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THE GROUNDHOG

“Neighborly News from the Heart of Lookout Mountain”

MARCH 2023

Remembering The Hitching Post

by Kelly Leavitt

On the evening of February 2, 2023, Mentone lost one of its historical landmarks to fire when the Hitching Post burned to the ground. Located at the town’s primary intersection, where Alabama Highway 117, Scenic Drive, and Cutler Avenue join, for over a century the structure welcomed travelers as they entered the heart of Mentone. Charred rubble is now all that remains.

The Hitching Post sat diagonally across the intersection from the Queen Anne-style Mentone Springs Hotel, which was built in 1884 and destroyed by fire in 2014. Each of the buildings had illustrious histories, especially in the town’s lively days of the early 20th century.

The Hitching Post began as a humble, wood-clad shotgun building known as the Mentone Store, built in 1896 by Guy Burgess (the uncle of Guy Jones, who was once president of Valley Head’s Citizens Bank). At the time, the road up and across the mountain took a different, more arduous, path than current-day Highway 117. Early reports state that trails and roads were difficult to navigate as people traveled by foot, horse, stagecoach, and wagon. The original structure was the back half of the building as we knew it, and the storefront faced current-day Cutler Avenue, which at the time was the main road heading east.

Mentone’s original post office was in the Gillette store on the corner where the Mentone Farmers Market is now held. In 1902, the post office was moved to the Mentone Store, and Guy Burgess served as postmaster for the next five years.

Documentation of these earliest years is sparse, but we do know that G. A. Burgess, father of the owner, was a cobbler who made and sold shoes in the building.

A marble soda fountain counter remained a fixture



Mentone artist Lydia Randolph’s recent painting of the Hitching Post will be part of MERF’s Taste of Mountain art auction on April 15. See page 10 to learn more.

in the Hitching Post until its demise. Guy Burgess’s sisters visited the Hitching Post in the early-1980s and said they remembered the marble counter being there in 1912. Mrs. Bernise Crow wrote, “Mrs. Brownie Tuttle said she remembers the delicious milk shakes Guy Burgess made for which he was famous. He made them using shaved ice, milk, chocolate syrup, and flavoring. There was no ice cream used then.”

Mr. Burgess sold the store to Mr. Davey Jones, who

operated a complete country store with dry goods and cloth for dresses, a drug store, and a soda fountain. “Mr. Hal Howe operated the business for one year while Mr. Jones owned it,” said Mrs. Crow. “He was an enterprising young man then. 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, which he sold in the store in the summertime.”

Mr. Jones sold the building to Marion W. Low and L. C. Pearce about 1924, with Sam Graham holding the mortgage. “Mentone was a bustling summer resort then,” said Mrs. Crow. “Then the Depression came and things were never quite as lively again.” Bill Porter, Mr. Low’s great-grandson, recalls that during the Depression, the Mentone Store, which offered credit to its customers, went broke because people couldn’t pay their grocery bills.

Mr. Sam Graham and his partner Mr. Fred Huron assumed ownership of the building in 1930. (In 1936, when Mentone incorporated, Huron became the town’s first mayor.) Graham renovated the building, expanding the original store, adding native stonework, and building the second floor which served as a dance hall. An etched rock on the front porch floor marked the date “May 15, 1931.” A drive-up filling station was also added in 1931.

The original gently-sloped roof was kept intact, creating a space of four feet between the floors. It is

(continued on page 8)



Save the Date! Saturday, April 1



It’s almost time for Mentone’s Community Clean-up, an annual event organized by resident Lyle Nicely and supported by the community since 2002. On Saturday, April 1, at 9 a.m., everyone is encouraged to meet at the Town Square (next to the Mentone Inn) to pick up litter grabbers and bags. Lyle will match individuals and groups with locations he’s identified that need to be cleaned up. Afterwards, everyone will meet at the Mentone Inn’s pavilion for a barbecue lunch, provided at no cost to volunteers. Feel free to bring a covered dish to share while enjoying live music by Larry Joe Hall. Mark your calendar now to be a part of this important tradition! If you have any questions, please contact Lyle Nicely at 256-996-0169.



Announcing the Mentone Area Heritage Scholarship

see page 3



The Groundhog

Published monthly
by the Mentone Area
Preservation Association

MAPA was first conceived on Groundhog Day, 1982, and then organized on April 5, 1982. *The Groundhog* has been in publication for 40 years.

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The opinions, beliefs, and viewpoints expressed by the various authors in this publication do not necessarily reflect the opinions, beliefs, and viewpoints or policies of the Mentone Area Preservation Association.

Groundhog woodcut courtesy of Meg Justice/Bee Spring Studio

Mentone Matters

by Mayor Rob Hammond

Mentone has lost another historic structure to fire. The loss of the Hitching Post is a blow to the property and the business owners, and the entire community. Thanks to Mentone firefighters for their response and the other fire departments that sent aid. Also thanks to Mentone Police, DeKalb EMS, DeSoto Rescue and all other agencies at the scene.

After the fire, the town hired an independent building inspector to look at the Moon Lake School building. He found electrical and structural issues that need addressing. As with everything, this will be expensive. The council will come up with a plan to address these issues.



New sidewalks have been added to the Moon Lake campus to make it more accessible to visitors. A new grease trap system is being completed and hopefully the lunchroom can be occupied soon.

Saturday, April 1, has been slated for community clean-up day. Details are in this issue of *The Groundhog*.



Doreen Crow Waters always kept the flower beds at the Hitching Post lush and colorful.

From the Editor

by Kelly Leavitt

What would Mentone be like without *The Groundhog*? I've pondered this a lot over the past few weeks. As I watched the Hitching Post burn, I knew I had a big writing job ahead of me. Part of preparing this issue involved perusing dozens, and dozens, and dozens of past issues of the paper.

I've read a lot of past issues over the last five years, but with hundreds published since 1982, I still have a lot more to read! I have silently thanked, countless times, the small group of visionaries who began this modest publication over 40 years ago. Its decades-long dedication to preserving the history of Mentone is important for the continuity of Mentone as the "simple yet grand" place that it is.

History is vital. It is the lifeblood that has brought us to the present. The study of history provides a way to honor those who came before us, and keeps us cognizant of our responsibility for those who will come after us.

During my recent perusal, I read the issue following the great snow storm of 1993 and enjoyed learning about all the ways community members helped each other out during those trying days. I also read about the "Great Fire of 1913," when an entire block in Valley Head burned to the ground.

Whether it's 30 or 110 years ago, the strong spirit of community remains, as does the fear of losing buildings to fire.

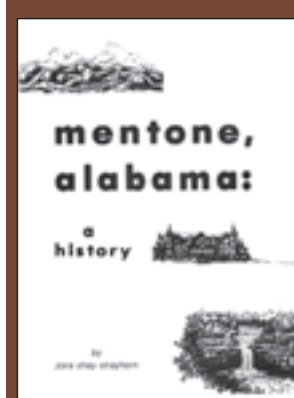
What we create today makes a difference. *The Groundhog* lets us know how to make that difference, whether it's showing up for the annual community clean-up, or staying up-to-date with the activities of our local non-profit organizations. *The Groundhog* gives us all a voice. I encourage you to contribute, whether it's a poem, an essay, or your family's history. It provides a powerful way for us all to know each other...and for readers in future decades to get to know you :)

Have a lovely month, everyone. —Kelly



Walking around the ruins of the Mentone Hitching Post yesterday, something caught my eye. It was the letter «H» partially visible amidst the smoldering remains. The fire that brought down the historic building consumed tons of wood in a short time, yet here was the «H» that formed the name of the building on the side facing the Mentone Inn. But there was more. As I pulled out the letter, surprised it had survived the blaze, I saw another letter. And another. And yet another. A few minutes of digging around and we found every single letter that spelled out «HITCHING POST.» Unbelievable. They may be charred, but they made it through the fire. I'd like to think this is not just a tangible memory of the past, but perhaps a promise for the future. What about that?

—Stephen Smith on Facebook, 2/4/23



Learn about the History of Mentone
Zora Strayhorn's book, *Mentone, Alabama: A History*, is for sale in the MAPA office, and at Mentone Market and DeSoto State Park. \$15

Letter to the Editor

My name is Kathy Turner. I grew up Kathy Schrader. Helen Turner who helped start the ground hog was my sister. I went to school at Valley Head High School and graduated with the Class of '75, with Bill Berry and that crew.

On August 9, 1980 my husband David Turner and I were married at Moon Lake Baptist Church.

The reception followed at Nippersink Lodge. I had worked there for years for the Hauges. The Disneys were now owners and to my knowledge this was the first-ever reception at the lodge.

We got in our carriage and left the circle headed to the heart of Mentone and then north to Nashville. The moment we approached the Hitching Post, David realized he could not find the travelers' cheques. Well I said, "Let's go into the Hitching Post and call back to the lodge and talk with your dad. The most wonderful Bernise Crow sat us down and said, "Don't you worry. You are going to have a wonderful time with or without the money." She gave us a Coke as we waited to see if our party had found them. Lo and behold, Dad had used them as a bookmark. All was well and we were on our way. At that moment, growing up around the Hitching Post suddenly became the most wonderful part of my youth!





