

Too, another matter that surfaced that either indirectly involves the public and tax dollars is the proposed “new” 25 or 30 million dollar hospital at Oconee Memorial. The reason for the cost guessing is because it depends on who you are talking with...hospital administration or county council members.

The county council recently may have made the best move concerning this issue. They voted to have the public pass on the matter in a referendum vote. There ain't nothing like letting the people who will more than likely be paying the cost decide if this is really what they want and need right now. While a referendum is advisory only, it is likely to express to government how tax payers feel at this time of recessionary trends everywhere.

While some may not agree with Minnie Owens, no one can say she's dull and not forthcoming with her views that often concern matters that affect all of us. Keep on “keeping on” Minnie, and may your health improve

June 5, 1991

### **Exploring New Territory Can Be Important**

In the middle 1940's a Biology professor at the University of Georgia knew how to get attention. His class at that time consisted of about 450 students and was taught over the public address system in Baldwin Hall. Dr. Schoenburn was “all business” in his lectures, except for one brief moment before each class. At that time he would proceed to tell a joke or an interesting anecdote. Amazingly, from that moment until class ended, he would hold complete attention of the class. The subject was difficult for many, and at the outset, he explained that at least 60 percent of the class would fail. He went on to explain how the percentages of passing grades would be established as he graded on the curve.

Another thing he emphasized was how important it is to take notes. “What I am telling you and draw on this board can be found somewhere in you text books, “ he said, “but if you want to pass this course, you had better get every word I write or speak during these lectures...and if you know the material, you can pass.”

fees as well as water usage. If this is true, then it does appear that customers will be paying more than one time for the same services.

Minnie said she can still count and figure it, we're still paying 13 bills in a 12-month period.

While this may be sort of like closing the pasture gate after the horses have already escaped, it is nonetheless important to everyone who pays a utility bill each month. It is especially important to those on fixed incomes who must watch every penny every day.

Minnie, in the past, has been able to exercise her civic privileges and take such matters directly to the local council meetings and let it be known directly exactly her sentiments about our government.

Never one to be bashful about expressing a viewpoint, Minnie has provided a lot of good and interesting comments on community events. Especially, has she observed the way our tax dollars have been spent on a local as well as national level. Her letter-to-the-editors over this county for many years brought a chuckle as she administered terse comment, and often, a lot of down-to-earth common sense observation.

The city's "two-bills-in-one-month" issue seemed to "jump start" Minnie the other day, but there's other things on her mind, too. Not the least of these is the county school board asking for another two and one-half "million dollars" in their budget request. Minnie suggested, and perhaps rightly so, that that much could be saved by simply cutting the administration in half. "We'd probably never know the difference if the administration staff were reduced by 50 percent," and "by the way, what are all those people up there in our school administration building doing every day?" she inquired.

I told her that I didn't know the answer, and further, I didn't know where to find out for sure, either. It is said there are fewer students now than in previous years, but the cost for schools continues to rise, and the quality of the product being produced continues to slide downward. Somewhere, someone needs to find out if all this cost for administration is actually helping the real needs in the system...which is more likely the relationship with the teachers to the students. Also, equally important is parent involvement.

While I managed to pass the course, it is one of his jokes that has been firmly fixed in my thinking. He told the story of a man who had a problem with his sick cat.

The problem with the sick cat prompted the man to call his local veterinarian. The conversation went something like this:

Man with sick cat: "Sir, my cat is rather ill, and I need some expert advice," he explained over the phone.

The vet responded: "What are the symptoms?"

Man with sick cat gave a list of symptoms the cat exhibited.

The vet: "I think I understand the problem. What you should do is get a pint of castor oil and give it to him immediately."

Man with sick cat, thinking to himself, "My god, that's a lot of castor oil to pour in one small cat, but this man is a professional, and I guess he knows what he's talking about." So, he proceeded

A few days later the man with the sick cat happened to run into the vet downtown. The vet immediately inquired: "How's your sick calf doing?"

"I don't have a sick calf," the man replied, "I called you about a rather sick cat I have."

The vet was astounded, "My goodness," he exclaimed, "I believe I recommended you give the animal a pint of castor oil...surely, you didn't pour that much castor oil into one small cat?"

The man assured the vet he did.

"Is the cat still living?" the vet asked.

"Sure is, the man said, "But he would have died if it hadn't been for three friends that came in and helped save his life."

"How's that?" the vet said.

