Homer Crow, Director
Donna Bukley Associate Director
Amelia Brooks, Secretary
Shurlee Froehler, Treasurer

October Groundhog Award



The October Groundhog Award is presented to the home of Dallyne and Jim Jones. It is altogether fitting that these descendants of Joneses who homesteaded here should have this honor during the Centennial celebrations.

Mr. Jones built the home from a sketch of a rustic house that Dallyne had found in a magazine. The house fronts on the river and has a large screened porch on the rear.

What began as a heater room became a full basement; similarly, the "attic" contains three bedrooms and a bath. There is sleeping space for their six children and eight grandchildren. Also, there is no lawn to mow. Built last summer, the home has already particularly been enjoyed when the whole family gathered for the Christmas holidays.

The Groundhog Award Committee is composed of Nelda Howe for the Rhododendron Garden Club, Max Cash for the Town Council, and Mabel Kirk for MAPA.

Groundhog Is Industry At Punxsutawney, Pa.

Groundhogs are a big industry in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania. The earliest settlers in this town of 10,000 were Germans who brought the legend with them that if on February second an animal cast a shadow, there would be six more weeks of bad weather.

The site chosen in town was a place named Gobbler's Knob. The first official trek there was made February 2, 1887. From this beginning, the official weather forecast of a Punxsutawney groundhog has been announced around the world each year.

The groundhog has a special zoo all its own. Built into the library with a window overlooking the park and a window into the children's library, the zoo provides a home in a natural habitat with year-round temperature comfort, running water, simulated trees, and a burrow.

Punxsutawney goes all out with a king and queen, a banquet, parade, art and hobby exhibits, concerts, sporting events, fireworks, and outings. However, these events take place during the week of July fourth.

VIEWPOINT

By Charles White McGehee

This publication is neither staffed nor designed for coverage of such events as deaths, weddings, and personals. These functions are adequately reported by our regional daily newspaper, the Fort Payne Times-Journal. Because our town has seen such an undue number of deaths during the past few weeks, it seems proper that some expression be given of the feelings we have endured.

Ruby O'Rear was special in so many special ways. We chose her as the cover subject of the first issue of the Groundhog not because of her Mason familyhood, nor her long, long years as Mentone correspondent for the Times-Journal, nor our joy that she was a charter member of the Mentone Area Preservation Association. It was rather that she had come to represent for us so many attributes — especially her broad and universal tastes and her genuine love and concern for people. As one of our foremost flower experts, it is appropriate that she died at Howard's Chapel, having gone there for the purpose of assisting in decorating the Chapel for the Sunday services. Her funeral was literally a celebration of her life.

Conversely, the death of 27-year-old David Sims at the hands of a hit-and-run driver on DeSoto Parkway was an inexplicable tragedy, shattering not only to his family, but to scores of us who especially knew his mother Eleanor Moerlins. David and his wife Amy, granddaughter of our own Eula Cash, were at home for the Labor Day weekend and had spent most of the Saturday of his death clearing away a tract of land at Cloudmont where they planned to build a house and someday live.

Alice Woolf in a few short years had become a part of our Mentone happenings and mores. She was a scholarly, individualistic person who had written advertising copy in New York, taught in Jacksonville, Florida, and written several pieces for Landmarks News. In this column we once praised her philosophy of getting dressed and out of the house for breakfast in one of our area restaurants.

Edwin Tuttle lived in Valley Head but had many friends in Mentone. He was a master woodworker who made the fine inlaid board on which Doc Long and I play competitive chess games most Friday afternoons.

Dixie Strayhorn was less known to most of us, but those of us who have gotten to know his wife Zora so well in MAPA meetings and other occasions have shared in her grief. She has accepted his sudden death with much maturity.

Similarly, Roy Jones was less known to many of us than his warm and friendly wife Clydel. At her beauty shop just off Old Hotel Square, she has been a source of comfort to many; now those feelings are being returned.

Jenny Reidsel and her husband Bill had moved to Mentone from Minnesota just two years ago. They built a home near Comer Scout Reservation. Her death was sudden, just after they had returned from a trip out west.

Robert Wright, a neighbor and friend of Donna and Charles Bukley, was known to many as "Florida Bob." Born in Trussville, he spent twelve years in the Navy. He, his wife, and son had built their home here just two years ago, moving from Florida. He will be missed.

Added to these deaths was the tragic loss of Julie Jones, daughter of Nancy and Jack, Jr., and granddaughter of Jack and Olive Jones, in an automobile accident.

In bitterness the poet Omar Khayyam reminded us, "The moving finger writes, and having writ, moves on; nor all our piety can lure it back or cancel half a line of it."

Shakespeare provided some solace in contending "We are such stuff as dreams are made on and our life is rounded out with a sleep, a sleep so sound it is untroubled by fearful dreams."

New Mentone Brochure Near Time Of Release

A need of long standing in Mentone has been provided in the form of a brochure extolling its attractions. Announcement of details was made at the meeting of the Centennial Steering Committee Saturday morning, September 8, that 25,000 copies of the four-color brochure should be available in about two weeks, in time for Centennial Week.

A \$1,500 grant toward this Centennial project was made by the Alabama Bureau of Travel and Tourism. In order to meet the printing schedule and make the brochures available in time for the Centennial Week, the Mentone Area Preservation Association made a loan of \$1,500 to the Centennial committee, which will be repaid by donations from local merchants and citizens. Total printing cost is \$3,375.

The brochure was designed and facilitated by Bruce Bon Fleur, who has had wide experience in this field.

To The Editor

Enclosed is a check to pay postage; please mail the Groundhog to me monthly. I am Marjie Floyd, widow of Dr. M. T. Floyd. I am 85 years old. Dr. Floyd was at one time doctor at Lahusage, later at Valley Head and was practicing in Fort Payne when he died in 1946.

Marjie Floyd
406 1/2 9th Street NW
Fort Payne, Ala. 35967

Package Treatment Plant Considered By Council

At the Town Council meeting on Thursday, September sixth, Mayor Rob Hammond announced that the engineers employed by the town are doing a feasibility study of a package treatment plant, hooking onto the Valley Head system, or piping water from a private source in Valley Head, such as a cave or springs.

The mayor explained that the package treatment plant would be for temporary use in the summers. It would be necessary for Mentone to have an engineer under contract from another water system to come on duty at the special times the plant would be used.

Revenues for the month of August were \$7,485.76, and expenses were \$6,233.38. Visitors to the council meeting in addition to **The Groundhog** reporter were Angelo Rosario, Richard Meadows, and Homer Crow.

Mr. Rosario expressed his concern over the condition of the town road leading up to several homes in his neighborhood. The council (Kenneth Crowe was absent) voted unanimously to have chert placed on this road, on the road leading to the Meadows' home, and on the road near the Hartline home.

Other business included unanimous votes to renew membership in the Alabama League of Municipalities and to renew the fire insurance on the Town Hall.

There was much discussion about the water situation in town. The new holding tank contract has already been let, and the feasibility study will help the councilmen to determine what the next phase of the improvement should be.

Work Begins



Mentone drivers have long been aware of the above slide area just below town on 117 which is both unsightly and a traffic hazard. Work on repairing the slide is expected to begin shortly by R. E. Grills Construction Company of Birmingham at a cost of \$747,732.24. C. B. Tidmore, District Engineer for the State Highway Department, states that about 45 working days will be required and that the road will be straight and the problem solved.

Music Makers



Brothers Carl and Claude Cassidy, 80 and 83, are shown making music on the porch of the White Elephant on July 8th of this year. The photo was taken by Carol Picker of Lacy's Springs who wrote, "We enjoyed our visit to Mentone and expect to visit again soon. Twice we enjoyed eating at the Log Cabin Deli and once we had dinner at Cragmere Manna."

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Bearding The Lion



Men of Mentone, the publicity going throughout the state from the Travel and Tourist Bureau states that visitors to the Centennial Week celebrations will see men bearded in the mode of 1884. You have only a couple of weeks more. Throw away your razors. Enjoy the luxury of not shaving. Meet the challenge of Arthur "Lightning" Goss, who sports one of the most lustrous beards in the area.

Antique Automobiles Gather At Mentone



Remember how great it was to sit in a '56 Pontiac with its chrome detail on the hood, munch on popcorn, and watch your favorite stars on the big screen under the stars? Or perhaps you were lucky enough to be the younger sister who sat in the rumble seat of a '29 Ford coupe to insure that your older sister's date behaved himself.

Maybe you rode in a Stanley Steamer and had the steam hit you in the face when your beau wanted to show off with that mellow sounding horn.

On Saturday, the eighth of September, you could have relived some of those moments by coming to the Mentone Springs Hotel parking lot where eighteen classic cars convened for their autumn tour and meeting. The Atlanta Horseless Carriage Club enjoyed a picnic at the brow park, catered by Dorothy Crow and Aylene Brown; they dined at Cragmere Manna in the evening. Friday evening was spent at DeSoto State Park.

The '40 Ford owned by Carl and Margaret King has the distinction of having been used in the newly released movie of Bear Bryant's life. A '41 Cadillac in original condition owned by Pete Pritchett was my favorite since that is my birthdate. The youngest car was Dean and Betty Baker's mint condition '61 Pontiac Tempest, also seen in the Bryant movie.

Jim and Louis Reed arrived in their '41 army Jeep dressed in World War II vintage uniforms. The president of the group was Jim Felix who came with his wife Ruth in their '24 Model T roadster.