Message from MAPA’s President

by Beverly Haynes

It’s March! Daffodils and yellow bells are blooming in Mentone. I love them. When I see them, I am taken back to when I was a little girl, maybe first grade. We had a Spring event every year in which the entire school participated (we were 1st-12th grades). There were daring feats of acrobatics performed by the upper levels on the PE equipment, music sung by little children, and musical PERFORMANCES! Our music teacher chose a theme and the children twirled and danced. And we got to wear costumes!

The performance I remember best is when I was a daffodil. My mom bought the pattern chosen by the music teacher along with yellow and green crepe paper. She cut

out the leaves and petals of the costume and somehow made it all stay together. I was so proud and felt so pretty in my daffodil dress. I was careful to not crumple it as we drove to the school that night.

I still remember it all these years later and get the same feeling of joy and excitement when I see the first daffodil pop up. (Sidenote: I was also chosen to play the lead as a frog in the second grade but that is a story for another time.)

Having said all that, we will all be popping out like daffodils soon and rekindling our love of the beauty of the mountain. We are the caretakers of our world here, so put Mentone Clean-Up Day on your calendar. April First!

But, don’t forget in the meantime that in March, MAPA will host a presentation by Larry Smith on the Cherokees. I would like to see the Bill Berry Community Room packed, just like it has been for previous talks.

MAPA has worked closely with Northeast Alabama Community College to be able to offer an academic scholarship that replaces the scholarship previously given to Miss Rhododendron. MAPA believes that it is time for any high school senior meeting the criteria to have the opportunity to seek this scholarship. Good luck to all.

Let me know if you have any questions or concerns at mapamentone@gmail.com. Stay well and God bless.

Mentone Area Heritage Scholarship

MAPA is pleased to announce the Mentone Area Heritage Scholarship. Thanks to Northeast Alabama Community College (NACC), one high school senior will receive a scholarship covering full-time (12 hours) tuition for the Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 semesters.

Criteria

- Applicants must meet the following criteria:
- Currently attend a DeKalb County high school
 - Be a high school senior graduating in 2023
 - Have a minimum 2.5 grade point average (GPA)
 - Have a permanent address in the 35984 or 35989 zip code (Mentone, Valley Head, or Hammondville)
 - Be eligible for acceptance to NACC
 - Enroll as a full-time student (12 hours)
 - Submit an original essay

Essay Topics (choose one)

- Essay will be between 500 and 750 words. It may be hand-written or typed. (If hand-written, please include word count.)
- All research must be cited on a separate page. This will not count towards the total number of words.
- Essays displaying plagiarism will be disqualified.

Topic 1

Research a historical topic about Mentone, Valley Head, or Hammondville and briefly tell us about it. This could be a period of time, a genre (summer camps or hotels, Civil War, early 20th century, etc.), a notable person, architecture, or events. Also, explain why the topic interests you, what you have learned from it, and why it is important to be preserved. Do you see any connections between the past, present, and future?

Topic 2

If your family has lived in Mentone, Valley Head, or Hammondville for 100 years or more, please tell us how your ancestry has influenced your life and your understanding of history. What have you learned about the importance of preserving the history and heritage of families and their communities? Do you see any connections between the past, present, and future?

Applications, more details, and a list of available resources for research are available at mapamentone.com and through the counselors’ office at Valley Head and Fort Payne High Schools. Applications MUST be emailed or postmarked no later than April 1, 2023. The scholarship recipient will be selected by the Mentone Area Preservation Association’s board of directors and recognized at his or her school’s senior awards ceremony.

Native American Occupation in Present DeKalb County

This talk was originally scheduled for January, but due to illness was rescheduled.

Larry Smith of Guntersville will trace the evolution of the Indians from pre-historic times to the removal of the Cherokees in 1838 at a free talk hosted by the Mentone Area Preservation Association (MAPA) on Thursday, March 16. The program will begin at 6:30 p.m. in the Bill Berry Community Room at Moon

Lake Village. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Smith recently co-authored *New England Missions and Schools to the Cherokees in Northeast Alabama 1820-1838*, and previously prepared a study on Wills Valley for the Alabama Historical Commission.



VETERANS RESOURCE FAIR

March 23rd
10:00-2:00
DeKalb County VFW Fairgrounds

Representation from:

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-Marked For Life Ministries	-NACC Veterans Recruiter
-Alabama Career Center	-Alabama National Cemetary
-Community Action	-Senior Center
-Medicare	-RC&D
-Financial Aid	and more!
-Mental Health Resources	
-Al Department of Veterans Affairs	

Blood Assurance will be present for donations

For more information, please call
DeKalb County Extension Office 256-845-8595





MAPA’s Spring Charity Golf Tournament

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Senior Health: Medicare Patrol

by Lynn Hixon

Senior Medicare Patrol has reported that Medicare is NOT sending out new plastic cards, chipped cards, or Medicare “gold” cards. There are many fraudsters trying to acquire information from Medicare beneficiaries. Another common scam is someone calls saying you are owed a refund from Medicare. There are also reports from people that they are getting calls to do genetic testing or are being offered genetic testing at informational meetings. A similar take on genetic testing is calls that offer “free” medical supplies.

For more information please call your SHIP coordinator, Lynn Hixon, at the DeKalb County Council on Aging at 256-845-8590.



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BEAUTIFUL BROW property located in Lake of the Brow. Enjoy beautiful views of Shinbone Valley below. \$79,900. #1792283

MENTONE PROPERTY offers road frontage on Hwy 117 in the business/alcohol district. A rare opportunity as this is one of very few available vacant lots in this area! \$75,000. #1801221

BUILD YOUR NEW HOME with BREATHTAKING VIEWS year round! Brow property in Lake on the Brow on Lookout Mountain. \$55,000. #1798542, #1798643, #1798655, #1798657

GREAT POSSIBILITIES! This Mentone property offers road frontage on Cove Road in the business/alcohol district. A rare opportunity as this is one of very few available vacant lots in this area! Also adjoins a lot that fronts AL Hwy 117. #1801378

BROW LOT in Mentone! Watch the seasons change from your own paradise between DeSoto State Park and DeSoto Falls. \$144,000. #1815139

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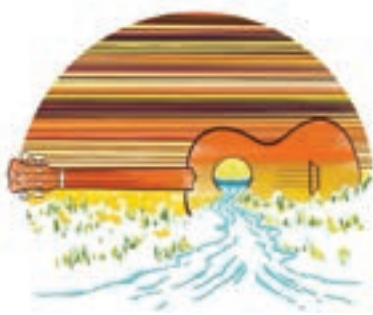


Mentone Ukes

Grief is a heavy load to bear. How the ukulele helped me lay that load down

by Debra Fey

When I first held a ukulele and heard the sounds, it brought joy and light into my life for the first time in a long time. But I've gotten ahead of my story.



In 2009, Rick and I started construction on our dream home in Mentone on property we'd bought two decades before. We were looking forward to retirement. But fate had different plans. Within six months of moving to Mentone, Rick was diagnosed with a rare, painful, and disfiguring cancer that would eventually take his life five years later.

Grief is a load that gets heavier and heavier as you watch your husband of 45 years suffer. Through the surgeries and radiation. The chemo and clinical trials. Finally, he laid his burden down. But the grief, the tiredness, the loneliness, and a sense of "what's next?" gathered up inside me.

To my surprise (our surprise) a cowboy from California walked into my life and as we got acquainted, we hiked. Quiet walks in the woods. Little conversation. No pressure, just breathing. Listening

to nature talk to me, helping me heal. But that deep down joy was still missing.

One day, Jerry brought his ukulele to my home and he played a few tunes on it. Then he placed the ukulele in my hands and said, "Put your left ring finger on the bottom string, third fret." I did and tentatively strummed the four strings. I'd played the C chord! Next, it was the F chord, then the G7 chord—and a whole new world seemed to avail itself to me.

Soon we were playing "Sloop John B" and laughing as we sang, "This is the worst trip I've ever been on!" A deep laugh and easy joy bubbled up inside me, and I was sincerely grateful. I wasn't sure I would ever (or could ever) laugh like that again, but thankfully I was wrong. Learning to play the ukulele truly helped me heal and laugh again. I believe God put that instrument in my hands on that day back in 2018.

Over the last year, Mentone Ukes members have shared their "ukulele stories" in The Groundhog. Each story reflects a unique journey and, taken together, depicts the diversity of our group in age, life experiences, musical backgrounds, and interests. Above all, we are a tight-knit group, laughing, encouraging, learning, and striving to improve. Together. And the common thread is the ukulele. The humble, sociable ukulele.

Come join us at an upcoming session and see for yourself just how easy and fun the ukulele is to play. And if you need to heal, to laugh, to sing off-key, to feel welcomed and respected, to be a part of something bigger than yourself, to experience the simple joy strumming four nylon strings can bring, the sweet sounds of the ukulele and the camaraderie of our group may be just what you need.