"Well," the man explained, "three other cats came in to help him out in his emergency. One of them helped him dig holes, while another cat helped him cover up holes, and the third cat helped him explore new territory."

With that story behind him, Professor Schoenburn began his class and launched into many areas that were indeed new territory for most of the class...particularly the ones who weren't repeating his famous "separating center" course in human biology.

June 12, 1991

## **The Door Really Wasn't Big Enough**

For most of my early years of "growing up" in this area, there were no funeral homes per se. The undertaking was done in Westminster for the most part by Sheldon and Miller. The Sheldon was Mr. Frank Sheldon, deceased and his partner, Mr. Dewitt Miller, a longtime resident and perhaps the oldest living WWI veteran in this county or area. Mr. Miller continues to live at his home on Retreat Street, and until recent years could be seen walking or driving about the town.

This incident goes back several years...in the late 1930's or early 1940. Carl Moore was an employee part-time at the Sheldon Miller furniture store and combination funeral parlor. The furniture was on display on the left side of the store and the coffins were more discretely stored in a partitioned section on the right hand side of the store. Carl was a young man at the time and worked at whatever task was needed. Mr. Miller also operated an apple orchard up the Long Creek Road in the area where Vascoe ("Tater") Harbin and his wife Minnie, now live just above the Chauga river bridge.

When apples were in season, and Carl wasn't busy with the furniture store or helping with a funeral in the area, he would sometimes work in the back of the store polishing and packing apples to be moved to market. This was long before the industry had evolved into a mechanized farming operation.

As it happened one day, the apples were in the back of the store and several containers were near some of the pine box shipping boxes that were used to transport coffins from the manufacturers to the undertakers in that business. A black man whose name escapes me at the moment, was also helping Carl polish and pack apples at the rear of the store. One of the big pine boxes was leaned against the wall with the cover removed so the coffin could be taken into the display room for potential customers to choose. The cover was also leaned just against the box portion.

For some reason, Carl got involved in a conversation near the front of the store and called his black friend and working partner up to the front. While this was happening, another person slipped in the back

door and positioned himself inside the pine coffin box and slid the lid over to cover his presence. When the conversation ended at the front, the black assistant went back to the apple polishing business at the rear of the store. Of course, this action was all planned and premeditated.

Just as he was settling down to work, a very low and mournful voice came from the pine box near him...sort of like this...Ohh...Ohhh...Oh...Ohhhhh...with the groans and moans getting deeper and more frequent. It doesn't take a genius to figure out what happened. The black guy was already working in an "uneasy" environment, and this was all it took to trigger a quick reaction. He bounded up from his working position with great speed and force and nearly took the screen door out leading to the back loading dock where he never had time to use the steps but did some "free-sailing" off the dock. He never missed a thing, did not stumble or fumble, and just how far he ran is a matter of debate. But he left at a high rate of speed. His raised arm prints all but knocked out the screen and could be seen for several years later as he departed a door that wasn't nearly big enough.

Incidentally, Carl Moore, deceased, was a decorated veteran of WWII and later lost his life serving his country during the Korean War. A great guy who saw some interesting things happen here and probably initiated some of them.

June 19, 1991

### **It's "Snake Season" In Oconee County**

Nearly everyone has an interesting snake story. People have been interested in snakes apparently ever since Adam and Eve encountered the serpent in the Garden of Eden. I'm kinda like the fellow who said he only feared two kinds -- big ones and little ones, but mostly, I'm afraid of those I don't see, but happen upon, quite innocently. I've always figured you've got an even chance of getting out of the way of any snake if you can see him and put some distance in between.

The other day I was proceeding to open an overhead garage door on the shed where I store some utilities, tools, etc. near Hartwell

lake. I don't know how many times I have very quickly, without looking, unlocked the door and flipped it up with the help of the big coiled spring. This time, however, it was different. Apparently, a big, long, about 6 or 8 feet, black snake was lying on the ledge of a section of the door's folding section. As it was moved to the overhead position, the snake had no choice but to fall. He did and let it suffice to say, he came down very close to me. Only about a foot or so in front of me. He could have easily fell around my neck. Not one who has conscientiously gone in for "snake handling," I was startled, to say the least, but so was the snake. He hit the deck and gathered himself together -- all 7 or 8 feet -- and looked up at me as if to say, "What the hell is going on here?"