Other cars were Charlie and Jeanine Adams' '36 Ford four door convertible; Ernest and Elizabeth Atkinson's '40 two door Chevrolet; Jim and May Cummings' '34 Rolls Royce; Bill and Lill Gunderson's '29 Ford coupe; Bert and Lou Harrington's '56 Pontiac; T. McDaniel's very rare '31 Model A convertible; Tommy and Elizabeth Protsman's '51 two door Chevy; Ray and Olla Tapp's '31 Brown Model A sedan; Gene and Joyce Terrell's '34 Ford roadster; John and Jackie White's '15 Model T; and Gaspar Ortuno's '34 Buick.

— Sandra Padgett

Centennial Draws Many Visitors

In addition to friends, relatives, and tourists, there will be special guests in town for the Centennial Celebration. Some 250 Episcopal women will meet at St. Joseph's Church on Wednesday afternoon, October seventeenth. About forty residents of Mentone, Indiana, will be here during the first weekend, Oct. 13-14. They will stay at the Mentone Inn. They are bringing their antique fire engine to take part in the parade on Saturday, October thirteenth.

On the day of the Classic Groundhog Run there will be 60 to 70 members of Live-in-a-Landmark organization from all over the state. They will participate in workshops at the Mentone Springs Hotel.

In addition, of course, there will be the runners in the second annual run, which begins at the Hitching Post, circles down to the turnoff to the falls, and returns. Runners are expected from all over the state and from parts of Tennessee and Georgia.

To facilitate parking for all of these extra guests, the fire department, led by Chief Sammy Cash, will arrange for special parking adjacent to the fire hall.

Rehearsals For Christmas Begun By Community Chorus

The Community Chorus has been reactivated, under direction of David Mays, and is rehearsing each Monday evening at 7:00 at the Moon Lake Baptist Church.

Work is beginning on a Christmas Cantata, which most likely will be presented also in Valley Head. Singers from Valley Head are participating in the chorus.

All singers are welcome, even those who don't read music. The only requirement is to like singing. Just show up at the rehearsals on Monday evenings.

American Legion

A policy of monthly meetings has been decided upon. Commander Leonard Shigley is pleased that the goal of doubling membership is moving along at a rate of 150 percent. Plans for improvement of the property are under discussion. Long range plans call for paying for the property. If you are a veteran and not already a member of the Mentone American Legion, call Leonard Shigley at 634-4140.

Rescue Squad

The Rescue Squad holds regular meetings on the first Tuesday of each month. Training sessions have been underway and there has been systematic examination of the equipment. Captain Leonard Shigley says, "There have been no emergencies lately and that's the way we like it. But don't hesitate to call us."

Harvest Festival Set At Moon Lake Oct. 24

Plans are well underway for the Annual Moon Lake Harvest Festival on Saturday, October 27th from 5 to 9:30 p.m. Bill Berry, President of the Moon Lake Parent Teachers Association, sponsors of the event, states that once again there will be various games and events and the crowning of the king and queen.

Purpose of the festival is to raise funds for improvement of Moon Lake School. For a month prior to the event, other fund-raising events will be underway. Dinners will be served, registration for the king and queen, and other events.

On Oct. 27th plate dinners will be available beginning at 4:30, featuring hot dogs, cake and drinks, which will also be sold individually.

Highlights of the evening include the Country Store, bingo, cakewalks, and other events. The costume contest, for children of all ages, will be judged at 6:30. Those in costume should be there at 6:00.



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Families Of Mentone

The Smiths twelfth in a series



It seems in keeping with the centennial celebrations that the Smith family be written about this month. In the twenties Wallace and "Nannie" Smith furnished horses for the guests at the Mentone Springs Hotel. During the summer of 1924 they stayed in a cottage near the hotel and supplied both horses and milk for the visitors to the mountain.

Wallace had a livery stable located just north of where Clydel's Beauty Shop is today. Farther down DeSoto Parkway below St. Joseph's Church Seab Davenport ran another livery stable.

"Nannie," Lillie Elizabeth Young Smith, remembers being told about the big Fourth of July celebrations that were held at Moon Lake just after the turn of the century. Ed Mason had an ice house, insulated with sawdust and hay, in which he kept blocks of ice sawed from Moon Lake in the winter. On the Fourth of July there was a big community picnic with horse races around the lake and other games, and ice from the ice house.

Another vivid memory is of a Fourth of July when Wallace had earned \$92 renting horses. That evening he had to go to his father, who was ill. He took his son Blake with him, and Dewey stayed with Nannie. About eleven o'clock that evening, one of the blacks who worked at the hotel asked Nannie if she could rent two horses for about an hour.

"I knew Minnie, knew that she was trustworthy, and I also knew the blacks wanted to go after moonshine. So I told her to bring six more people with her, and I'd rent all eight of them horses." Dewey held the lantern while Nannie saddled the horses. "And that made a full \$100 we made that holiday!" Nannie still exults over her ingenuity. As if it were this past Fourth of July, she recalls that one of the men rode her favorite mare Dolly. "There ain't a bit of sweat on her," he told Nannie when the eight returned with their bottles and the horses. "He was right," Nannie relates. "We all got what we wanted that night."

Horses have been the love and livelihood of the Smith family ever since great-grandfather Lawrence Smith had a contract with the Long Island, New York, port authority to pull ships into dock using his horses. In 1842 he moved from New York to Rome, Georgia.

Lawrence's son, Lawrence Dider Smith, always said his was not a happy childhood — a Yankee in a Southern school, the other children ignored him. Soon after their arrival in Rome, the family received a silver medal from the Southern Carolina Institute, dated 1846-8, for their having made the best cheese in the area.

Around 1870, after the Civil War, using lumber from his sawmill, Lawrence built on the site of the present Joseph Tate home. Both Lawrence and his wife Mary Mariah are buried at Four Roads Cemetery near the state line, close to the present John Tate home.

Lawrence Dider grew up to marry Lula Leola Blake. Her father was Jack Blake, married to Margaret Force, who was a sister to Carlotta Jane Force O'Rear. The Forces had come from New York, also.

Horses figured in this side of the family since Jack Blake had a saddlery in Rome. Unfortunately, this was burned by Union troops. Since another part of his business endeavors had been in slave trade, Blake was forced to begin again after the war.

He homesteaded to Flat Landing Ford, near the present Eb and Jackie Kirby place. Here he had a wooden dam, ran a feed mill, and made bonded whiskey for the federal government — a legitimate distillery right here in the Mentone area.

Later both Lawrence Dider Smith and his wife taught school in the Holly Springs Church of Christ building. They lived about a mile from the present Dewey Smith home. Their children were Virgil, who lived in Cleveland, Tennessee; J. David, who lived in Missouri, Myrtle Inez (whose daughter has the cheese medal), and Wallace Jerome, who furnished horses for the hotels in the area and worked for the Lahusage Coal Mines for a time.

In the twenties there was a large auditorium behind the Mentone Springs Hotel that seated 600 people. There were dances held two nights each week in the large dining room. Also there was a nine hole golf course out back of the barns that ran from the ridge above Bill Russell's present home, on up toward the water tower.

Wallace's livery stable ran a buckboard to Valley

Head to meet the trains. He rented horses and took guests on sightseeing trips. There used to be a foot bridge over the river where the bridge now crosses near the Wiegand home and Camp Skyline. Once a guest decided to ride his horse over the walking bridge. Half way across, the horse spied the water and fell and broke its neck.

Wallace Smith boarded some summer people's horses. His son Dewey remembers that two or three of their own horses, including a favorite mare named Agnes, died from having been ridden too hot. Dewey also recalls that he grew to detest white stockinged horses or those with white spots on them. He and his brothers had to take horses to a small stream and scrub to make sure no stains showed before their father would rent the horses to hotel guests. "Stains didn't show so badly except on those white places," he laughs today.

Wallace and Nannie had seven children. Ethelyn died in adolescence; Jerome Blake passed away three years ago. His widow lives in Valley Head with a son. Another child lives in Atlanta, and one is deceased. Dewey Fredrick (named for Dewey Harrison, a well thought of Mentone man) had three children. One daughter died; the other is Edna Morgan. Son Larry lives here.

The second daughter was Martha Edna, who died in infancy. William Lawrence passed away in 1973. His three daughters live in College Grove, Tennessee; Valley Head and Atlanta. Walter Robert (Scutter) trains bird dogs; his three children live in Dalton, Georgia; Denver, Colorado; and Fort Payne.

The baby of the family is Reba Ruth Hammon, librarian at Fort Payne High School. Her three sons live in Valley Head, White Hall, and Fort Payne. Daughter Robin lives in Fort Payne, also.

During the heyday of the Mentone Springs Hotel in the 1920's there were two hotels in Cloudland, too. Dewey Smith would lead six to ten horses through the back way from his place to the Cloudland hotels. After guests had gone sightseeing, in the evenings Dewey would bring the horses home, often sound asleep on his mount. His father would lift him down and bring him into the house and put him to bed.

One evening when Dewey was returning from Cloudland with the horses he also brought back a neighbor girl who worked in one of the hotels. Just as they were above Lake Lahusage, a big storm arose. Since horses attract lightning, they dismounted and stood watching lightning dance on the lake waters. "That was the night Ruth was born," Nannie remembers.

For a time Nannie sold vegetables from her buggy. She had raised her mule colt in her yard. Rodie wouldn't let anyone else ride her. Sometimes she would become frightened by an object along the roadway and would take off and run for about a hundred yards before she would slow again. For this reason, Nannie never took her young children with her in the buggy.