Debra Fey

Join us at our free ongoing ukulele sessions on March 4 and 18 at 1 p.m. CST at Moon Lake Library. Newcomers and beginners of all ages are always welcomed to attend and loaner ukes are available. Connect with us on Facebook @MentoneUkes or at mentoneukes.com. Questions? Please contact Debra Fey (debrajfey@gmail.com) or Jody Rhodes (jodyrhodesy@gmail.com).



Congratulations to Brad Lackey of Lookout Mountain Protography for winning Second Place in the State Parks category of the 2023 Outdoor Alabama Photo Contest. Pictured is DeSoto Falls at DeSoto State Park. The winning photographs can be seen at outdooralabama.com/photocontest.



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Art’s Popping This Spring

by Juli Jordan



It was less than a week after the loss of The Hitching Post when the Little River Arts Council Board of Directors met to plan 2023 events and programs. It’s an odd feeling to plan for the future when still in shock from a recent loss, especially for our new board members, Michele and Stephen Smith. As we tossed around new ideas for 2023, the mood lifted to one of possibilities and excitement. Returning annual events include: Membership Social, Big Art Pop Up, Music for the People Summer Concert Series, Follow Your

Art, Sidewalk Chalk Art Contest, and Creative Spirit Market. Monthly Art Talks will continue on the third Wednesday of each month, 6–8 p.m., at Moon Lake Library. The idea behind Art Talks is about artists and art enthusiasts getting together to talk about their work. Each month’s conversation depends upon who shows up and what they have to share. Everyone is encouraged to bring some of their work.

Spring Fling & Pop Ups

What better way to kick off the season than a casual get-together with friends, old and new? That’s the point of the Spring Fling Members Social happening Sunday, April 30, 5–7 p.m. at the Mentone Inn. LRAC members and the public are invited to join us for refreshments and comradery. Pick up a complimentary 2023 calendar of events for your home or rental cabin. This is not a fundraiser, it’s a FUN raiser! Also in April, Pop Up artists will set up during the Mentone Farmers Markets, Saturdays, 10 a.m.–1 p.m. Each week, we will post the popping artists information on our social media pages.

On Friday, May 19, 7–10 p.m., Will Dooley and Company returns to kick off our

Music for the People Summer Concert Series as well as the Big Art Pop Up weekend. Bring camp chairs, blankets, picnics, and enjoy this free concert on the lawn behind the Mentone Inn’s Linger Longer Pavilion. Saturday, May 20, 10 a.m.–3 p.m. is the Big Art Pop Up at the same location, where artists will exhibit and sell their work. Mark your calendars for more Music for the People: June 10 (Black Sedan Band); July 8 (Natti Love Joys); August 12 (band will be announced soon). Several exciting new and returning projects are still in the works and will be announced soon.

Get Involved

Would you like to support the arts in a fun and easy way? LRAC is compiling a list of volunteers. It’s a wonderful way to meet your neighbors and greet visitors to the area! You can choose to assist with one event or more. To learn more, contact LRAC at info@littleriverartscouncil.org.

Supporting Artists

Artists, did you know that LRAC’s website offers a free Artist Registry? The registry is a way to connect artists with collectors. During monthly Art Talks, you will learn tips about marketing and photographing your work. LRAC can even help connect you with grants and give you tips on grant writing.

Our Mission

LRAC’s mission is to enrich the quality of life for people in Mentone and neighboring communities by raising funds for the arts, sponsoring events, providing educational opportunities, and strengthening cultural resources for the benefit of all businesses and citizens in the Mentone area. We rely on memberships, individual and corporate contributions, program revenues, and fundraising to support our programs throughout the year. We are extremely grateful to the donors, supporters, and volunteers who make our work possible. To become a member of LRAC, go to littleriverartscouncil.org/membership.

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www.facebook.com/MentoneFarmersMarket

SAVE THE DATES

- LRAC Members Spring Fling!**
Sunday, April 30, 5-7pm
Casual Pot Luck Get Together, Just Because
- Will Dooley & Company**
Friday, May 19, 7-10 pm
- Big Art Pop Up Market**
Saturday, May 20, 10-3pm

*It's all happening at The Mentone Inn
& Linger Longer Pavilion*

ARTalk

Every 3rd Wednesday
Moon Lake Library 6-8pm CT

Join us for a lively discussion of art!

Bring a piece of your own art or just show up and join the discussion. Everyone welcome!

Hosted by Mikel Yeakle

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With a successful year, Little River Escape has decided to embark on a new journey by creating River Ridge Escape Tiny Home Dealership. At the dealership, tiny homes are available to tour and purchase. RRE is now delivering across the nation and also developing other communities to bring more folks to Lookout Mountain.

River Ridge Escapes now has five tiny home communities and one down County Road 641 in Mentone, AL. There are several Airbnb Tiny Homes in our various locations to come experience a tiny home, downsizing, the community, and explore the surrounding areas.

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Mentone Arts Center

March spotlights Linda Munoz and a host of classes and events

by Randy Grider

We are leaping into spring with a full slate of events and activities.

Kicking off the month, we return to hosting live performances during the Music on the Mountain Songwriters Series on Tuesday, March 7 at 6:30. In addition to the early round featuring local songwriters, returning crowd favorite Cliff Abbott will be the featured songwriter. Abbott’s original music is a blend of folk, bluegrass, country and other influences. He recently released a new album titled “Mary’s Rocking Chair.” For more information on Abbott, visit cliffabbott.com. The event is hosted by award-winning singer-songwriter Craig Hendricks, who resides in Mentone. The round is free to the public.

On Saturday, March 18 (9 a.m.–1p.m. CST), we are bringing back certified Bob Ross instructor Gary Grider for a Paint Like Bob Ross class featuring the Northern Lights on black canvas. The cost of the class is \$100 and limited to 10 students.

We will salute our first three Artists of the Month for the first quarter at a Spring Social on Thursday, March 23 from 5:30–7 p.m. inside the Chuck Sennett Center for the Arts. We invite the public to join us in honoring Betsy Scott and the late Carl McCleskey (January), Penny Dobson (February), and Linda Munoz (March).

About the March Artist of the Month honoree: Linda Munoz has worked in the medium of glass since 1980. However, her artistic journey began prior to her introduction to glass. Working as a registered nurse in a psychiatric hospital on the night shift, she watched her staff nursing assistants as they pieced quilts to pass the long hours between patient checks. She found the process irresistible and soon, with the help of the staff, she pieced her own “Lone Star Quilt.”

She has since won awards for her pictorial quilt designs. When Linda took an intensive class in stained glass in 1980, she found the two art mediums to be very similar in design possibilities and especially in the use of geometric shapes. She took a mosaic class with a master mosaic artist Isaiah Zagar in Philadelphia and began making stained glass mosaic panels, benches and large community art installations. One of the larger projects can be seen at the De Soto Falls steps, where she and Brittney Hughes collaborated, and over 1,000 helpers placed a piece or more of glass on the mosaics going down to the falls. Little River Arts Council helped fund the materials and all the work was done by volunteers. Several mosaic benches were created by children under the guidance of Muñoz in the towns of Mentone, Valley Head, and Menlo, GA, with funding from Little River Arts Council in 2008 and 2009. Heather Nicely of Mentone helped with design and teaching of the workshops.

Muñoz has taught stained glass mosaic art and kiln fused glass to children and adults for more than 25 years. In 2010, she was chosen to become a DANA Teaching Artist. The training she received through the Alabama Institute for Education in the Arts was designed to prepare her to integrate arts education into the classroom curriculum. As a result, she developed a unit of study called “Patchwork History Project” in which students study the Quilters of Gee’s Bend and then construct a stained glass mosaic quilt for a wall installation in their schools. She has completed over 30 of these projects throughout the Black Belt of Alabama and in Mississippi and Georgia.

Linda has recently completed a series of large mosaic panels for the town of Collinsville. All panels represent the town in different ways. Two panels were made by school children, one represents the Hispanic community, another the Turkey Trot Festival and others. Community members helped with design and making the mosaic panels. They will be displayed together on Main Street this spring.

Linda’s work can be seen at the Mentone Arts Center gallery, at the Kentuck Gallery in Northport, where her work is featured both in the gallery and on the



Linda Munoz

on her website at littliverart.com and at her studio in Cuba, AL.

We are also hosting a two-day Botanical Drawing class by visiting artist/instructor Redenta Soprano April 1–2 in the Bill Berry Community Room at Moon Lake Village. The tuition is \$195 and class is limited to 10 students. A basic supply list of items students will need to bring will be emailed upon registration.

Another two-day class on Glass Beadmaking will take place on May 6–7 at Moon Lake Village. It is taught by visiting artisan/instructor Terry Hale. The tuition is \$195 plus a \$35 supply fee paid to the instructor. (Additional information on each class and instructor can be found under “Events” on our Mentone Arts Center Facebook page.)

For more on any of the events or to register for a class, email mentoneartscenter@gmail.com.

Randy Grider is executive director of the Mentone Arts & Cultural Center.



exterior of the building in a large mosaic mural, “The Kentuck Tree.”