Truthfully, that snake could have very easily been covered with excrement if he had fallen around my neck. Little did he know the risk of the moment, but somehow through the shock of circumstances, I realized that this was, at least, a non-poisonous type of snake, so I let him leave the premises without further provocation. After all, the little book on reptiles I received for "father's day" says these kinds of snakes will kill other snakes such as rattlers and copperheads. But it did make me wonder why he wasn't on duty to take care of a copperhead that was encountered about 30 or 40 feet in front of the building only a few days later. There was no choice but to eliminate the poisonous copperhead...and be thankful that the grass was cut so I could see him just before I came within about six feet.

Most snakes seem to want to get away from you, but could, conceivably, make you hurt yourself by their unexpected presence. I'm often reminded of the recreation director at a big resort hotel in the mountains who was telling guests about the facilities.

In his presentation, he reminded those who go walking along the mountain trails to be especially careful of rattlesnakes. "If bitten," he explained, "Take your pen knife, cut the area where the fangs punctured you leg or arm, make a tourniquet from your handkerchief, place it above the bite, tighten up with a twist of the tourniquet to stop blood flow and proceed to suck the poisonous venom from the bite. Release the tourniquet every five or ten minutes, and

get medical help.”

All of this first aid information was received very well by the group when he asked if anyone had any questions about the matter of treating snake bites and sucking venom from the wound.

One man held his hand up and inquired, “Sir what procedure would you take if you accidentally sat down on a rattlesnake and was bitten?”

Not one to be outdone, the director replied, “Use exactly the same procedure, but I’m sure you’ll find out real quick how many friends you have.”

June 26, 1991

### **Retreat Street Featured Flags**

There is renewed interest in displaying the American flag with a greater sense of pride and patriotism. This is part of our legacy of the recent war in the Persian Gulf and Desert Storm victory. It is a valuable, intangible asset to see the keen interest in our national pride when so many distractions of the last two or three decades have been distorting.

Patriotism and flag waving is not new to at least one resident of Westminster. Mrs. Sarah Johns has displayed the stars and stripes on a daily basis for years. A retired teacher from the school system, for many years Mrs. Johns taught at Westminster High School and later in Seneca. Her flag and her well-kept yard that sparkles on Retreat street is almost a landmark.

She recalled recently when each home along Retreat displayed flags daily. Somehow, some of the residents moved, passed on or just kind of got away from the habit. Personally, she would like to see the idea revived. There are others along the street who also display the colors on a regular basis, but Mrs. Johns believes if each home could begin this practice once more, it would add to the town’s distinction as well as expressing a visual appreciation for those who have paid the price for our freedom.

This is a worthwhile idea for Retreat Street or the entire community as well. It is a good time to remember, with the Fourth of July

almost upon us, and certainly the spirit of patriotism is currently running high. It is a visible expression that can hardly go unnoticed. The entire Main Street in Walhalla has been featuring U.S. flags displays along the light poles on both sides of the street. One cannot help noticing this when passing through. It stirs a feeling inside that this must be a people who know and care about our freedom, what it means, and a tribute to those who pay the price for our keeping it.

Mrs. Johns has an excellent idea. It would be good for all of us to remember that our freedom isn't free and we'd better keep an eye on all those collective events that threaten.

It is difficult to think of the flag without thinking of the late Colonel David Moon. David served actively during WWII and returned home to help manage Moon's Drug Store along with the late Walter Sassard. David was always a patriot and more especially after WWII. He was active in the local American legion post and one of his most impressive talks concerned the American flag. He researched the history of the flag and was often called on to speak before civic and school groups or just about anywhere a congregation was gathered. While I cannot recall, specifically, the commentary, he always gave a demonstration of how the flag should be properly displayed, folded or stored, and above all, the national respect due our national emblem.

David served in the reserves until he retired as well as working at the famous drug store that his father had founded. He also had a brother, the late Col. Herbert Moon, who served in the Army during WWII and stayed on to make a military career.

There is no national emblem anywhere that represents a nation so blessed as ours. A Divine God has surely looked over us and Mrs. Johns is correct in urging us to remember that each day.

July 3, 1991

### **Interesting People From Oconee Mill**

For as long as I can recall, and further than that, Oconee Mill has been making warm friends and millions of blankets. Through the halls of this manufacturing institution many distinguished and



interesting people have labored. It is, perhaps, the main "lifeblood" of the entire town with its payroll and good influence that affects each of us -- directly or otherwise. As with most companies the ebb and flow of personnel is constant, thus the ones I recall now have long ago been replaced with newer faces. But an indelible mark has been made about the ones I knew in the past.