During World War II Nannie ran a small store from her home and later from her own building across from her house. She would get up at all hours and sell gasoline. Finally the stamps used for rationed items and the night customers became too much, and she closed her store.

For twenty-eight seasons Dewey Smith has furnished horses to various camps in Mentone, just as his father did before him. In fact, he met his wife, Nancy Goodwin Smith (mother of Larry) when she was a counselor at Camp Skyline Ranch. His father Wallace rode until he was too feeble to mount easily. Then "Shine" McNew fixed a place where he could get on his favorite horse easily.

Today Nannie, eighty-nine years old, has sixteen grandchildren, twenty-one great-grandchildren, and two great-great-grandchildren. She is the beloved matriarch of the Smith family, having raised several children in addition to her own. Mentone has been especially enriched by the presence of this vibrant family. — Jean McGehee

The Lookout

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Special Section

Centennial Celebrations

Mentone, Alabama, 1884-1984

Appreciation

The **Groundhog** staff wishes to thank the following persons who provided assistance with photographs and information for this

special Centennial edition: Jessie Whitehead, Janie White, Mabel Kirk, James Kuykendall of **Landmarks**, Maggie Cordell, Jewel Palmer, Nan-

cy and Dewey Smith, Nelda Howe, Ruby Daniel, Norma Williams, Dallyne and Jim Jones, Ann and John Morrison.

"Do not come with the expectation of making a fortune; but if your fortune is already made, it is the most wonderful place in the world to live."
— John Mason, Circa 1884

Around 1890 Ed Mason wrote frequently to various newspapers in the state giving the virtues of Mentone. These are excerpts from two letters to the editors:

"Our expectations have never been exalted beyond possibilities in regard to Mentone's great and glorious future... Lookout Mountain is eight miles wide and eighty long, the top and sides covered with timber in variety.

"Traversed by three small rivers and numerous creeks furnishing water power to equal any. Mild climate, pure water, and many other natural advantages, good lands at low prices with easy terms. Future health resort of the South; will compare well with any under the sun.

"The top or upper plane of balmy Lookout freighted with comfort, health, and prosperity has a most excellent surrounding, being free and far from malarious districts, besides many other disadvantages encountered in other sections, such as cyclones, blizzards, droughts, floods, grasshoppers, and mosquitos.

"We do not claim this to be at present a great farming country, but yet the soil is susceptible of high culture and is rich in many ingredients which with proper culture with less labor and less expense we have secured better results than ever in the West. It is not here intended to say aught against any other country, but merely make comparison by stating the facts in the case, of which they cannot help and are not to blame."

Important Dates In Mentone History

- 1170 — Welsh explorer Prince Modac builds stone fort above caves near DeSoto Falls.
- 1540 — Expedition of Spanish explorer Hernando DeSoto moves through area.
- 1838 — Cherokees driven west in "Trail of Tears."
- 1854 — George O'Rear arrives.
- 1863 — General A. McCook leads 20,000 troops through area before encountering Confederates at Chickamauga.
- 1870 — Vernon cabin, central unit of St. Joseph's-on-the-Mountain, already built.
- 1872 — John Mason arrives.
- 1873 — Gillette 2-story house built. Store built nearby. (Both were on present site of Mentone Inn).
- 1880 — Horatio Libby arrives.
- 1884 — Ed Mason lays out town.
- Dr. Frank Caldwell builds Mentone Springs Hotel.**
- Alice Mason names town.
- 1887-91 — Ed Mason is postmaster.
- 1889 — James Huron buys Gillette place.
- 1891 — Martha Berry House built.
- 1892 — Charles Loring buys Mentone Springs Hotel.
- 1907 — The Mentone Store (now The Hitching Post) is built.
- 1913 — H. A. Chapman buys Mentone Springs Hotel, builds annex, and makes other improvements.
- 1920-21 — Alabama Baptist Association buys Mentone Springs Hotel from Mentone Springs Hotel and Realty Company which had bought it in 1915.
- 1924 — Huron store converted to "Hal's House."
- 1926 — LaHusage Hotel and dam built. Abandoned in 1929 Depression.
- 1927 — Hal's House burns; rebuilt, now the Mentone Inn.
- 1928 — Highway 117 built up mountain through town.
- 1936 — Mentone incorporated as town.
- 1978 — New Post Office and Fire Hall completed and occupied.
- 1980 — Ray and Sandra Padgett buy Mentone Springs Hotel from estate of Norville Hall, who died in 1978.
- 1982 — Mentone Area Preservation Association formed on Groundhog Day, Feb. 2.

Valley Head Depot



PAINTING BY JIMMY FRAZIER

From a newspaper clipping about the railroad station in Valley Head:

"In the neighborhood of this station, on each side of the railroad, we have a large quantity of first class agricultural land. It is the highest point on any railroad in the state, being 1,058 feet above the sea, and is noted for its pure air, good water, and healthy atmosphere. Near this station, Mr. John Mason, and a large number of Northern and Western farmers have located, to whose fine farms and general prosperity we invite the attention of those wishing to examine our lands before purchasing. Several famous kaolin and fire-clay mines are located near this station."

Mentone — 100 Years

Two Old Covered Bridges



Subject of many painters and photographers is this old covered bridge. It was built by John Mason sometime between 1872 and 1884 to provide access across Little River. Situated near Mason's home in the Moon Lake area, it was destroyed during World War II between 1943-45. According to both Max Cash and H. P. Goss, it collapsed when a heavily loaded county truck was making a crossing. Some of the piles are still visible above the water.



This covered bridge was at the crossing just below Camp Alpine where a concrete bridge is located now. It was built by John B. Crow; the Rev. Ernest Shigley broke his hand while working on the bridge. John Christopher Crow sawed the lumber for the project. Shown here are Harriet Clarkson Hall, Mary Stodgel, Dixie Hice, and Beulah Chandler.

The Young O'Rear Family



Jessie O'Rear, age six, and Ruby O'Rear, age 15 months.



Ethel O'Rear, about five years of age.



Alice Mason in 1882, age 22, two years before she named Mentone.



Paul Whitehead and Jessie O'Rear on their first date.



DeSoto Falls in 1921.

A composition by Alice Mason written as homework in April, 1883:



Ruby O'Rear and Alice Mason O'Rear.

LITTLE RIVER FALLS

The sun was just setting upon this lovely cascade, and as its level beams shone upon the sparkling waters of Little River as they leapt from one high rock to another, and on the massive moss-covered rocks which surrounded it, making a most beautiful picture for the eye to behold, I thought how much beauty the Creator has concentrated in this one place.

The rushing river as it dashed over the precipice was all that disturbed the stillness, except now and then when a deer came to drink, but seeing intruders in his wild, yet beautiful dominion, quickly fled.

The laurel and ivy which were in bloom almost covered the banks of the river. In an open space at the right of the falls was a platform, where persons who have come to peruse may dance if they prefer it to looking at the scenery around them.

From the platform, winding along the edge of a high cliff is a wandering trail which terminates abruptly at the top of a high wall of rocks; here, a ladder (somewhat dilapidated) is placed by which a descent can be made to the river.

From this ladder the trail continues a short distance down the river to where some boards have been placed across a narrow part of the river (to cross on). It then winds over rocks and through patches of laurel, ivy, and holly, so closely woven together that it is almost impossible to penetrate them; till it suddenly stops at a small cave under a high perpendicular rock; and looking up you can see Little River as it rushes over a precipice nearly a hundred feet high (her grade, "very good").



Seab Davenport.



Mary Mariah Smith
1818-1895

W. B. HILLIARD, President. J. B. HILLIARD, Vice-President. J. H. CHAPMAN, Sec. Treas.

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Mentone, Ala. June 28, 1904
Received of Wallace
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toward Contribution
for horses.
J. H. Hilliard

Compliments of
camp laney
for boys
On Top Of Lookout Mountain
Mentone, Alabama 35984



Guy Burgess, Ed Mason, and Mr. Dorman. (Photo by E. T. York).



Scutter, Bill, Dewey, Blake, and Wallace Smith.

A College For Mentone

Sometime around 1875 an association was formed with John Mason, president; Drs. J. N. Winston and D. H. Purdon, vice presidents; Ed Mason, secretary; J. F. Caldwell, treasurer. The purpose of this association was "to build and establish a college on Lookout Mountain, at Mr. Caldwell's new place, Mentone Springs, which is just opposite Valley Head and one and a half or two miles distant from that place. This site has been selected for various good reasons. It is within easy reach of and not too near the railroad, and combines accessibility with the advantages for which Lookout Mountain is famous, besides a number of springs of mineral and other waters, whence the name is derived.

"It is the intention of the association to erect a spacious and substantial two storey building, the first floor divided into four rooms, to be used as study and recitation rooms and library; the upper floor to consist of one large room to be used as a public hall.

"In connection with the college, the projectors of the enterprise propose to establish a public library, and one of the rooms of the building, as above stated, is to be devoted to this purpose.

"Any person may become a member of the association on payment of an annual fee of one dollar.

"This enterprise was set on foot by a number of northern gentlemen who have settled on the mountain, and who have both the energy and determination to push the matter to a successful issue. The association has been organized only a short while, and they already have secured about \$500, and they are adding to the fund constantly."



Wallace Smith in front of Powell's Store near the O'Rear Covered Bridge.



Col. Howard's study-cottage at his Master School.