Her work is in the gallery of Black Belt Treasures and on the large mosaic sign in Camden, AL and in the United Nations’ Worship Center in New York City. She taught mosaic art many years at the Alabama Folk School and her mosaic panels and benches are in various locations at Camp Mc Dowell in Nauvoo, as well as at the University of Alabama’s Arboretum in Tuscaloosa. A more recent installation is above a statue of St. Francis in the prayer garden at Christchurch Episcopal Church in Tuscaloosa. You can also see her work

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The original structure...The Mentone Store



The Hitching Post and Post Office, circa 1940. Courtesy of Landmarks of DeKalb Co.



Remembering the Hitching Post (cont. from page 1)

said that a bridge engineer designed the dance floor and heavy timbers were used for support. “It was constructed so it could hold many dancers without danger of collapse,” said Mrs. Crow. “Many people have stated that the floor actually swayed and rocked from the shuffling of many feet while Joe Huskey ‘called’ the square dance.” The building was named the “Hitching Post.” Advertisements as early as 1931 referred to the “Hitching Post Roof Garden.”

Graham and Huron also built an addition for the post office in 1932, in the space most recently occupied by the Gourdie Shop. People traditionally gathered at the post office when the mail was delivered each day in

the morning and afternoon, and took the opportunity to catch up and share news (and probably gossip) with their neighbors.

At the time, Wayne Baxter rented the drug store section and the dance hall and the grocery store portion was rented to Will Davenport, whose cousin Lee Davenport and his wife Lottie operated the store from 1932 to 1941. Lee became one of Mentone’s first councilmen in 1936. In 1985, he recalled that one of his fondest days was when he made 45 banana splits, one after the other, for girls attending a Baptist conference at the Mentone Springs Hotel.

In 1938, ownership of the building was assumed by Sam Graham’s wife, Lila Berry Graham (sister of the famous Martha Berry). Their daughter, Eleanor

Graham Glover, and her brother, John, assumed ownership in 1945.

Mrs. Glover and her husband, Bill, operated the business, with the help of their three sons, Graham, Alex, and Billy. “Graham remembered hard work, but a lot of pleasure in the early 40s there,” said Mrs. Crow. “Alex said he paid his way through college operating the soda fountain.”

After Eleanor’s death, John Graham gifted the building to his nephew, Alex Glover, in 1968. Alex and his wife, Honey, sold the building in 1976 to Fritz and JoAnn Smith. The next year, Durwood “Doc” and Kyle Long bought the building.

Jean Elrod and her sister, Bernise Crow, opened an antique shop, The Crow’s Nest, in 1979. In 1980, the two bought the building, and in 1982, Mrs. Crow assumed full ownership. She served as president of the Mentone Area Preservation Association in the 1980s, when the Miss Rhododendron Pageant was held in the dance hall. Mrs. Crow died in 2006 and in 2007, her daughter, Doreen Crow Waters, with an eye to preserving the building, bought the Hitching Post from her father, Homer, and continued running the Crow’s Nest.

Through the years, dozens of tenants occupied space in the building, including gift stores, boutiques, a rustic furniture shop, realty offices, antique shops, artist studios, restaurants, tearooms, a bakery, used book shop, beauty shop, woodworking shop, candy store, yoga studio, and more. Sharon Barron Burke’s Gourdie Shop occupied the former post office space for 40 years, until it, too, was destroyed in the fire.

Doreen Waters sold the building in 2021 and the next year the building was bought by Jerry Clifton, who had dreams of the Hitching Post regaining some of the glory of its past years. Extensive renovations were underway at the time

(continued on page 15)



Alex Glover stands behind the marble soda fountain counter, 1940s



Photo courtesy of Ranger Wright



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Bernise Crow at the Hitching Post



Marie Desoubeaux, Janette McCord, Leslie Bunch, Terrance McCabe and Shurlee Froehler, relaxing and talking out front of the Hitching Post
Picture taken by Bernise Crow



Cynthia Fife identified the fiddle player as Mack Blalock, her great-uncle.

“Dancing in the Clouds”

Throughout the 1930s and 40s, and into the 50s, the Hitching Post was known far and wide for its dances. They were a regular staple on Saturday nights beginning at 9 p.m. during the summer months; sometimes they were also held on Wednesday nights. In some years, dances were held on July 4 and Labor Day beginning at 12:01 a.m. and lasting “until the sun comes up over the mountain.” One can surmise that these dances were scheduled in the wee hours to mitigate the summer heat.

Square and round dances were held, and sometimes orchestras played, providing for a different kind of dancing. “Many famous musicians played for dances,” said Bernise Crow. “They were not all square dances. Some orchestras played. Morris Balu from Chattanooga played some. An orchestra from Cartersville, Ga. 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.”

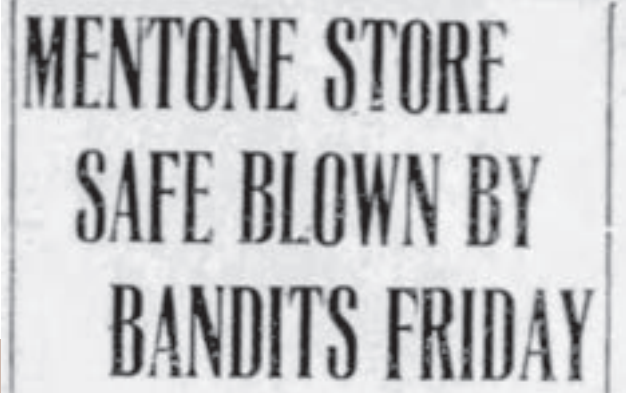
People drove from all over the region to attend the dances. Stories are told of young people sneaking out of their parents’ homes to drive to Mentone from far away so they could dance the night away. Many marriages owe their thanks to couples meeting each other at the Hitching Post. Again and again, the common refrain is the joyful and happy memories people had. Many have said the dances were the best time they ever had...



Bill Berry shared the photo at left: “Taken during the mid-1950s, this photo looks westward and captures the building’s status as a hub of daily activity in those times. A lanky man strides toward the post office, a grey-haired lady shares greetings and gossip with friends, and (on the extreme left) my beloved Aunt Corrine poses with four of her six children (including current Mentone residents Robert Wolcott standing beside his mother and Carolyn Hendon sitting atop the stone wall).



The Mentone Springs Hotel and the Hitching Post...gone but not forgotten



Reports were pouring into the station today as a result of redoubled activity of Birmingham safe crackers, second story men and sneak thieves.

The largest cash loot was obtained at Mentone, where nitroglycerine was used to blow a safe in the general merchandise store of Low and Pearce [The Mentone Store]. Of about \$100 taken, \$60 was in nickels, dimes and quarters, it was stated.

In addition there were several checks of large denominations.

In the report to the Birmingham police it was stated the work was evidently that of experienced burglars.

—Tuscaloosa News, 5/7/26



Mentone Educational Resources Foundation

Taste of the Mountain Returns to Mentone

by Anna Mae Horn

MERF will once again host the ever popular ‘Taste of the Mountain’ art auction and fundraising event on Saturday, April 15, at 6 p.m. at a new local venue, Camp Skyline. This will be the first time since Covid-19 that we have been able to host this event. Having a three-year hiatus has certainly impacted our program. We hope to regain and even further expand our offerings through a rejuvenated and lively gathering this year as we celebrate 30 years of community support. Original Valley Head Student artwork as well as an extensive gathering of local art and goods generously donated by our local area community members will be available for sale in the live and silent auctions. We are grateful for the generosity of the donors and bidders during this important fundraising event for MERF. Our ability to support the arts enrichment program at Valley Head School fully depends on this fundraising event. We

hope you will join us for a magical evening in support of a worthy group, our school children and community at large.

Tickets may be purchased through our website at merfhouse.com and at Mentone Market (cash only).

Recent activities with our students in Valley Head include a field trip to Huntsville to hear the Huntsville Symphony Orchestra’s presentation of Lemony Snickets. Laughter and delight filled the concert hall. Three students were able to see their selected artwork included in the printed program.

For the first time ever, MERF was able to coordinate volunteers to conduct mock interviews for high school business students at Valley Head. This rehearsal helps prepare the FBLA members for competition and future endeavors seeking employment.

Senior lunches are in full swing. We are still currently serving at the Moon Lake Baptist Church



fellowship hall. We do plan to move back to the MERF house as soon as we can accommodate this growing bunch! We invite you to join us each Wednesday at 11:30 a.m. This event is a nice time to catch up with old friends and create new friendships as well. Many thanks to Mentone Market and Camp DeSoto for providing our most recent lunches.

MERF’s purpose is to identify community needs and coordinate resources to support them. Please visit our website at merfhouse.com to volunteer or learn more about our foundation.

Anna Mae Horn is the executive director of the Mentone Educational Resources Foundation. She can be reached at 256-635-8775 or merf.mentone@gmail.com.