The other day it was called to my attention the last remaining member of the Busha family retired. Frances Hart Busha, explained that her brother, Fred, recently retired from Beacon's Oconee. This marks the first time in nearly 60 years that an immediate member of the Busha family is not working at the plant.

Recently, Roy and Robbie Luckadoo, residents here for several years, were back in town for a short visit while Roy attended the "Quarter Century Club" banquet event the company features each year. Roy had the distinction of being a member of the club in Swannanoa, N.C., the home office of the company, where he worked for 30 years prior to moving to Westminster where he was employed with the Oconee plant for another 15 or so. Thus, they have many friends and associates in both places. Roy and Robbie now live between Hendersonville and Asheville, about 4 miles or so from the airport. After retiring from the Weave Room here, Roy and Robbie spent a great deal of time visiting the big flea market at Pickens each Wednesday as well as exercising skills in various crafts. Roy even had the patience to teach my wife, Aline, how to bottom a chair with oak splints. Now these splints were not "store bought." Roy found a friend who knew the art of selecting just the right kind of white oak tree in the woods, cutting it and extracting the splint material. Now, there's a man with not only patience, but skill and know-how. Robbie, too, was no less skilled. Leaving here long before daylight on "flea-market" Wednesday mornings, she knew exactly how to bargain for the best prices. She imparted much of this ability to Aline who continues to drive a "hard bargain" at yard sales and flea markets.

There's been an endless flow of good and interesting people associated with Oconee Mill. I hope this great manufacturing institution can continue to weather all kinds of economic storms.

For many years, Dora Busha, wife of Hoyt Busha, both employed at Beacon, was the personnel manager for the plant. Dora was an outstanding student in high school and had a keen sense of appreciation of all the people who worked at Beacon and their unique personalities and contributions to make the factory wheels turn. No doubt, she has enough good material to fill several chapters in a big book about her experience.

It was about this time of year long ago when the plant would have a big town-wide barbecue -- especially designed with activities for the employees and their families at the old baseball park which continues to be active on North Avenue. How many recall when the food catering company mistakenly used a synthetic lemon flavoring instead of real lemons for the barbecue hash mixture and some of the stuff exploded? So did several hundred people, but that is a story in itself. Perhaps we can look further into the events and people from this local plant that continues to keep on keeping on while others just couldn't get the job done.

July 10, 1991

### **Early Experiences Long Remembered**

Mr. W. C. Felder surely had a great level of patience when he agreed to let me serve as a "printer's devil" nearly 55 years ago. As a youngster of 10 or 11 years old, my first job with Mr. Felder and The Tugaloo Tribune was cutting wrapper from paper that was shipped in for printing the weekly paper.

Mr. Felder knew what he was doing when it came to his profession -- publisher, printer, editor or whatever the occasion demanded. In the tradition of Ben Franklin, perhaps this nation's most prominent printer, Mr. Felder understood the business from the bottom up. He tried very patiently to impart some of his knowledge to me and others who had served as a young apprentice or "printer's devil." His job was tough, but he held to certain principles that he knew were proved good. Not quite tall enough to reach the feed board of the hand-fed Chandler and Price job printing press, he arranged a box for me to stand on -- about 8 or 10 inches high so I

could learn to manipulate the equipment.

I tried to do whatever chore he assigned me, from learning to handset type from the California type case to melting the lead for the Linotype machine and pouring it into “pigs” which were constantly being recycled. Recycling is not something recently discovered. It was put to good use at least half a century ago and no doubt, longer. We did it by force of habit back then, and Mr. Felder was a “master” at using everything at his disposal in the printing/ publishing business. It was a practical thing to do as well as economical.

A big, pot-bellied stove was used to heat the building where Mr. Felder’s print shop now stands. There was coal to fire the stove and some wood and kindling kept handy for “quick starts.” In the winter, it was necessary to keep the building warm so the machines would perform properly and the ink would distribute on the presses when they were “cranked up.”

One of my jobs at that early age was to keep the fire going in the pot-bellied stove so the printing operation could function. Nearby the stove was the Linotype machine which is still located there and in use by Mr. Felder today when he wants to produce lead type for printing.

On one particularly cold evening...rather late in the day, the winter season had closed in, and the fire had dwindled to nearly none. Mr. Felder suggested that I build the fire up so that he could keep the building warm and the Linotype machine busy “spitting out” lines of type in a “stick” container that was dumped on the stone and arranged for proofing on the type gallery proof press.