The man on the horse is Dr. J. A. Gorman, a New Orleans physician, co-owner with John Milligan and Gray Morrison of Lookout Mt. Camps. Also shown is the house he built on the brow a few yards north of Sunset Rock. Hal Howe called it absolutely the best boys camp in the Southern states: "The boys are instructed in handicraft, rifle practice, swimming, riding, baseball, track, and other sports. Chief Standing Deer, a chief from the Cherokee tribe in North Carolina, teaches archery."



This is the grist mill built and operated by John B. Crow at Alpine.



Shown in the early part of this century are Georgia Crow, Alice Howell, Addie Crow, and Bud Reece.



Something of a local shrine is Mentone Spring, which along with Beauty Springs a few hundred feet up the mountain, was a major reason for the building of the Mentone Springs Hotel.

Personals

Sept. 7, 1892, Lookout Mountain news in the Fort Payne newspaper: "The Hotel at Mentone is filled to overflowing with guests."

"A singing society was organized today at Holly Springs; about seventy-five persons signified their desire to become members and elected the following officers: W. M. Hamilton, president; Wm. Willington, vice president; Henry Mason, chaplain; Samuel O'Rear, secretary."

"Miss Jessie Winston of Valley Head spent several days on the mountain as the guest of Mrs. Sproule."

"September 24th is the day appointed for the big DeKalb County Sunday School Convention to be held at Mentone."

"There will be a big hop at the Mentone Mineral Springs Hotel next Wednesday night."

"The Little River, Bankhead, Liberty, and Holly Springs schools will meet at Holly Springs Church on the last day of their schools session and unite in having a school exhibition."

Thursday, March 3, 1898 (?), *The DeKalb Times*, from Bankhead: "Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Grey of Gadsden are visiting Mrs. Grey's parents, Mr. and Mrs. David Blalock. . . Mr. Howe and family, newcomers from the North, have been giving concerts at Valley Head and Mentone. Mr. Howe gave a horse and gold watch to Mr. Ed Mason for ten acres of land near here and is comfortably at home in a tent thereon. . . Mr. F. M. O'Rear sold his lot at Sulphur Springs last week to Mr. George Davenport, of Chattanooga, for \$50.00."

Wednesday, July 15, 1891 (?), *Chattooga News*, Summerville, Ga.: Mrs. Seab Davenport of Valley Head visited relatives near Lohasage recently. . . Ot Cavin and George Maples had a difficulty during a singing at Mount Pleasant Sunday the 13th, Cavin cutting Maples in the thigh. . .

Boosting Mentone

Several letters were printed in a pamphlet "as one source of information to those seeking homes and investments in this country." One such letter was written July 18, 1883, by John Mason. Excerpts follow:

"I beg to say that I have lived on Lookout Mountain, within three miles of Valley Head, for the past ten years, and for thirty years previous resided in the State of Iowa. We came here to escape the rigors of Northern winters, and the intolerable heat of the summers. There are not the extremes of temperature here that are to be found at the North, the thermometer never descending to zero in winter and rarely reaching ninety in summer. The nights are always cool, and good for sound and refreshing sleep, something not always attainable in the Northern States. The past cold winter, the lowest point for the mercury at this place was 8 degrees above zero."

"Farming is not extensive here at present, nor is it likely to increase while living can be had so easily from the range. The various kinds of timber, oaks, hickory, chestnuts, and other forest wood furnishing mast for hogs, while the abundant native grasses give feed to horses, cattle, and sheep, for fully nine months of the year, without any other care from their owners except to throw them a little salt whenever they come up. We think it prudent to feed a month or two, but most of the cattle go through the winter without feed except what they procure from the range themselves, and keep in good order. The advantages of stock raising here as compared with the Western prairies, are that here they have plenty of shade in summer and wind breaks in winter, plenty of good water that never freezes, with freedom from high winds and storms that overtake stock sometimes in an open country; and besides we are nearer the markets. This is a pleasant and healthy place to live in. We are probably 800 feet above the valleys. There are no chills and fevers, or agues of any kind here, and no doctors except those who come here from the North for their health. . . "I believe all kinds of fruit that will grow in this latitude will succeed here with anything like care or culture."

"Although farming is limited here as yet, every family has a good garden, where all the vegetables grow to great perfection. The woods are open and easily cleared, and when broken up, will produce thirty bushels of corn, thirty bushels of oats, one hundred bushels of Irish potatoes, and 150 bushels of sweet potatoes to the acre. If fertilizers are used, the above amounts would be doubled. . ."



Huron's Store was the first Post Office in Mentone, near the site of the present Mentone Inn. Around 1890 are shown above Mrs. H. C. Christopher, a baby in the arms of her grandfather James Huron; little James Harris Huron, Mrs. Christopher's brother, stands between Grandmother Huron and Uncle Harry Huron.



How to catch a man, leap year, 1908: Build a large Mouse Trap. Disguise the front entrance as a palatial mansion: take an empty flour sack, fill with rubbish and print a dollar sign on it. Hang on for bait. Scatter a few loose coins about the entrance for effect and await results.



Lola McCool (Buddy Williams' mother) and Maxine Shortridge "ready for a swim," 1917.



Maxine Shortridge (mother of Joann Florence, Eclectic, Ala., MAPA member) and a friend, 1917.



Jim Blalock, Belle Howell, Albert Howell, Erskine Crow, Alice Howell, E. T. York, Alma Howell, Tom Gray at the Howell place in 1910.



Six Shigley girls: Edna, Stella, Grace, Ethel, Belle, and Elizabeth.



Mr. and Mrs. Fred Jones, Carl and baby Herman; 1910.

Household Hints

Mrs. Paul Whitehead kindly consented to share her mother's scrapbook with *The Groundhog*. Alice Mason O'Rear kept clippings of all sorts of recipes, household hints, and book reviews. The following seem to be particularly interesting.

"To get rid of warts, take common washing soda, dissolve in a small cup of water. Make it so strong that some sediment will settle in the bottom of the cup. With this paint the warts five times daily, and they will disappear. This is harmless, painless, and sure."

"To save doctor's bills: Never go to bed with cold feet. Never lean with the back upon anything that is cold. Never begin a journey until the breakfast has been eaten. Never take warm drinks and then immediately go out into the cold. After exercise of any kind never ride in an open carriage... Never omit regular bathing... When hoarse, speak as little as possible... Merely warm the back by the fire, and never continue keeping the back exposed to the heat after it has become comfortably warm..."

"I was troubled with roaches for several years, and could keep nothing secure from them — not even a nice book. Trunks, chests, locks and bars were no security against them. A lady friend told me to sprinkle plenty of powdered borax everywhere. I did so, and have not had any since. For awhile after applying the borax we found them dead everywhere. It will also destroy ants."

If interested in preserving and stuffing the skins of birds and small animals, "the implements and materials required by the amateur taxidermist are a sharp penknife, a pair of cutting pliers, a pair of strong scissors, a long narrow mustard spoon, a button hook, a sadler's needle (three sided), flexible wire of three sizes, tow or cotton wadding, chalk (powdered), corrosive sublimate, arsenic and arsenical

soap."

A book of etiquette published around 1890 and titled *Don't* contains these admonitions: "Don't tuck your napkin under your chin... Don't eat soup from the end of the spoon, but from the side. Don't gurgle or draw in your breath or make other noises when eating soup... Don't mop your face or beard with your napkin... Don't drink from your saucer... Don't use hair dye, hair oil, or pomades... Don't wear your hat cocked over your eye... Don't expectorate... Don't have the habit of smiling or grinning at nothing... Don't gape, hiccup, or sneeze in company... Don't drink wine or spirits in the morning... Don't offer to shake hands with a lady... Don't sit cross-legged... Don't repeat the scandals and malicious rumors of the hour... Don't stare at people... Don't carry cane or umbrella in a crowd horizontally... Don't ask questions of strangers indiscriminately... Don't speak ungrammatically... Don't conduct correspondence on postal cards... Don't wear diamonds in the morning... Don't nag."

And finally, an article on "The Dangers of Intermarriage." "I married a widow who had a grown-up daughter. My father visited my house very often, fell in love with my stepdaughter, and married her. So my father became my son-in-law, and my stepdaughter became my mother because she was my father's wife. Sometime afterward my wife had a son — he was brother of my stepmother. My father's wife (my stepdaughter), also had a son. He was, of course, my brother and at the same time my grandchild, for he was the son of my daughter. My wife was my grandmother, because she was my mother's mother. I was my wife's husband and grandchild at the same time. And as the husband of a person's grandmother is the grandfather, I was my own grandfather."

"Happy Hal" Howe Writes His Book

From his chapter "Eagle Cliff": "This is one place that you don't worry for here nature is revealed in all her splendor, the sunset blending in one grand panoramic view of smokey peaks, virgin forests, and flowery dells. Mentone is the very place to come to if your energy is gone and you have no appetite or even if you have a nervous breakdown. Lots of people come here that way and after a couple of weeks around the wild mountain scenes, along the river, riding or hiking a few miles, they forget the office, the city, and their troubles."

From the chapter "Life Is Like That," "I enjoy taking a three minute walk out to the bluff, and looking out over sleepy valley. I see the smoke of a locomotive against the background of pines fifteen miles away. I hear the mocking bird a thousand feet below me in the virgin forest and hear a turkey gobbler in some barnyard away down the valley and the woodpecker hammering on a dry limb aloft..."