March Is Death and Taxes Month @ Moon Lake Library

by Anne McLeod

“Our new Constitution is now established, everything seems to promise it will be durable; but, in this world, nothing is certain except death and taxes.” —Benjamin Franklin

They’re not the most lively of topics—death and taxes. Though we’d rather be talking about practically anything else, Benjamin Franklin was right. And because they’re such certainties, the library will offer sessions and services this month to help patrons prepare for them.

Free Tax Preparation: Make an appointment for help filing your tax return. Library board member Jay Robbins has trained in tax preparation and can offer free assistance to those who need help. Stop by the library to make an appointment and to pick up the initial paperwork. Jay can help do your return, at no charge. The library will offer this service throughout tax season.

End of Life Legal Issues: Elder law attorney LaTanya Rhines from Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments (TARCOG) will be with us on Tuesday, March 21, at 1 p.m. for a session on end-of-life legal issues. Find out about different powers of attorney, wills, probate, and other matters that can affect your family. Navigating unfamiliar legal terrain while also dealing with grief can take a toll. Learn how to prevent problems for your family members after you’re gone. They’ll be glad you did, and you’ll have the peace of mind of knowing you have planned ahead.

If you have questions about these or any other library programs, please call 256-634-2127 or email me at books@moonlakelibrary.org.

March 2023 @ Moon Lake Library

- Weekly Meet-Ups:** CHESS on Tuesdays at 1; KNITTING and CROCHET Tuesdays at 2; SCRABBLE on Thursdays at noon
- March 3 @ 6 p.m.**—Family Game Night! Bring a snack to share and we’ll enjoy board games at the library.
- March 4 @ 10:30 a.m.**—Little Library Learners. Stories and crafts for children ages 3-7.
- March 4 @ 1 p.m.**—Mentone Ukes offer free ukulele lessons for all experience levels.
- March 9 @ 4 p.m.**—Joint meeting of Friends of Moon Lake Library board and the municipal library Board of Trustees
- March 11 @ 10:30 a.m.**—Moon Lake Library book club. This month we’ll discuss *The Personal Librarian* by Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray.
- March 15 @ 6–8 p.m.**—Art Critique and Discussion Group with Mikel Yeakle, sponsored by Little River Arts Council. Let’s talk about art. Artists, please bring a piece or two to share.
- March 17 @ 1 p.m.**—We added a second Family Game Night for March! Bring a snack to share and we’ll enjoy board games at the library.
- March 18 @ 10:30 a.m.**—Little Library Learners. Stories and crafts for children ages 3-7.
- March 18 @ 1 p.m.**—Mentone Ukes offer free ukulele lessons for all experience levels.
- March 21 @ 1 p.m.**—Elder law attorney LaTanya Rhines will present information on powers of attorney, wills, and other end-of-life legal issues.

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Ed Jones drives a stagecoach past the Hitching Post during the Rhododendron Festival parade, 1980s. His first cousin Brandol Jones is seated beside him.

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Rhododendron Garden Club

by Alyce Kenney

“Water is the driving force of all nature.” —Leonardo Da Vinci



The February meeting of the Rhododendron Garden Club began with a presentation by Angie Shugart, founder of the Little River Waterkeepers organization. We learned about the tireless work of this organization and its efforts to provide education about and raise awareness of the needs of our local area “Little River.” You may ask, “What does a river have to do with the interests of a garden club?” The answer is, to quote American entomologist, ecologist and conservationist Doug Tallamy, “Knowledge generates interest, and interest generates compassion.” Each person who lives in a community with others has a

responsibility in maintaining and protecting the natural, life-giving ecosystems of air, soil, and water. Nature is not an infinite resource. From the trees and shrubs, down to the groundcovers; from the clearing of land to the chemicals we use to eradicate weeds and invasives; from the placement of plants to the amount of water we use to maintain those plants—every awareness of the co-relationship between humans and nature is vital for the future of our planet.

We feel strongly about our impact as a group on the local environments we work in. Here’s a list of some of the current plans we’re developing:

Moon Lake Village Grounds
We will restore and recreate natural garden areas throughout the property. These will incorporate native perennial plants that will provide habitats for pollinators and prevent soil erosion.

Bridge of Flowers
This will be an area of natural beauty that visitors can enjoy when they come to the Mentone area. This is a new venture to be created and curated by our

club. Stay tuned for exciting details!

Mentone Post Office Grounds
Sprucing up is in the works when spring gets here! Let us know what you think. Thanks to Misty Watters for her guidance.

MERF House Grounds
Working with Anna Mae Horn to establish some permanent plantings that will keep beautifying this wonderful green-space property for years to come.

Adopt-a-Mile
We’ve got a mile that is just ours! Look for signage soon. You can have your own mile too! Look for us on Mentone Clean-up Day.

Want to get involved? Join us! Have plants you want to donate? Drop us a note. Check out our Facebook page for lots of information.

The Rhododendron Garden Club is a member of National Garden Clubs,



Inc., Deep South Garden Club, Inc., the Garden Club of Alabama, Inc. – District II, and the Northeast Alabama Federation of Garden Clubs.

We meet the second Tuesday of each month at 10 a.m. in the MERF house in Mentone. Come join us to learn, participate, and enjoy! Follow us on Facebook or send any questions to rhododendrongardenclub@gmail.com.

Alyce Kenney serves as secretary for the Rhododendron Garden Club.

Moon Lake Library Book Club

by Jay Robbins

On the second Saturday of every month, at 10:30 in the morning, members of the Moon Lake Library Book Club get together to talk about books. (If you are someone who loves to read, you are automatically a member of the club.) At the last couple of meetings, we had a great time talking about some of the books we had recently read and enjoyed (or not!).

At our next meeting, we will talk about one book: The Personal Librarian, co-authored by Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray. It is the fictional portrayal of a real-life person, Belle da Costa Greene, who was hired by financier J.P. Morgan to manage his vast library. She is also a black woman passing as white and must at all costs keep that secret.

The Moon Lake Library has one hard-cover copy of the book and four Kindle versions. Please join us on Saturday, March 11, to talk about this fascinating book.

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In Memoriam



KATHERINE VELMA CHADWICK
December 31, 1929—January 28, 2023

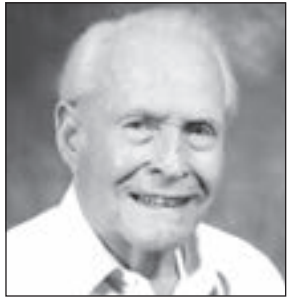
Katherine Velma Chadwick, age 94, of Valley Head, Alabama, passed away on Saturday, January 28, 2023. She was born on December 31, 1929 to Virgil Gore & Lois Crawford Gore. She is survived by her daughter, Janet Chadwick; sisters, Nell Jo Jones and Glenda Knight; and several nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her husband, Joe Chadwick, and grandson, Riley Henderson. Mrs. Chadwick was buried at Head Springs Cemetery. In lieu of flowers the family requests donations to The Alzheimer’s Foundation, 322 Eighth Ave., 16th Floor, New York, NY 10001 (alzfdn.org).



JO ANN BAYNE PHILLIPS

Jo Ann Bayne Phillips, 80, of Jacksonville Florida, passed away on January 31, 2023. Born to Prentie and Earl Phillips, Jo Ann grew up on a cattle farm in Valley Head. She earned a bachelor’s degree from Jacksonville State University then began her career as an English teacher. Jo Ann married Eli Bayne and went on to have two children, Philip and Teresa Bayne. After moving to Jacksonville Beach, FL, she taught at Mayport Junior High, Fletcher Junior High,

and Jeff Davis Middle School. After 30 years of teaching, Jo Ann retired, divorced her husband, and traveled the world. Her experiences included driving a dog-sled team on the Iditarod under the Northern Lights in Alaska. She explored the Amazon, Nile, and Yangtze Rivers and she rafted the Colorado River, camping along the banks. Visiting the Great Wall of China was a great delight for Jo Ann, along with visiting the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem and the Great Pyramids of Egypt. While there, she journeyed through the Egyptian desert on camelback. Other memorable journeys included Antarctica, Russia, and the Panama Canal. Jo Ann’s love of reading and education touched the lives of the small island nation of Kuna Yala, where she became known as The Book Lady—a name given to her as a result of bringing books to the island’s children. Jo Ann traveled to many unique locations, searching the world for new experiences and finding many new friends. In addition to expanding her knowledge of the world, she brought back stories, pictures, and the experiences of a lifetime. Jo Ann touched the lives of many and will always be in our hearts. Come celebrate her life with us on Saturday, March 11 from 4 to 6 p.m. at Lee’s Chapel Baptist Church, County Road 751, Valley Head.



CLIFFORD “TOM” SATTERLEE
September 19, 1924—February 5, 2023

Clifford (Tom) Satterlee passed away on February 5, 2023 at the Mentone home of his daughter, Elizabeth “Liz” Stephens. He was born and raised in New Orleans, where he graduated from Holy Cross High School. He was drafted into the Navy at age 18 and was a World War II veteran, serving as an aviation radioman in the South Pacific. He attended Tulane University upon his return and became a cost estimator for Higgins Shipyard in New Orleans. He later worked as an estimator for Chrysler Aerospace at the Michoud facility. When he retired, he and his wife moved to Diamondhead, MS and lived there for over 40 years. While there, he was a member of the POA and King of Mardi Gras crew of Diamondhead. Tom was an avid golfer and member of the Mississippi Seniors Golf Club well into his 90s. He loved to hunt and fish and was a talented musician and singer. He also built several houses in New Orleans and his home in Diamondhead.