I glanced in the stove and it appeared to me the fire was completely gone. It seemed there was a need to start the operation from zero, so I got some scrap paper, wadded and placed it over some ashes in the stove that on-the-surface appeared “dead.” In the process of placing the kindling on top with a few pieces of wood and coal, and wanting to get the job done efficiently, I dashed just a bit of kerosene in on top of all this...and then began looking for some matches to ignite the stove. It took several minutes for the matches to be found, and under the smoldering ashes there was some hot coals of fire which had not been observed.

When I finally found the matches and tossed a lighted one in, there was an explosion to say the least. The old "pot-bellied" stove tried to lift off its platform, and the lid on top of the stove left an indentation in the ceiling. One interesting thing was the way the big, long stove pipe travelled across the entire width of the building and hit against the opposite wall. It moved in a vertical position all the way.

As best I recall, I don't think I received a commendation for the quick way the fire was started. Actually, it was a miracle that no one received any physical damage of a serious nature. There was scorched hair and eyebrows, and fire was scattered over the immediate area, and one thing I recall quite clearly...there was unlimited soot all over the building. It was thick, scattered and landed on everything. It took several months for it to be cleaned off all the equipment.

Mr. Felder came up straight - forward from his Linotype machine with a generous helping of soot blown over him as well as the machine. His quick action probably saved a devastating fire. Fortunately, he was a very patient man, and obviously, he had a very tough job trying to train a new "printer's devil."

July 17, 1991

### **Lightning Created Fast "Streaker"**

Some things are burned into memory forever. For example, if you've never seen lightning "up close" you may not understand. On the other hand, if you've ever witnessed a nearby "strike" you'll probably never forget the experience.

Visiting my brother, Bruce D. Hunt, who now lives in Chattanooga, Tenn., recently, triggered this recall.

It was during hot summer months such as these we are now experiencing. Each day a thunderstorm would blow in; sometimes there was plenty of lightning and thunder. The time was during the early to mid 1930's. There was no such thing as a swimming pool in Westminster or maybe even Oconee County. Kids, out of school for the summer, did whatever they could get away with for entertainment - if they had any spare time.

One of the things many boys in this rural area did was build a pond on any nearby stream. There was a particularly good place in Mr. W. L. England's pasture and where Mr. England had also constructed a nice fish pond.

This event, however, occurred just below the fish pond on a branch. A group of boys -- most of them older than I -- had endeavored to build a nice pond for swimming. Some of those involved in this included Dan Stickland, Broadus Barber, Harry Strickland, Bruce Hunt, perhaps John Stewart, the Brock boys -- Ray, Guy, Jack and Bill, and maybe some of the DeFoor boys, I had been allowed to tag along with my brother, Bruce, who was about six years older. He may have been "forced" into letting me go along, but for whatever reason I was there with the somewhat older boys.

The construction of the pond had gone along rather well. There was a shallow end that began with water flowing gently down a small shoals. The depth increased gradually to where boys would go "skinny dipping" in the deeper part where some had learned to swim.

During the hot summer months, young boys, for the most part, only wore a pair of overalls, and that was about all. One could quickly "shed" them and hit the water at any nearby pond.

Everything seemed to be going well on this hot summer afternoon. It was nothing less than a picturesque summer scene of this group who had "invented" a way to beat the heat. The older boys were laughing, jumping in the water with any snakes or anything else that was part of the environment at the time.

As a youngster, about five years old, I was playing in the water in the shallow end of the pool on the shoals. The hot summer sun was baring its fangs, and we were all generally having a good time.

Suddenly, the Lord took over. He brought up the elements and whipped them into one of the quickest thunderstorms you could imagine. A sudden flash of lightning, a heavy, deep roll of thunder, and the happy complex of the old swimmin' hole suddenly changed.

Then it happened, a flash of lightning cut down a pine tree just above the shallow shoals and laid it right across the creek. I left the

scene, "they said" at a very high rate of speed. Minus any overalls or anything else, some reported that I outran boys twice or more my age. The Lord sent a message, and I "got it." When my brother and some of his friends finally captured me, I had made it to the chicken lot behind Mr. O. A. Barber's house -- about a mile away. Finally, someone overtook me and ended the "streaking" event as they insisted that I at least wear my overalls home. Lightning "up close" can move anything!!

July 24, 1991

### **The Plowing Was Easy...Until**

Farm animals were most important before modern tractors and equipment took over in the rural south. For many small farmers in this part of the country, the animals almost became part of the family. Each had its own personality and would respond in special ways to special commands. This was especially true of mules and horses that were the basic work animals in Plowing the fields where it was tough trying to "scratch out" a living in the 1930's and '40's.