"Here on this bluff I dispose myself for an hour of such sober and thoughtful quietude as I believe on my soul that very few of my fellow men have the good fortune to enjoy. In this life man comes here without his consent and goes out against his will."



"Happy Hal" Howe in his early days.



Mr. Howe in his later years.

The Hitching Post

The history of the Hitching Post is long, many faceted, and fascinating. The first building on the site where the present building stands was a long shotgun type, built by Guy Burgess, uncle of Guy Jones who is president of the Citizens Bank in Valley Head.

This was called the Mentone Store and was built about 1900. Guy Burgess's sisters visited the Hitching Post about three years ago and said they remembered the old marble soda fountain counter being there in 1912. It is still in very good condition. The post office was in the building at this time and Guy served as postmaster.

Brownie Tuttle (Mrs. Edwin) said she remembers the delicious milk shakes Guy Burgess made. He was famous for them and made them using shaved ice, milk, chocolate syrup, and flavoring. There was no ice cream in them.

Guy's father, G. A. Burgess, was a shoe cobbler. He made and sold shoes in the store. Homer's father, Lee Crow, told me about this, and I have confirmed it with Guy Jones, grandson of G. A. Burgess.

The Burgesses sold the store to Doug Jones. Mr. Jones had a complete country store, with dry goods. Many have told me of buying cloth for making dresses. He also had a complete drug store with soda fountain facilities in the early twenties. Doug's son Ray and Edna Shigley worked in the drug store. Mrs. Bertha Akins worked for Mr. Jones for several years.

Mr. Jones built the house now owned by former mayor Sam Barrett and lived there while operating the store. Hal Howe operated the business for one year while Mr. Jones owned it. He was an enterprising young man. He cut blocks of ice from Moon Lake in the winter, stored it in sawdust in a small building, and kept it to make ice cream to sell in the store in the summertime.

Albert Ellis (brother of Nelda and Peggy Howe) and Red Hulan operated the drug store one year. They served milk shakes and homemade ice cream. Mr. Jones sold the building to Low and Pierce about 1924. Mr. Low was the father of Vinnie Pierce, Lila Van Zandt, and Buck Low. Mr. Pierce was Vinnie's husband.

Bertha Akins continued to work for Mr. Low and Mr. Pierce. The business was leased to N. B. Haston one year, and N. B. Jr., Leonard Hammonds, and Lee Davenport worked the soda fountain. Alfred King operated the store some time in the twenties. Mentone was a bustling summer resort. Then the Depression came, and things were never quite as lively again.

Mr. Sam Graham bought the place about 1930. He added the upstairs portion, with Fred Huron as a partner. They had a bridge builder do the construction, with heavy timbers for support. It was constructed so that it could hold many dancers without danger of collapse. There is a space of about four feet between the ceiling of the first floor and the dance floor above it. Many people have stated that the floor actually swayed and rocked from the shuffling of many feet while Joe Husky called the square dances.

Mr. Graham also built the room now occupied by Sharon Barron's Gourdie Shop for the Post Office. The Post Office was moved from a small building just below the Hitching Post in 1932. Stella Shigley was the postmistress there for a few years.

Mr. Graham and Mr. Huron rented the grocery part to Will Davenport. Wayne Baxter operated the drug store section and the dance hall. Lee Davenport and Lottie operated the store from 1932 to 1941. Arthur Hixson and Ray Perkins worked there for a while. One year Lee moved across the street and Arthur operated the Hitching Post along with a Mr. Quillon. The old cash register still in the building was brought there by Mr. Will Davenport from the Valley Head store.

After 1941 Bill and Eleanor Glover operated the Hitching Post. Eleanor was Sam Graham's daughter. Their three children helped run the business — Graham, Alex, and Billy. Graham remembered hard work but a lot of pleasure in the early '40's there. They would sometimes prepare breakfast for the fox hunters at about 5 a.m. The fox hunters would stay at the Mentone Springs Hotel, but depend on the Hitching Post for an early breakfast. Alex said he paid his way through college operating the soda fountain there. Mr. John Graham was the sole owner on



The Shigley family: Edna (Jones), Elizabeth (Reece), Belle, Rev. Ernest, Ruby (Daniel), Clarence, Roma (Smith), Grace (Jones), Nona (Williams), Frances Ethel. In front, Mrs. Frank Shigley, Margaret, Frank Shigley, and Stella. This was taken in the '30's.



Eleanor's death, and he gave the Hitching Post to Alex Glover. For a few years the building looked lonely and sadly neglected. A few small businesses were attempted there. Rose Brown had a cloth shop at one time in the post office room. Clyde Lance Jones had her beauty shop in that room once. The Blalock boys had a woodwork shop in the mid section.

Then Fritz and Joanne Smith brought the place to life again. Fritz cleaned and spray painted and Joanne decorated and arranged antiques inside; it was beautiful to see!

Doc and Kyle Long bought the building from Alex Glover and operated the antique business for two years. They sold ice cream which kept customers happy.

In 1980 my sister Jean Elrod and I bought the property after operating an antique shop for a year in the post office room and leasing the entire building for one year.

Today it continues as an antique shop, the Crows' Nest, a wood craft shop by Jimi Wilson, and the Gourdie Shop by Sharon Barron. Allen and Ruth Horton have a room for collectibles, and Ruth keeps the shop for us two days a week.

Many famous musicians played for dances here. They were not all square dances. Some orchestras played. Morris Bales from Chattanooga played some. An orchestra from Cartersville, Georgia, played for a dance while Lee and Lottie Davenport were there. Lee

said they had five or six hundred people for that one. Hank Smith and the Smith brothers played with Hixson Bell playing piano. Hixson played in Nashville for the Grand Ole Opry and with an orchestra in Boston later. He now lives in Rainsville and teaches piano.

Someone told us that Lawrence Welk played here at one time, that he actually started his accordion playing here. We must check this.

At one time slot machines were in the store, and I've been told that liquor could be bought quietly in the back of the store.

But the most interesting people come in now and reminisce about the wonderfully good times they enjoyed at the dances held upstairs. They say they would love to have one more good dance.

The Hitching Post name was given to the Mentone Store by Bill and Eleanor Glover. The store has always been and continues to be a place for friends to meet and discuss the problems or the good news of the day. When I was a teenager the mail was delivered to the post office twice a day, at 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. A crowd would gather both times to pick up mail and visit.

One day a gypsy lady came by. She went upstairs and looked over the place completely fascinated. She said, "Oooh, I feel strange vibrations!" Perhaps the happy shuffling of many feet have left an echo in the old boards worn smooth as silk.

— Bernise Crow

Stagecoach In Mentone

Collector's Item Available



Mentone was chosen as the site for the 1983 calendar of the Alabama Film Commission. Pictured at Cloudmont Ski Resort and Golf course are, left to right: David Sims, William R. Nunn, Bruce Bon Fleur, Walter Sumner, Gary Jones, Bernise Crow, and Connie Rawlinson.



Mrs. Linda Brown, Secretary-treasurer,
Mentone Centennial Committee
Route 1, Box 271
Mentone, Alabama 35984

Enclosed is a check/money order for \$15 plus \$2.50 postage and handling for which please send me a Mentone Centennial Commemorative plate to the following:

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____

Mayors Of Mentone

1936	Arthur Hixson
1940	Fred Huron
1944	Paul White
1948-61	C. E. Harvey
	(Resigns for reasons of ill health)
1961-72	Sam Barrett
1972	R. P. Daniel
1976	Max Cash

(Resigns because it interferes with postal work. Daniel completes term).
1976 Ethel Manifold
1980 Sam Barrett
(Resigns because of ill health).
1983 Rob Hammond
(Re-elected in 1984)



(Above) Fred Huron, first mayor, and Jim Mallicoat on the river, Jan. 21, 1940. (Below) Alice Jane White seven days later with 18 inches of snow atop the ice.



MENTONE GROUNDHOG CLASSIC RUN

SPONSORED BY THE MENTONE AREA PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION & *Runner's World*
one mile fun run

Proceeding Groundhog Classic Run there will be a 1 mile fun run at 9:00 a.m. pre-registered entrants are guaranteed a t-shirt the day of the race. Late registrants will be mailed a shirt. Times will be called but no records will be kept.

groundhog classic

Distance: 4 miles
Course: flat to gently rolling hills
Location: DeSoto Parkway
Entry Fee: \$6.00 pre-registration; \$7.50 day of race
Awards: Specially designed t-shirts and Runner's World hats will be given to all participants. Pre-registered runners are guaranteed hats and shirts the day of the race. Late registrants will be mailed t-shirts. Runner's World post race certificates will be given to all participants and Runner's World medallions to the top three finishers in each division.
Splits: Called at half-way mark. Water available on course.
Organized by: All proceeds go toward the goals of the Mentone Area Preservation Association, an organization dedicated to preserving and protecting the natural heritage, environment, and other unique qualities of Mentone.

Entrants will be enchanted by the scenic course of this four-mile run, which begins at historic Hotel Square, continues down DeSoto Parkway underneath overhanging autumnal splendor of dogwood, redbud, oak and maple. The course then circles at the DeSoto Falls turn off and returns past Windward Inn, St. Joseph's Church and ends at the Hitching Post. The Groundhog Classic will cap off the fall "Colorfest" and Centennial celebration.

Mentone is located on Lookout Mountain, halfway between Chattanooga and Gadsden on highway 117. There are exits on I-59 north and south. Follow 117 through Hammondville, Valley Head, and up the mountain. From the east, Mentone can be reached through Lafayette, Summerville, Georgia, through Menlo to Cloudland to Mentone.