Tom is preceded in death by his loving wife of 64 years, Peggy Joyner Satterlee; his parents, Irving Thomas Satterlee and Anna Breitling Satterlee; and his brother, Irving Crawford (Red) Satterlee. He is survived by his daughter, Elizabeth Satterlee Stephens; son-in-law, Jerome Stephens; brother, George Marion Satterlee; grandchildren, Romey Stephens Archley (David Atchley) and Justin Stephens (Aga Stephens); great- grandchildren, August “Sky” Atchley, Sophie Stephens and Ryder Stephens; several nieces and nephews; and his partner, Carlene Daboval.



SHEILA FOSTER DAVIS
October 7, 1946—February 16, 2023

Sheila Foster Davis, 76, of Valley Head, passed away Thursday, February 16, 2023. She was born October 7, 1946 in Aberdeen, WA to the late William Estep Foster and Gertrude Simpson Foster. She graduated from Weatherwax High School in Aberdeen in 1964 before furthering her education at business school. On October 14, 1972 she married William Arthur “Bill” Davis, Jr. of Fort Payne. The two of them traveled with the United States Air Force until

his retirement in 1986, when they then made Valley Head their home. She retired from W.Y. Shugart and Sons Hosiery. She is survived by her husband Bill Davis; children Erica Dukes (Roger) and Bill Davis (Jennifer); grandchildren D’sya Dukes and Liam Dukes, Jayce Davis, Walker Davis, Foster Davis, Joel Decanter, Julie Decanter, and Jayda Decanter; siblings Joanne Chapman (Otis), Mary Haggerty (William), Rena Johnston (late husband Gary), and Helen Barr (James); brother-in-law Tony Hieber; sisters and brothers-in-law Linda Kerby (late husband Alton), Carol Hardeman (Dennis), Janice Shrader (Raymond), Roy Davis (Candie), and Patricia Davis; and many nieces, nephews, and close friends. She is preceded in death by her parents; sister, Lorna Hieber; brother, William Foster; brother-in-law, Ricky Davis; and granddaughter, Sara Ashlynn Davis. Mrs. Davis was buried at Valley Head Cemetery.



WILLIAM “BILL” ARTHUR DAVIS, JR.
November 30, 1946—February 24, 2023

William Arthur “Bill” Davis, Jr., 76, of Valley Head, passed away Friday, February 24, 2023. He was born November 30, 1946 in Fort Payne, Alabama to the late William Arthur Davis and Lois Ilean Jones Davis. He graduated Fort Payne High School in 1966. On October 14, 1972, he married the love of his life, Sheila Foster Davis in Aberdeen, WA. Immediately following graduation from high school,

he joined the United States Air Force, where he served active duty for 20 years. He retired in 1986 as a Technical Sergeant. He and Sheila traveled the world with the USAF before making Valley Head their home. After military retirement, he attended Northeast Alabama State Junior College achieving an associate’s degree and then worked at GameTime, Siemens, Earthgrains, and RTI before officially retiring at the age of 62. He is survived by his children Erica Dukes (Roger) and Bill Davis (Jennifer); grandchildren D’sya Dukes and Liam Dukes, Jayce Davis, Walker Davis, Foster Davis, Joel Decanter, Julie Decanter, and Jayda Decanter; siblings Linda Kerby (late husband Alton), Carol Hardeman (Dennis), Janice Shrader (Raymond), Roy Davis (Candie), and Patricia Davis; sisters and brothers-in-law Joanne Chapman (Otis), Mary Haggerty (William), Rena Johnston (late husband Gary), and Helen Barr (James); brother-in-law Tony Hieber; and many nieces, nephews, and close friends. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife of 50 years, Sheila Foster Davis on February 16, 2023, granddaughter Sara Ashlynn Davis, his parents William A. and Lois Davis, brother Ricky Davis sister-in-law Lorna Hieber, brother-in-law William Foster. Mr. Davis was buried at Valley Head Cemetery with military honors.

*“Let the beauty of what you love
be what you do.”*
— Rumi

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Sunday, March 12, 2023
12:00 – 1:30 PM Dine-In OR Carry-out
St. Joseph’s on-the-Mountain Episcopal Church

Menu:
Corned Beef • Cabbage • Carrots • Potatoes • Bread • Dessert
Cost: \$15 per person / \$5 (children 12 & under)
Held by St. Joseph’s Episcopal Church Women
to benefit the work of the church in the Mentone community

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ONE, TWO, THREE...and there you have it! ONE, it's a lovely 2BR/2BA cottage, w/sunny sitting room & dining room. TWO, there's an adorable, dollhouse-like guest cottage. THREE, there's a newly-built, handsome, two-car 32x36 garage/shop w/12' ceilings; heated & cooled; well-insulated walls; with a bathroom & its own 1000-gal septic tank! Well, we could also include a number FOUR in our count, because there's a charming little garden shed in the fenced back yard (plus raised garden beds!). The shop has 2 separate storage rooms that are climate controlled. Owner was thinking ahead and put a 50-amp breaker and wiring in place for a future charging station for electric vehicles. The versatility of the shop building is just one of the great features of this property. Located just off the DeSoto Parkway in Mentone. Whether you're looking for a full-time home with guest quarters and workshop, or a place for everyone to escape to the mountains & have a place to hang out & to keep your "mountain toys" stored, it all adds up to PERFECTION. Just listed for \$495,000 (1828446)





PRIVATE RETIREMENT RETREAT: 3BR/2BA, RANCH-STYLE HOME, 56X40 SHOP & 22 ACRES W/SMALL POND. Home was built for current owner, has been immaculately kept, & is only 5 years old. Land is beautifully wooded, with a gracefully-curving, nearly 1/4 mile driveway, lined w/dogwoods, leading up to the shop & residence. Young fruit trees, & fig. 3BR/2BA; one-level home w/covered porch; hardwood floors; free-standing, wood-burning fireplace in LR; spacious kitchen with oak cabinetry & hardwood floor; large MABR suite; dining area leading out to covered back grilling porch & fenced back yard. Attached 2-car garage. 4-door workshop w/storage. \$440,000 (1806766)





MEMORIES OF LAZY DAYS FULL OF FUN ON THE LAKE permeate this one-owner property located on the private side of Mentone's Lake Lahusage. Filled with one family's nostalgia, waiting for the next family to bring it back to life & fill it with their own memories of good times on the lake. One of those rare places with easy walk down to the water; swim & fish from your dock; put in a boat at the public ramp just a short distance away. 4BR/2BA; wood floors; wood beams; mtn stone fireplace; vaulted LR/KI/DR. Screened porch on back leading to huge deck overlooking the lake. Yes, it needs A LOT of work, but it is a rare gem awaiting the right person to make it shine! \$375,000 (1786628)





SOUTH COOL STREET COTTAGE. Just the right size for a cozy home, personal getaway or rental. 2BR/1BA, 600 sq ft. Low-maintenance exterior with metal roof & cement block construction. Interior is a "moment in time," with original, mid-60s simple-mountain-retreat with a lot of character. Reminiscent of the old Florida cottages that have disappeared. The location is perfect, in the heart of Mentone, but away from the Farmers Market & downtown shops/eateries are only a pleasant walk away. Sit on the porch in late afternoon & watch the sunsets. Nice storage building w/electricity for handyman shop or craft room. It's a cute little package in a COOL location. \$229,900. (1818317)

LOTS and LAND

2 UNRESTRICTED ACRES IN MENTONE, on East River Road, where property lines meet up with the lake. PENDING! 4BR/2BA, power and water available at the road. High-speed internet available. \$55,000. (1795866)

TALL HARDWOODS AND PEACEFUL BROW SUNSETS. Build your special mountain dream home on this beautiful 1.2-acre lot in a choice area along the parkway between DeSoto Falls & Desoto State Park. Property lines extend over the brow so that trees may be removed for a clear view. The lots have a good setback from the road for quiet privacy. Two lots available. Lot 21, \$175,000. (1825125)

BEAUTIFUL HOMESITE IN A PEACEFUL VALLEY! Situated in a valley farm setting that has a large portion of the farmland in a permanent conservancy. This tract is not under the conservancy and is a home site that has beautiful sunset views across the valley. \$72,000 (1809242)

BROW-FRONT LOT ALONG THE PARKWAY, the perfect location to build your dream residence or getaway between DeSoto State Park and DeSoto Falls. Beautiful sunsets and the views of the valley & mountains beyond can be created because you own your view and can decide how much, or little, clearing you want. Good setback from the road offers privacy on this 1.2-acre, hardwood-covered lot, with approx. 107' of brow frontage. Two lots available. Lot 22, \$175,000. (1825126)

The Hope of Spring

God, thank you for Spring and the hope of warmer, longer, brighter days.
Thank you for the coming of growth and life and birth.
Thank you that things are coming awake in the world.
This is what our calendar says, and we do see some signs that it is real.
But we also still struggle with the residual layover of winter.
Now we ask that you bring into reality all that belongs in this season.
Your word says that we will have provision, and hope, and joy, and health and loving relationships here and now in this life.
We ask that what belongs in this season would become actual in our practical lives.
We hope in you and in your promises. We hope in your gift of Spring.