About this time each year, it was a special privilege for me to visit my Grandpa and Grandma Dunlap who were living in McCormick county at that time. Now, McCormick county was not the most prolific farming section of the state. There was plenty of pine trees, flint rock and tough ground, but there was also some fertile bottoms along creeks and rivers where growing corn, cotton, or whatever was easier.

On of these visits to my grandparents in that part of the state, it was getting close to "laying by" waiting for the harvest to roll in...especially the watermelons and cantaloupes.

In one of the flat, better fields in front of Grandpa Dunlap's home, in the 1930's, he had a nice field of corn. It was coming along pretty good, with sufficient rain mixed with other elements. But it was time to run the "sweep" plow-down the furroughs. A Negro, a man named Will Shaw, lived in a small house just below Grandpa's and was unique in many respects. He was very kind and understanding of youngsters, and more importantly, he knew how

to communicate with the mules that he worked in the fields.

Another thing I recall about Will was the shoes he wore as he plowed the fields. They really weren't shoes at all. They were sections of old automobile tires -- or casings, as they were sometimes called. He cut them out and fashioned a pair of open-on-both-ends sandals that he fastened around his feet with pieces of line. They worked amazingly well, and Will would plow the fields and sing spirituals that could be heard for miles around.

On this special day, Will was plowing a rather old and slow mule named "Blue" with the sweep going through acres of corn. I was sent to the field with a bucket of fresh drawn water, and as he stopped at the end of the row, I asked if I could plow a round. At that time, I couldn't conveniently reach the handles of the plow, but the crosspiece was exactly right. Will agreed to let me try. For a couple of rounds, he walked behind me holding the reins, and "Blue" accepted me as being in command as I hollered "whoa!", "Gee!", "Ha.ah." This was a great thrill for me, and all went well for a round or two. Finally, I asked Will if I could handle the lines as well as guiding the plow for a few rounds. He seemed to welcome the idea and thought I had enough training with his line holding. All went extremely well for a round, but then at the end of the row, there was a grown-up ditch full of brush, weeds, and small trees. As I made the turn, I failed to pull old "Blue" in tight. She walked into the ditch, and straight into a nest of hornets. The rest is history.

"Blue" set sail and that old sweep plow looked almost like a wing as it bounced through that field of corn. As best I recall, Will finally captured "Blue" about two miles away, and I considered myself lucky for letting go of all plow lines and plow stock. While this was a rather old, and often slow mule, there was no doubt she could move with great determination in the face of hornets whizzing around.

Mules can be hard-headed and determined, but they certainly aren't crazy in the face of danger.

July 31, 1991

## Everything That Goes Around

I never cease to be amazed at people who make a living buying and trading. It seems there is an element in our society that can actually make a good living by buying, selling and trading with each other. Antique dealers, for example, seem to do well by dealing with each other. Exactly how the system works is not clear, but it does work. Also, car dealers seem to have a knack for making many deals with each other. And then, there are cattlemen -- those who buy and sell cows, calves, mules, horses, or livestock. The story goes on.

Raymond Fendley told this the other day about an experience he had several years ago. Raymond and his wife, Winnie, have long been known to many in this area, both having retired from the postal services in Westminster.

In addition to working for the post office, Raymond has always had an interest in farming and farm animals. At their home in the Oakway community, they've had ample room to do both.

Raymond said that one day he was coming down the road from Long Creek when he happened to reach the area where a friend and fellow livestock man, Derrell Blackwell, lives in the Holly Springs community. It happened that Derrell had returned from a cattle sale with a fine calf loaded on the back of his pick-up truck.

"How much will you take for the calf?" Raymond asked. "Well, I really don't want to sell him," Derrell replied, "But if you really need him and want him really bad, I guess we could strike a deal."

A deal was struck. Raymond said that he backed his truck up to the rear of Derrell's and the calf was loaded.

Coming on down the road into town, Raymond stopped by Molgro England's store to buy some supplies and parked his truck across the street where the cement wall once stood. Molgro spied the truck with calf and commented that he surely needed the calf. After some discussion and offers, with a small profit added on, a deal was made. Again the animal loaded from one pickup truck to another without touching the ground.

Before the new owner could get the calf transported to a barn or



pasture, Derrell Blackwell again entered the picture, according to Raymond. Derrell, it should be pointed out, has dealt in trading cattle for many years, going to auctions, cattle barns, farms for wherever, and has been successful in the business.