Detach and mail or bring to: The Mentone Groundhog Classic, Box 50, Mentone, AL 35984. Entry fee of \$6.00 per run must accompany each application. \$7.50 after October 15th. Make checks payable to M.A.P.A. (Mentone Area Preservation Association)

NAME _____ TELEPHONE _____
ADDRESS _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
Age as of 10-30-84 _____ SIGNATURE _____
Parent or Guardian _____ If under 18, signature of parent or guardian is required.

Shirt Size S M L XL

Division:
() Men () Women
() 14 & Under () 14 & Under
() 15-19 () 15-19
() 20-29 () 20-29
() 30-39 () 30-39
() 40 & Over () 40 & Over

CHECK RACE(S) () Fun Run
() Groundhog Classic

CO-SPONSORED BY

Runner's World

WAIVER: In consideration of accepting this entry, I the undersigned, intending to be legally bound, hereby, for myself, my heirs, executors and administrators waive and release any and all claims for losses and damages I may have against M.A.P.A. and all other parties and their representatives, successors, and assigns for any and all injuries suffered by me in said event. I attest and verify that I am physically fit. Further, I hereby grant full permission to any and all foregoing to use photos, videotapes, motion pictures, recordings or any other record of this event for any purpose whatsoever. NO ONE MAY ENTER THIS EVENT WITHOUT SIGNING THIS OFFICIAL WAIVER

Compliments of

Dr. and Mrs.
J. M. Brewer

A Centennial Tour Of Mentone

(For Our Visitors)

At the top of the mountain where 117 intersects with DeSoto Parkway (89), you are at Old Hotel Square. Within walking distances are the following points of interests: (Maps are usually available around town).

(a) MENTONE SPRINGS HOTEL, focal point of the Centennial, built in 1884, a classic example of Victorian architecture. It is not operated at present as a hotel, but there are gift shops worthy of a visit.

(b) THE WHITE ELEPHANT, formerly an annex of the hotel, now a fine gifts and antiques shop. Behind the hotel to the east.

(c) THE MENTONE INN, operated as a Bed 'n' Breakfast. Lunch Mondays. Built in the 1920's. Available for parties.

(d) THE HITCHING POST, once a place of festive dances, site of the post office and various stores; now houses a number of gift attractions. Browse here at your pleasure, ask questions about the area. Also has Crow's Nest Antiques; Gourdis and art objects; Back Door custom framing.

(e) THE LOG CABIN DELI, a place to eat if you're hungry. Excellent food. Closed Mondays.

(f) ST. JOSEPH-ON-THE-MOUNTAIN CHURCH, usually open for visitors. Its center unit is a log cabin thought to be originally the oldest residence in Mentone.

Time now to get in your car and head down DeSoto Parkway, checking points on the map:

(g) DESOTO FALLS, a natural landmark.

(h) CRAGSMERE MANNA RESTAURANT AND

GARDENS, originally a log cabin residence of a former slave. If you're hungry and it's after 5 p.m. (and not Monday or Tuesday), a top-notch meal; suitable for parties.

(i) CLOUDMONT SKI & GOLF RESORT, southern-most ski resort in America. Grass skiing in summer. Much natural beauty; chalets for rent; nine holes.

(j) DESOTO STATE PARK RESORT, good restaurant, camping areas, swimming, various accommodations, etc. Hiking trails.

(k) HOWARD'S CHAPEL, a small structure built during the Depression by Col. Milford Howard. Unique stone design, flowing from a huge boulder. His ashes are buried here. He was an author, movie producer, nominated for President, and did much for the development of Mentone.

Now return to your car and make the beautiful drive around highway 165 to 117, carefully consulting your map. If you're hungry, turn right on 117 past the Georgia line to the Lookout, an excellent family restaurant (closed Sunday night and Monday).

As you return to downtown Mentone, we call your attention to the following establishments who have supported **The Groundhog** through their advertisements:

Taylor's Trade Center; Cloudland and Lookout Nurseries; Whitley's General Store and Service Station (mechanic on duty); Knotty Knots; Tom's Drive In; The Owl's Roost (jewelry and antiques); The Red Barn (browsing); the Superette, friendly grocery and gathering place; McGee's Gulf Mart (old timey general store); in the Town Hall, Grann's Junque and Antiques; Furgerson's General Store with Drive-In Charcoal Burgers; just across the Deli parking lot, Clydel's Beauty Shop.

Compliments of

**Camp Skyline
Ranch**

Compliments of

**Camp DeSoto
for Girls**

Compliments of

**Saddle Rock
Camp
for Girls**

**Congratulations,
Mentone**

on your one hundredth birthday!

**Malibou Mountain
Band**



Compliments of

PAUL THOMAS

Judge of Probate

DeKalb County

Fort Payne, Alabama 35967

Compliments of

**Alpine Camp
for Boys**



Compliments of

**Mentone
Fire Department**

Compliments of

Ann Watkins

Compliments of

**Colquitt Jones
Mentone's Chief
of Police**

Compliments of

**John and Mickey
Cooper**

Specializing in Loopholes

Compliments of

Town of Hammondville

Dot Blackburn, Mayor

Former Council

Essie Downer
Laboyd Wilks
Zack Barnard
Ed Williams
Dale Fisher

New Council

Essie Downer
Laboyd Wilks
Robert Brandon
Melba Fuller
Robert Turner

Compliments of

**the
Nation Family**



Compliments of

Ponderosa Bible Camp

Call or write for FREE Mailbox Club lessons and earn a partial scholarship to camp!

Compliments of

**Harold Richards,
Sheriff,
DeKalb County**

Mentone, a place where Indians
used to roam and call home
Mentone, a place full of lore,
history, and soul mending.
C.V.J. Brewer
Menlo, Georgia

MENTONE, ALABAMA

By Zora Shay Strayhorn
CHAPTER I, AN OVERVIEW

Like the stars that come out at night to brighten the night sky and to fade at dawn, so in a way is the town of Mentone, Alabama, ephemeral. At times past it has sparkled brilliantly; at times faded, only to return and radiate its quiet charm.

The name Mentone is from two root words: The Latin "mens" meaning mind; the Latin root word "tonus," and the Greek root word "tonus": a stretching, i.e., the name Mentone means "Toning of the Mind" or "Mind Stretching." Maybe "Mind Boggling" would be a better word to describe this tiny place in the sun.

The French City of Mentone has been described as meaning "Musical Mountain Spring." Mentone, Alabama, was named by Alice Mason, young daughter of John Mason, father/founder of the city, who in 1884 at the request of Dr. Frank Caldwell, builder of the Mentone Springs Hotel, gave the town its name.

Two of the original mineral springs of clear life-giving mountain water still exist. Another spring was destroyed by blasting of Alabama State Highway 117 when the road was under construction.

The terrain has been shaken by violent upheavals of the earth, according to geologists, in the dim geological past. The effects of erosion by rain, wind, ice, snow, and the wide swings in temperature changes from ice to tropical heat have had their results, too. Because of this, there are huge outcroppings of rocks and within the earth caves and caverns.

Marine water covered large areas here over 600 million years ago. Trees fell in swamplands, forming peat deposits and finally making coal which attracted hordes of people here at one time with great expectations from "get rich quick" promoters.

Mentone is located on Lookout Mountain in the northeastern part of the state of Alabama. Lookout Mountain is eighty-three miles long. It is a part of the Cumberland Plateau of the Appalachian chain which begins in Maine and ends at Gadsden, Alabama.

Mentone is about midway between the northern and southern tip of Lookout Mountain and has a comfortable elevation of between 1700 and 1800 feet high. The highest point on Lookout Mountain is High Point, Georgia, at 2,393 feet; Sand Mountain is about 1700 feet high, and Gadsden, only 1,124 feet.

The section was carved out of lands originally occupied by the Indians, principally Cherokees. In 1819 a portion of western Georgia was laid off into the state of Alabama; on December 14, 1819, Alabama became the 22nd state. DeKalb County was one of three Alabama counties created from the Cherokee Cession in 1835 when the Indians were forced to leave on their "Trail of Tears." DeKalb County was formally established January 9, 1836, eleven days after the Treaty of New Echota.

The earth has heard the silent sounds of Indian moccasins, the footsteps of legendary Welshmen, the British, Spanish, French explorers and traders with a big sprinkling of the Scotch and Irish. Mentone was brushed by the Last Battle of the Revolution between the Indians and frontiersmen in 1782. On an early fall night in September, 1863, the thundering sound of horses' hoofs resounded as the cavalry of McCook's Union Army crashed through the woods on uncertain paths. Archaeologists and geologists have found amazing ancient artifacts.

About 1854 Mentone, Alabama, was known as "Ellison's Precinct" because a man by the name of Ellison operated a grist mill here. George O'Rear lived at the Ellison place that year.

The first house built here was about 1854 by Robert Vernon and forms the central structure of St. Joseph's-on-the-Mountain, Episcopal. Griff Johnson's great-grandfather, Joseph Johnson, came from England and settled in Savannah, Georgia; he was a cotton buyer. His son, Henry M. C. Johnson, came to Head River, Georgia, near Mentone, and built a house in 1860. Griff's father, Henry Reed Johnson, built an early-style Colonial house, painted white with a white picket fence in 1884. Griff and his wife, Nina Mae, still live in the one hundred year-old house on their 800 acre farm. Head River, Georgia, is where Little River begins.