—Author Unknown



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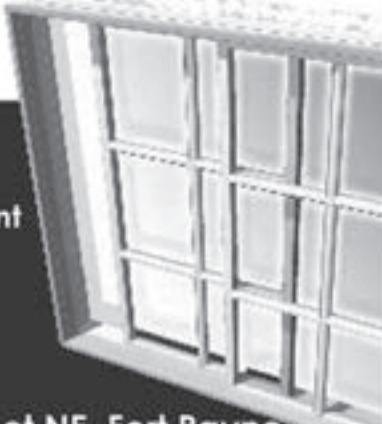
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- Lil Mole Run Golf Course
- Little River Hardware
- Log Cabin Village
- Lookout Mountain Realty
- MAPA/Groundhog Office
- Mentone Arts Center
- Mentone Cabins
- Mentone Farmers Market
- Mentone Inn
- Mentone Market
- Mentone Mountain Getaways
- Mentone Realty
- Mentone Town Hall
- MERF House
- Moon Lake Library
- Moon Lake Trading Company
- Moon Lake Village
- Rocky Top Pottery
- St. Joseph’s Church
- Southern Style
- Wildflower Café

VALLEY HEAD/
HAMMONDVILLE

- I-59 Rest Area
- Dave’s Antiques
- Hammondville Town Hall
- Nena’s Produce
- Tiger’s Inn
- Valley Head Food Mart
- Valley Head Town Hall

FORT PAYNE

- Alabama Fan Club & Museum
- Bargain Depot
- Big Mill & Vintage 1889
- Blue Jug
- Boom Town Makers Market
- Brown’s Cleaners
- Bruce’s Foodland
- Chamber of Commerce
- Day’s Inn
- DeKalb Library
- DeSoto State Park Lodge
- DSP Country Store
- First Fidelity Bank
- Fischer X-Roads Store
- Hampton Inn
- Holiday Inn
- Huddle House
- Little River Canyon Center
- Priceless IGA
- Quality Inn
- Rim of the Canyon Café
- Southern Properties
- The Spot Coffee Shop
- Waffle House
- Wilson Realty

GEORGIA

- BJ’s State Line Store
- Cloudland Trading Post
- Crossroads Market
- Ingles
- Jim’s Family Restaurant
- River Ridge Escape
- Menlo Design Cuts
- Menlo Lucky’s
- Menlo Restaurant
- Menlo Town Hall
- Mountain Top Country Store
- Paradise Garden



March Birthdays

- 1

Virginia McDorman
Will Langston
Ally Smith
Jonathan Cuzzort
Roland Hendon
Susanna Munoz
Hayden Chambers
- 2

Dennis McDonald
Dewayne Pierce
Holley Midgley
Marc Stewart
Dr. Suess
- 3

Kama Jade Blalock
Dawson Bone
Charity Crowe
Kaleb Cronnon
Laura Hill
Michael Smith
Jason Smith
Matt Sharp
Patty Bobo
Johnny “ Slim “ Smith
- 4

Corey Ingram
Lance Woods
Clara Lee
Becky Stott
Durrell Owens
Denise Brown
Jennifer Linn
Jay Parker Cyrus
D’sya Dukes
- 5

Ashley Gifford
Macie Hammon
Eiko Key
Beth McKinney
Joey Glenn
Jeanette Whited
- 6

Annabelle Grider
Randy Hilliard
Inez Guffey
Josh Gregory
Clint Phillips
Sara Boatwright
Randy Posey
Inez Guffey
JD Trammell
- 7

Paige Ware
Kisha Moore
Bella Stokes
Gary McElhaney
Easton Ferguson
Wendy Brown
Kevin Pugh
- 8

Whitney Smith
Mayson Bailey
Rhett Dean
Melonee Green
Elaine Wilbanks
Kristen Bergeron
- 9

Ellie Grace Cyrus
Adalynn Phillips
Randy Ballinger
Jensen Glenn
Delilah Johnson
- 10

David Rape
Autumn Hall
JD Clements
Spencer Harris
Tara Henderson
Mallory Wooden
- 11

Bo Hammond
Jay Chadwick
- 12

Lauren Everett
Preston Ledford
Justin Manning
Megan Richerzhagen
- 13

Tonya Shanklin
Jeremy Hope
Krystal Johnson
Tommy Hairel
Emily Allen
Jaydon Bain
Julie Prestwood
Ella Fowler
Robie York
- 14

Elizabeth Hodge
Hunter Robertson
Benton VanPelt
Bonnie Ware
Mike Neel
- 15

Carter Wright
Ronnie Hilliard
Presley Rae Crowe
Jim Bozek
Brenda Smith
- 16

Avery Chadwick
Raymond Coots
Jesse Bone
Van Battles
Finley Darwin
Debra Williamson
Tony Headrick
Penny Scott
- 17

Judson Bain
Camden Bell
Lily Smith
Larry Wayne Smith
April Howard
Ally Davis
Tommy Daspit
Kim Keena
- 18

Sydney Williams
Jeremy Henderson
Kendall Israel
Alexis Nance
Sherryl Lewis
Ruth Kean
Kristy Shrader
- 19

Dean Freeman
Olivia Harrison
Lane Stout
MC Thompson
Sam Pouncey
Harley Peek
Diane Young
- 20

Zach Jones
Hobson Kirby
Koley Thompson
Greg Wheat
Willa Ingram
Joy Ana Conley
Tom MacMichael
Ricky Linn
Carla Matthews
Sara Evans
- 21

Mary J. Chambers
Paul Peppers
Reese McCurdy
Sam McCurdy
- 22

Aimee Grace Smith
Wanda Black
Ariel Bolton
Glenda Williams
Cynthia Newborn
- 23

Kallie Ingram
Lue Smith
Jon Bain
Steve Patton
Robert Baker
Ethan Blevins
Kean Cowart
- 24

Wyatt McGee
Lori Blackburn
Cutter Battles
Kathy Graham
Taylor Roe
Glen Whited
Caitlyn Shugart
Sandra Haney
Amelia Barker
Adam Russell
- 25

Eli Day
Dylan Lee
Jimmy Phillips
Lydia Wright
Bobbie Zakary
Barry Blalock
Julie Mayhew
- 26

Vickie Blackburn
Evelyn Graves
Skylar Haney
Robert Smith
Maliyah Turner
Zadie Vest
Lane Clark
Marlee MacLeod
- 27

Anna Nelson
Sandra Boehringer
Beth Hawkins
Samantha Blalock
Ariah Bickerstaff
Jordan Hulkan
- 28

Abby Davis
Jamie Darwin
Dudley Easler
Maggie Mae O’Daniel
Matthew Collins
- 29

Holly Owen
Cindy Bethune
Arden Shanklin
Kathy Wheat
Don Ingram
Mamie Jo Miller
Sonja Grider
- 30

Sara Lee
Donna Hilliard
Dru Hill
Shannon Meadows
Cooper Langston
Kristy Pridmore
- 31

Arnold Clinton
Gena Fowler
Henry Townsend
Annette Hawkins
- 32

Lyli Wright
Marlana Beasley
Noah Blalock
Lindsey Blalock
Chad Wooten



Anniversaries

- 3

Darrin & Amanda Smith
- 5

Michael & Donna Smith
- 7

Tommy & Ruth Battles
- 8

Blake & Brittany Villarreal
Garrett & Amanda Collins
- 10

Tom & Alice Shanklin
- 11

Hobson & Martha Kirby
- 12

Charlie & Andi Runnels
- 16

Todd & Mary Beth Davis
- 18

Rodney & Christine Ballenger
- 19

Tommy & Joan Harrison
- 20

Grant & Shelley Meadows
Chris & Allison Smith
- 22

Brett & Brandi Justice
Chuck and Angela Rogers
- 23

Nick & Tina Langston
- 25

Tommy & Christie Langston
Hayden & Allie Williams
- 26

Marc & Michele Walsh
Dudley & Becky Easler
- 27

Shaunathan & Abby Bell
Robby & Cat Curtis-Grisham
- 30

Brian & Melissa Carden
- 31

Ron and Graciela Dickson

Ongoing Community Calendar

- Mentone Town Council** meets the 2nd Tuesday every month at 5pm at Mentone Arts Center.
- Mentone's Planning Commission** meets the 1st Wed. every month at 5pm at Town Hall.
- Valley Head Town Council** meets monthly on the 1st Monday at 6pm at Town Hall.
- Hammondville Town Council work sessions** are held monthly on the 1st Tues.. at 5pm at Town Hall. Council meetings are held on the 1st Thurs. every month at 6pm in the Fire Hall.
- DeSoto Rescue Squad** meets the 1st Saturday of the month at 9am at the MERF house in Mentone.
- The North Lookout Mountain Fire Protection District Board** meets the 3rd Monday of every month at 7pm.
- Mentone Farmers Market** is open year-round on Saturdays from 10am-1pm in the Town Square.
- FREE FOOD for eligible persons and families.** Wednesdays, 9-11am. New applicants are welcome. Joint effort between St. Joseph's-on-the-Mountain Episcopal Church (Community Outreach Ministry) and the Food Bank of North AL.