He saw the calf, once again, loaded onto Molgro's truck, and immediately decided that he needed to buy this calf. It wasn't long before he and Molgro made a deal. One more time the calf was loaded onto Derrell's truck, after a small profit had been included in the transaction. It all happened very quickly and in the same day, according to Raymond.

Whether or not Derrell had another buyer in mind when he repurchased the calf he had sold earlier, or whether he did not recognize the animal as being the one he had previously sold to Raymond is not clear.

My guess is that each one of these fellows wound up with some kind of profit in this "round trip" ride the calf took that day. Again, it just illustrates how "dealers" seem to be able to make a profit trading with each other.

August 7, 1991

### **Charlie Got Brave...When "Primed"**

Charlie Collins was a great country newspaperman in Walhalla for many years. It was from his wife, Dorothy, that the Keowee Courier was purchased in 1959. Charlie served as editor and publisher of the paper for about 20 years and was working in that capacity when his death occurred from a sudden heart attack.

I recall many pleasant moments with Charlie. We had some common ground to begin with...being in the same kind of business and exposed to some of the same college professors at the University of Georgia. Charlie was a native of Athens, Ga., which kind of set him apart. He had been a Navy pilot during WWII and flew from aircraft carriers. He was later a flight instructor for young fighter pilots toward the end of the war.

His ability to write interesting stories was noteworthy. He especially was good at covering local political events during a period

when Oconee politics heated to a “near boil” at some of the stump meetings...especially during the Joe McCarey days as Supervisor and with other interesting characters such as Senator Pat Miley, and House Members Harold King and Ray “Pep” Green.

Charlie’s experience was wide and varied. He had a little nervous habit of “laughing” at nearly every question or statement directed to him. Surely, it was a matter of nervous reflex for he had many serious moments that didn’t call for laughter as punctuation. It was, however, just one of his characteristics.

It was during one of the holiday or in-between-holidays of the Christmas/ New Year seasons, probably 25 years ago, when this event took place.

While “Drinking For A Living” was not officially one of my professions at that time, it was an established fact that I occasionally “bent an elbow.” For reasons unknown, other than the excuse of celebrating another daybreak, I went to one of the local “chemistry labs” and loaded my vehicle with one of the better brands of so-called “sourmash” liquor. It was Jack Daniels, as best I recall. Armed with several “fifths” of this great spirit, I proceeded to visit my friend, Charlie, at his home above Walhalla, just off Playground road.

Charlie’s young son, Jimmy, was at the age to be interested in fireworks. Charlie had obligingly gone to one of the local dealers and bought a good supply. But first things came first. Since I had come for a visit and brought Charlie “refreshments,” we proceeded to celebrate with plenty of drink and lively conversation at Charlie’s kitchen table. The evening wore on. Eventually, I made my way back to Westminster. A good time was supposed to be had by all, but particularly Charlie’s young son kept insisting that it was time for the fireworks display.

It was about a week later when I first saw Charlie again at the Keowee Courier building in Walhalla. One of his hands and part of an arm were in bandages and he carried his arm in a sling. “My god, Charlie, what has happened? I inquired.

At first, he was a bit reluctant, and then he explained: the other night after you left my house, I was pressured to go outside and

shoot some of the fireworks for Jimmy. I guess I just got carried away a bit. For some strange reason, I got brave in the process and held one of the sky rockets by the stick while Jimmy lit it! The result is what you see. Charlie said that if he had been “primed” a bit more with Jack Daniels, the event could have been more devastating.

“I may have even held one in my teeth,” he ventured.

Charlie was a great guy, and great newspaperman, but not much of a rocket expert.

August 14, 1991

### **As The Twig Is Bent...**

My mother was a country school teacher. By that, I mean she taught in the school system when Oconee County had 43 separate districts as opposed to the single one we have now.

These were small schools located all over the county...places such as Toxaway, Clearmont, Tabor, South Union, Unity, Blue Ridge, Oakgrove, and the list goes on. She worked at a time when teachers, if lucky enough to find a job, earned about 60 dollars a month. There was also a time when there was no money to pay the teachers in the county, and payment in “script” was issued. This was nothing more than a letter of IOU. However, some merchants in the county would accept this kind of payment in lieu of real money. These were times and experiences of the big depression of the late 1920’s and ‘30’s.