Alabama Highway 117 which runs through Mentone's shopping area, was first named Lake Street. The streets were laid out and named by Ed Mason, son of John Mason, about one hundred years ago.

Adventurers, poets, crafts-people, musicians, promoters, dreamers, people of religious fervency, farmers, coal miners, sawmillers, educators, and a few bootleggers have found this spot.

Mentone has attracted people seeking physical health because of its pure, clean, cool, unpolluted air, and health-restoring mineral water (because of its iron content). Today the summer camps for boys and girls, hotel, inns, restaurants, and summer homes help restore the mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of visitors as well as natives of year-round residents.

(Chapter 2 will describe the physical aspects of Mentone and of Lookout Mountain).

Mentone Springs Hotel Gets Official Recognition



Shown above are Landmarks editor and vice president James Kuykendall, Homer and Bernice Crow, Sandra and Ray Padgett, and Hoyt Durham, President of Landmarks at the Mentone Springs Hotel on the evening of May 22nd. During a meeting of Landmarks of DeKalb County, the Padgetts were presented with the Certificate of Certification of placement of the hotel on the National Register of Historic Places, from the Alabama Historic Society.

Mountain Greenery

While The Groundhog was interviewing Mrs. Whitehead for last month's cover story, she was making "Martha's Pickles." She said, "These are simply the best pickles you'll ever eat. You can't eat just one." And she was right — they are crisp, delicious, and fun to make. The Martha is Mrs. Hobson Kirby. The pickles do not have to be canned or frozen. They stay in their crock or glass jar all winter, right in the kitchen or dining room. You may vary the proportions and take overnight instead of the hours given.

MARTHA'S PICKLES

16 pounds of cucumbers

Make salt water strong enough to float an egg. Be sure and use pickling salt. Pour over whole cucumbers to cover and let stand 6 to 7 days.

Remove from salt water and slice. Return to churn and cover with alum water. Use 2 packages of alum to water sufficient to cover sliced 16 pounds. Let stand 6 to 7 hours (or overnight).

Drain and rinse thoroughly. Return to churn and cover with white vinegar. Let stand overnight. Drain and discard vinegar. (NOTE: Martha Hobson says this bothered Miss Ruby O'Rear, who was saving her vinegar until she figured out a way to use it!)

Return to churn, using alternate layers of cukes and sugar. 10 pounds of sugar required for full recipe of 16 pounds cucumbers. Scatter pickling spices if desired in the layers. Heavy sugar layer on top. Cover and let stand 6 to 7 days. Improve with age.

Garden Club Program:

Thomas Jefferson, Gardener

Thomas Jefferson gardened for over fifty years atop a mountain at his plantation called Monticello, Italian for "Little Mountain." This master gardener, whose flower beds the garden clubs of Virginia have been restoring for over forty years, was the subject chosen by Jean McGehee for the September meeting of the Rhododendron Garden Club.

Jefferson's principal practice as a lifelong gardener was his keeping of yearly records, most of which are extant. From age twenty-three until just before his death at age eighty-three, he recorded the planting, blooming, and disappearance of flowers, shrubs, trees, and vegetables. He also recorded every aspect of weather, believing that after a seven year period he could accurately predict temperatures, rainfalls, and winds.

Despite his being in public service continually from 1769 when he was a member of the House of Burgesses in Virginia until he retired from eight years of the Presidency in 1809, Jefferson never lost his interest in gardening. He visited famous and private gardens wherever he went. He shared seeds and plants he received as gifts from abroad with friends, neighbors, and botanical gardens.

Curves and ovals were his favorite shapes for flower beds. He placed these groups of flowers so that they could be easily seen from within the house. Along his serpentine walk on the west side of his home he varied small clumps and thickets of shrubs and trees with the wide open vista which stretched for a hundred miles as far as the Chesapeake and the Potomac.

The first item on a list of plants he ordered in 1798 and again in 1810 was the rhododendron. Many of the plants he introduced are familiar to us in Mentone today, such as the mimosa tree, tulip tree, yews, ivies, and hedges.

Near the end of his life, Jefferson wrote to a granddaughter, "... though an old man, I am but a young gardener." Thanking a friend who had sent him seeds, he wrote, "Too old to plant trees for my own gratification, I shall do it for my posterity."

The September garden club meeting took place on Tuesday, September eleventh, at the Meadows home. Hostesses in addition to Jane Meadows were Frances Rosario, Theresa Bosworth, and Vivian Sherrod. Barbara Blalock gave the devotional.

President Helen Hill urged members to attend the district meeting in Gadsden September twenty-seventh. The program then will be "Landscape Plants for Alabama."

Committees are busily planning the community tea honoring descendants of the first families in Mentone. Members will also help to register garden club entries in the county fair during the afternoon of September thirtieth. Barbara Blalock is flower show chairman. Linda Brown, district president, urged members to participate in the flower show this year.

MENTONE SUPERETTE

PICNIC SUPPLIES — MEATS,
AND GROCERIES.

5 A.M. TO 6 P.M. MON. THRU FRI.
SAT., 6 TO 6 634-3111

1984 Come join the fun at our Harvest Festival

Oct. 27, 5 p.m.
Food and fun for everyone!
Moon Lake School P.T.A.

TRIANGLE GAS & GROCERY

fast, friendly service

Hot Nachos
With Cheese!



We now have the
coldest drink in
town - icee!

Congratulations, Mentone, for 100 Years!

Mon. thru Sat. 5 a.m. to 12 p.m.
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WE SERVE COMPLETE BREAKFASTS, SHORT ORDERS
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A Town, A Hotel, A Birthday (Continued From Page 1)

picnic lunches, and where the annual Crafts Festival is held. From here the view is stunning — the peaceful valley below, Sand Mountain beyond.

The hotel is a rustic cathedral, representing the heritage, the inner significance and natural beauty of the town. A river flows through the town, Little River, believed to be the only river in America that runs its full course atop a mountain. It's a beautiful stream, widening as it goes, bordered by rhododendron, holly, dogwood, and other foliage.

At Taylor's Ford where it is sometimes a ripple, sometimes a torrent, people drive their cars or take their dogs for a washing. It flows past the rotted timbers of the old covered bridge, past several of the youth camps known as the largest concentrated collection of camps in the land.

The west fork continues past Nippersink, a classic and functioning inn; tumbles over DeSoto Falls, edging past the prehistoric caves and the Cloudmont Ski Resort and Golf Course, the Corner Scout Reservation. On beyond the town limits it goes, past Howard's Chapel, later merging with the east fork that has flowed past Lahusage, and traverses the Little River Wildlife Preserve, 18,000 acres which shelter deer, wild turkey, bobcat, and many other wild creatures.

The river is a symbol of Mentone's quiet vitality, its closeness to nature, the attributes which cause visitors to develop a unique affection and a determination to return. Mentone is a way of life which has many facets and a history that is in process of constant revelation.

The liveliest years of Mentone were the Gay Nineties and the pre-World War I eras. The youth camp movement began in the twenties. More and more persons began building summer and retirement homes on the brow, along the river, and down the

side roads. The Depression made its mark. With the exception of Nippersink, the hotels and inns changed ownership often during the thirties and forties.

Around 1975 a somewhat spontaneous rebirth began. It was described in the November 2, 1982, **Groundhog**. A cooperative community spirit arose in several directions. Using the Vernon cabin as a centerpiece, St. Joseph's on-the-Mountain Church was built at Old Hotel Square with volunteer workers coordinated by the Reverend Graham Glover.

In 1976 Doc and Kyle Long bought the Hitching Post, now owned and operated by Bernise Crow and Jean Elrod, and began extensive improvements. This was the year Birmingham attorneys Frank Young and Jim Rotch purchased the Mentone Springs Hotel annex which became the White Elephant Galleries. Beginning that same year were the annual Mentone Crafts Festivals, so successfully coordinated by Linda Brown.

In 1977 the need for a quality restaurant was met by the young people of the Vine Community Church with the establishment of the Yellow Deli. They were aided by Jack and Olive Jones, who were already engaged in the Cloudmont Ski and Golf Resort and other activities. It is now operated by the Weavers as the Log Cabin Deli.

In 1978 both the new post office and the new fire hall were completed. In 1980 a major event occurred when Ray and Sandra Padgett bought the Mentone Springs Hotel and began restoration which resulted in its being listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The Mentone Inn was revitalized when purchased by Amelia Kirk Brooks. (For other developments, see "A Centennial Tour of Mentone" on page 12).

In 1981 Bruce Bon Fleur purchased Cragmere from the Joneses and established Cragmere Manna Restaurant and Gardens, now owned and operated by Randy Still. On February 1, 1982, largely motivated by



Bruce Bon Fleur and Sandra Padgett, the Mentone Area Preservation Association was formed for the purpose of "preserving and protecting the heritage, natural environment, and other unique qualities of life in the Mentone area."

So it is that the Centennial celebrations should remind us of the various realities, symbols, and perspectives:

A spring, a river, a cave;
A mountain, a town, a hotel,
And most of all, the people.
They came, they configured to form a community.
Across Appalachia the people came, setting the
drama of many lives.

Here we are after a hundred years.
What will we do with it?

For your Centennial Celebration let us cut
your steaks to order

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MEAT

USDA choice heavy western beef

Ask us about your next side of beef or
freezer order

Call us for orders at 635-6216
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Fourth Annual DeKalb County
Arts & Crafts Show

Nov. 10th & 11th

10-5 New VFW Fair Building
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Happy 100th Birthday, Mentone!