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Remembering the Hitching Post *(cont. from page 8)*
of the fire. Scheduled tenants had planned to meet as a group for the first time on the day after the fire. Sadly, that day never came.

A passer-by reported the fire, which was already a blaze. By the time Mentone’s volunteer firefighters arrived on scene, they knew there was no way to save the structure, so their efforts were spent making sure no nearby structures burned. Thankfully, they were successful and we owe them much gratitude.

Several fire departments and other first responders responded to the call, with tankers running up and down Highway 117 to fill up with water in Valley Head.

The cause of the fire has been officially listed as “indeterminate.” The current owner is uncertain about future plans.

The Hitching Post will long have a soft spot in our memories, with its 127-year-old history as one of the cornerstones of our humble town.

The Groundhog *extends thanks to several people who helped piece together this history, particularly Doreen Crow Waters and Lynn Glover Holloway for sharing their family histories, and Stephen Smith for obtaining historic deeds. Doreen’s mother, Bernise, once filled many pages with her lovely penmanship, documenting what she knew of the building’s history; Doreen donated these notes and many archival photographs to MAPA. Without their assistance, much of the Hitching Post’s history would have been lost to time. Because some of the sources relied on for this article were anecdotal, there may be some errors. We have confirmed as many facts as possible, and welcome any corrections or additions.*



"The Hitching Post and Roof Garden" 1938, from the collection of Bernise Crow

Bernise’s Notes

Bernise Crow loved chatting with people. During the 1980s, 90s, and 2000s, people often would stop in at the Crow’s Nest and reminisce with her. She would write notes on whatever scrap of paper was closest at hand. We’re so glad she did.

- John Majors from Rome, Ga., square danced upstairs 1947-1950
- B.B. (Jack) Hawkins had first date with his wife (Onell Price) at H.P. dance 46 years ago!
- Tom Selmon danced here in 40s when the Glovers owned the H.P.
- Jean Chestnut was counselor at Skyline. Danced upstairs. Her brother danced here in the early 50s. Said they wore a ribbon of a different color for each night.
- Jack Troxel played with Hank Smith and the Saddle Pals and danced here in the 40s.
- Ginger Shepherd married Porter Grant. They met at the Hitching Post in the late 40s.
- Frances Deon came to dances in the 40s. Said one man kicked another one down the stairs.
- State senator from Centre, Ala. used to come.
- Fox hunters camped in forks of road in 1938. They came to square dances here also and had a wonderful time.
- Jimmy Spurlin played with a band for the dances here at the Hitching Post. Played saxophone, tenor banjo, clarinet.
- Bill McBride danced upstairs in 1965.
- Hank Smith was here. Played for dances at the Hitching Post. He will come back and play sometime.
- Alabama Boys played with Randy Owen’s dad. Herbert Tate played here. Lucian Mills played guitar for dances in the 30s. Made \$3 a night. Nig (Victor) Bough played.
- Raymond and Mary Lee Woodsmall used to come to dance at H.P. 1949—from Gadsden.
- Dr. Roy Ledbetter of Monroe, La. attended square dances here in 1942. He said he visited Gray family in Cloudland. Best time he ever had.
- McCoy Patterson played slot machines at Hitching Post, 1927.
- Fred Nicholson came to square dances here 40 years ago.
- Someone told me that Lawrence Welk played here one time—that he actually started his accordion playing here. We must check this.



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Chattanooga Daily Times 1934

DANCE AT THE
HITCHING POST
MENTONE, ALABAMA
TONIGHT

CHILI CHILDS and His Commanders
9:00 Script \$1.00

Chattanooga Daily Times 1936

BIG DANCE

Everyone invited to attend the closing dance of the season at the Hitching Post, Mentone, Saturday night, Sept. 25. So, friends, let's make it the biggest and best round and square dance of the season. Music by Smith Brothers Band with Howard Kane at the piano.

Fort Payne Journal 1948

BIG DANCE

At the Hitching Post

MENTONE, ALA.

EVERYONE IS INVITED TO ATTEND
ROUND AND SQUARE DANCING

Every Saturday Night

FROM 8:00 TO 12:00 P. M.
MUSIC BY SMITH BROTHERS BAND WITH HOWARD KANE AT THE PIANO.
ADMISSION: \$1.00 EACH, PLUS TAX

Fort Payne Journal 1948

DANCE

EVERYONE IS INVITED TO THE BIG ROUND AND SQUARE DANCE AT THE

Hitching Post

Mentone, Ala.

every Saturday Night

8:00 TO 12:00 P. M.
MUSIC BY HANK SMITH AND THE SMITH BROTHERS WITH HOWARD KEAN AT THE PIANO.
ADMISSION \$1.00 PER PERSON PLUS TAX

Fort Payne Journal 1950

BIG DANCE

ROUND & SQUARE

SATURDAY NIGHT, SEPT. 4th, AT THE HITCHING POST, MENTONE, ALA., AND EVERY SATURDAY NIGHT THROUGH SEPTEMBER. EVERYONE INVITED.

MUSIC BY SMITH BROTHERS BAND WITH HOWARD KANE AT THE PIANO. ADMISSION \$1.00 PLUS TAX.

Fort Payne Journal 1948

OPENING DANCE

AT

The Hitching Post

Mentone, Ala.

Saturday Evening,

JUNE 12th

FEATURING

Mack Thomas

AND HIS

ORCHESTRA

9:00 till 1:00 o'clock

SCRIPT \$1.00 TAX PAID

Sandwiches Drinks Souvenirs Novelties

Fort Payne Journal 1937

Dance at Hitching Post.

Special to The Chattanooga Times.

VALLEY HEAD, Ala., May 25.—The Hitching Post at Mentone is planning its first dance of the season Saturday evening, with a Chattanooga orchestra and a number of special entertainers.

Chattanooga Daily Times 1936

Sunrise Dance

SATURDAY MORNING, JULY 4th

AT

The Hitching Post

MENTONE, ALA.

Presenting

CHILI CHILDS AND HIS COMMANDERS

Featuring

Jane Spencer, Lillian Silverman and Bill Wilson

Popular Radio Artists

Sandwiches Drinks Souvenirs Novelties

12:01 A. M. Script \$1.00

TILL THE SUN COMES OVER THE MOUNTAIN!

Fort Payne Journal 1936

SUN RISE

DANCE

LABOR DAY

September 2

Sunday night, 12:01 A.M., till the sun comes over the mountain.

The Hitching Post

MENTONE, ALA.

Chattanooga Daily Times 1935

Announcing

THE OPENING OF OUR ROOF GARDEN

SATURDAY, MAY 26th, 9 P.M.

Johnnie Screen and His Eleven Blue Ribbon Boys (With Added Attractions)

THE HITCHING POST

MENTONE, ALA.

Dancing Each Saturday Evening Thereafter

LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN—\$1.00 PER COUPLE

Chattanooga Daily Times 1950

SUN RISE DANCE

LABOR DAY

MONDAY MORNING Sept. 7 12:01 a.m. till ?

AT

HITCHING POST

MENTONE, ALA.

PRESENTING

Mack Thomas and his Orchestra

Last Dance Of the Season

DON'T MISS IT.

1936

DANCE every Saturday night at the Hitching Post near Cloudland, Ga. Music by Adis Childres and The Alabama Boys. MIS-tfc

JULY 4TH SUNRISE

DANCE

AT

The Hitching Post

Roof Garden

MENTONE, ALABAMA

Script . . . \$1.10 per couple

MUSIC BY MACK THOMAS AND HIS TRUPPE ORCHESTRA

Vocalist, Miss Machine Hardware

From 12:01 A. M. July 4 to

Chattanooga News 1939

BIG LABOR DAY DANCE

Everyone invited to attend the big sunrise round and square dance at the Hitching Post, Mentone, Ala., starting at 12:01, Monday, Sept. 6. Dancing until sunrise. Music by Smith Brothers Band with Howard Kane at the piano.

1948

Opening Dance

THE HITCHING POST

MENTONE, ALA.

ANNOUNCES ITS

OPENING DANCE

Saturday Evening, June 1st

From 9:00 till?—Script \$1.00

featuring

LENTZ REYNOLDS & HIS ORCHESTRA (10 Piece)

DANCE ABOVE THE CLOUDS

Toasted Sandwiches, Souvenirs Drinks Novelties

Dancing Every Saturday Evening Thereafter.

Fort Payne Journal 1936

BIG SQUARE DANCE

For a pleasant evening attend the big square dance at the Hitching Post, Mentone, Ala., every Wednesday night.