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Happy 100th Birthday, Mentone!

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What Mentone Means To Me The Mayor's Report

By James R. Kuykendall

The Mentone community, one hundred years old this year, has attracted a special breed of people from its beginning when Dr. Frank Caldwell began construction of the Mentone Springs Hotel in 1884.

To me, Mentone is a blend of native mountain people, camp personnel, retired persons, and other residents, some of whom are referred to as "brow or summer people." Often an early experience in Mentone as a member of a family retreat, as a hotel guest, or as a young camper has prompted a person to make his home at Mentone in later years. Artists, craftsmen, and writers are fascinated by the area. The mixing of Lookout Mountain and Little River with creative and innovative people produces an uncommon community.

The story has been told many times, but when we were compiling material for the first published history of DeKalb County in 1970, the tale Jessie O'Rear Whitehead told us about her mother giving Mentone its name had a real impact on me.

One of my earliest memories of Mentone was as a child during the 1930's, when I witnessed some of the social life at a pre-dawn breakfast at the Hitching Post with my father, who was attending a statewide fox hunt. Kennels were erected on the rear grounds of the Mentone Springs Hotel, and this area was, prior to turning the dogs loose for the chase, alive with serious fox hunters from several states, newspaper writers, and curiosity seekers.

The late Alice Woolf described the people of Mentone in a 1977 issue of *Landmarks News* by stating that the strong, hardy souls who live there year round know how to cope with hardship and adversity. She said, "All of this is forgotten because there are so many, many marvelous aspects of life in Mentone. One either loves this place or he cannot live here."

Some of the hardy souls that I've known there include two former mayors, Sam Barrett, with whom I worked in the tourist association, gave me a guided tour of each of the summer camps during the 1960's. Another mayor, Robert Daniel, guided me down the rugged mountainside to the small caves near DeSoto Falls, which according to legend, were used by Indians at one time.

Four generations of McDormans have used their Mentone home, where Clarence McDorman often prepared his Sunday school lesson for the class he taught for 50 years at the First Methodist Church in Birmingham. My daughter and I attended one of the all-day picnic lunches in 1979, with the Birmingham church group at the McDorman home.

Other Mentone ties have included my seeking the support of Carl and Mary Wiegand (always helpful) with a *Landmarks* project, visiting with Richard Speed when he was planting shrubs at Howard's Chapel, viewing the Mentone home of John Graham and learning of his plans to donate his artifacts and furniture to the Birmingham Museum of Art, eating barbeque at a Fourth of July event at the John Cooper home, viewing DeSoto Falls from the homes of Billie Noojin and Isabelle McSpadden, touring the Mentone Springs Hotel with Norville Hall ten years ago and again recently, with Ray and Sandra Padgett, eating lunch at Nippersink with the Ed Disneys, obtaining books and information from Janie White regarding Welch explorer Madoc's travels in our area, visiting the art studio of Sue Hamilton, traveling the Mentone roads with Bob Sudderth, when he served as *Landmarks* pilgrimage chairman in 1977, obtaining old photographs from Frank and Mabel Kirk, keeping up with Mentone people through the writing of Ruby O'Rear, and visiting briefly with Mentone residents when we bring copies of *Landmarks News* to the Hitching Post.

What does Mentone mean to me? It is a fascinating place with many pleasant memories. HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MENTONE!

Construction should begin on the new water tank in the very near future. District 4 County Commissioner Billy Colley assisted the town in getting some paving done while county crews were paving DeSoto Parkway. About .5 mile of road was paved on Culver Avenue and a small portion was paved on Grove Street. Two layers of tar and gravel were put down. Under normal conditions this type of paving should have a life of about ten years. The town paid the county \$5,177.60 (the county's cost) for this work. County road crews have also been making repairs on other paved and unpaved roads in the Mentone area.

Some citizens have had questions about what level of government is responsible for certain services. Listed below are some examples of who is responsible for what:

- Roads:**
- Town of Mentone — town streets
 - DeKalb County — county roads (blue and yellow signs)
 - State of Alabama — state highways (in our case, 117)
 - U. S. Government — jointly funded with states (U. S. 11 & I-59)
- Police Protection:**
- Town of Mentone — local policeman (Colquitt Jones)
 - DeKalb County — Sheriff's Department
 - State of Alabama — State Troopers, ABI
 - U. S. Government — FBI, Secret Service
- Judge Randall Cole will be present to swear in the new council at 7 p.m., October first.
- Rob Hammond

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Happy 100th Birthday, Mentone!



Bed 'N'
Breakfast

Congratulations to the Mentone Springs Hotel, Ray and Sandra! Happy 100 Years, Mentone!

Reservations: or Write P. O. Box 284
205-634-4836 Mentone, AL 35984
Amelia Kirk-Brooks, Owner

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Mentone Police
7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. . . . 634-3705
After 11:00 a.m. . . . 634-4467

DeKalb Sheriff: 845-3801
Valley Head Police: 635-6814

Hammondville Police: 635-6374
Forest Rangers: 1-845-1331

or 1-800-392-5679
Poison Information Center:

1-800-292-6678
FIRE DEPARTMENTS

Mentone:
7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. . . . 634-3705
After 11:00 a.m. 634-3745, 634-4507

634-4446, 634-4274
Valley Head: 635-6111

SCHOOLS

Moon Lake: 634-4133
Valley Head High School: 635-6228.

TOWN COUNCIL OF MENTONE

Rob Hammond, Mayor
Max Cash
Lee Davenport
Hobson Kirby
Stanley Brown, Richard Meadows
Catherine Bailey, Town Clerk
Leroy Snyder, Water Department
Colquitt Jones, Police

THE CHURCH OF GOD OF PROHECY

The Rev. Billy R. Boozer, pastor
Sunday School: 10:00 A. M.
Sunday Services: 11:00 A. M., 7 P. M.
Thursday Prayer Meeting: 7:00 P. M.
Telephone: 635-6365

VALLEY HEAD PRESBYTERIAN

The Rev. Jerry Davis, minister
Services: 1st, 3rd Sunday, 9:30 A.M.
Telephone: 635-6283

CATHOLIC CHURCH

2813 Gault Ave. North, Fort Payne
Masses 5 p.m. Sat., 10:00 A. M. Sun.
Telephone: 845-4774

CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD (Traditional Episcopal)

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Rector

First, Second, Third Sunday.
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11:00 A.M. Telephone: 634-3375

MENTONE CHURCH OF GOD

The Rev. Joey Kirby, minister
Sunday School: 10:00 A.M.
Preaching Hour: 11:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening Service: 6:00 P.M.
Wednesday Training Hour: 6:30 P.M.
Telephone: 634-4418.

MOON LAKE BAPTIST CHURCH

The Rev. William Steele, minister
Sunday School: 9:45 A.M.
Sunday Services: 11:00 A.M., 7:00
P.M.
Sunday Training Union: 6:00 P.M.
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 6:30
P.M. Telephone 634-4587.

MENTONE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The Rev. Ann Q. Lohr, minister
Sunday School: 10 a.m.
Sunday Service: 11 a.m.
Sunday Bible Study Group: 6:00 P.M.
Telephone: 335-6561

MENTONE WESLEYAN CHURCH

The Rev. A. C. Clemens, minister
Sunday School: 10:00 A.M.
Sunday Worship: 10:50 A.M., 6:00
P.M.
Wednesday Evening Service: 7:00
P.M. Telephone: 634-4210

ST. JOSEPH'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The Rev. Robert Blackwell, minister
Sunday School: 10:00 A.M.
Sunday Worship: 11:00 A.M.
Wednesday Bible Study: 6:30 P.M.
Telephone: 634-4476

MENTONE REVIVAL CENTER

The Rev. Dewey Oswald, minister
Sunday School: 10:00 A. M.
Worship Service: 11:00 A. M., 6 P. M.
Wed. Prayer Meeting: 6:30 P. M.

CAMP ALPINE: Richard O'Ferrall,
director; camp for boys; 634-4200.
June 1-Aug. 11

COMER SCOUT RESERVATION:
Bob Dunaway, director; Boy Scout
camps June 17-July 14. 634-3445.

CAMP DESOTO: Sue Henry, direc-
tor; camp for girls. June 19-Aug. 15.
634-3411.

CAMP JULIETTE LOW: Kathy Holly,
director; Girl Scout Camp in
Cloudland, Georgia. June 17-Aug.
11. 404-428-0446.

CAMP LANEY: Rob Hammond,
director; camp for boys; June
16-Aug. 11. 634-3561.

**LOOKOUT MT. CHRISTIAN CON-
FERENCE CENTER:** Anne and John
Morrison, directors; 634-3471.

PONDEROSA BIBLE CAMP: Chris-
tian youth camp. Glenn Miller, direc-
tor. 634-3795. June 16-Aug. 11.

CAMP SADDLE ROCK: Marty Grif-
fin, director; girls' camp; June
16-Aug. 11. 634-4608.

CAMP SKYLINE RANCH Susan C.
Hooks, director; girls' camp; June
16-Aug. 11. 634-3201.

VALLEY VIEW RANCH: Nancy
Jones, director. Cloudland, Georgia;
June 17-Aug. 11. 404-862-2231. Girls.

CAMP WOODMONT: Jane Bennett,
director; boys' and girls' camp.
404-284-5369. June 17-Aug. 5.



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