The schools were often one or two room buildings with a wood burning stove for heat and a well for drinking water. Students built the fires in winter, used outdoor toilets, and drew the water from a well. Classes of grades one through seven were often in the same room with each receiving assignments and instructions. While it may seem confusing to us now, the system apparently worked pretty good. Obviously, many of those taught excelled professionally later on.

There are yet some of these teachers in our midst. While the number is diminishing, several still are with us. Two who come to

mind are Mrs. Edna Holcombe and Mrs. Fred Arve. Both of these ladies had great experience in teaching in smaller schools.

It should be pointed out that simply being smaller did not indicate being inferior. Students who attended these schools through the seventh grade were transported by bus or private means to one of the six or seven high schools that existed at that time.

A few made it to college...usually Clemson for young men since it was strictly a military A & M college -- non-co-educational. Young ladies, many of the upstate, attended Winthrop -- a four year college strictly for women.

My mother only had a year of college training when she became a school teacher. At that time, the state could issue a letter of certification for anyone deemed adequate to instruct. College was not always a requirement, nor a degree, but more emphasis was placed on common sense and desire with ability to get the job done.

Later in life, my mother, who continued to attend summer schools, and educational programs of training, managed to complete the requirement for a degree. She graduated from Winthrop at age 56. Seeing the need for continued training, she persisted and acquired enough hours to qualify for a Master's degree., though I don't think she ever actually received this piece of paper. It probably didn't matter to her that much except that it was a requirement that seriously affected the pay schedule.

I never attended any of the classes she taught, but occasionally, I was allowed to go with her. The experience was interesting at best I recall, and I'm sure the "learning" taught there was practical if not always academic. One of the things she mentioned that expressed her philosophy was a comparison: "Training a young person is like setting out a small tree...if you plant the tap root straight into the ground, the wind and rain may blow it around a bit, but eventually it will grow straight and tall if it survives."

She may have wondered a bit about how my "tap root" was situated in the years of "growing up." But I don't think her faith was ever seriously shaken. She had to believe...cause there wasn't much left that had significance.

August 21, 1991

## **Things To Remember On October 1st**

The campaign by Oconee Memorial Hospital to get a "yes" vote on the proposal to build a new hospital is organized and highly financed. While the voting public will have a choice in the advisory referendum October 1st, there has been little or no organized efforts by any group who may oppose the idea.

However, it is obvious if you talk to the average citizen over the county, there is a silent population who have serious questions about whether or not a new hospital of Oconee County is appropriate a this time.

While the big, full page ads of promotion "for" building a new \$25 million facility say this can be done without raising taxes, this can be questioned. Issuing revenue bonds -- which the hospital wants the county to guarantee, in effect, if the voters choose to say "yes" on October 1st, may sound wonderful on the surface, but what happens if there isn't enough revenue -- estimated at two and one-half million dollars each year -- to retire the bonds?

While no one wants to think about this possibility -- certainly not those who want to build a new hospital -- it most assuredly is a possibility.

Too, the estimated cost of the new facility would be approximately \$25 million. However, if you multiply two and one-half million dollars each year by the estimated 30 years required to retire the bonds, this figure changes dramatically to \$75 million. The finance charges are the other two thirds of the cost!

Unless you are rich, have plenty of hospital insurance, which is high already, or you are insured by Medicare or Medicaid, the chances are slim you will be welcomed at this or most any hospital. The bottom line, folks, is money. Of course, the hospital as a business, must have funds to operate. This is extracted from those who use the facility. Or at least, that's where they try to get most of it, but if that fails, you as a citizen and taxpayer of Oconee County may be called upon to "supplement" the needs. That is basically what this whole matter is about when the voters who will vote on October 1st cast ballots. You will decide if you want your county

council and government to give the hospital board permission to issue revenue bonds with the guarantee of the county.

Whether this facility is good or needed or a "must" to insure the continuation of the hospital is not the question.

There has been some insinuation that unless this new facility is approved, there will be a deterioration in the quality of trained professionals attracted to Oconee -- especially specialists, etc.

Who can answer that? Who knows? It seems reasonable that unless any professional -- doctor or otherwise -- sees a need and reason to be in Oconee County, perhaps it would be better for all concerned to locate in another area.

Your vote in this referendum is important. While this advisory only, it will indicate to our county government the voting wishes of the people. The money for this project will ultimately come from you. It matters not a great deal if it is under the guise of revenue bonds or direct general obligation bonds, the public will pay the bills. There will be no mistake about that. It may be a really good time for all who care to decide what we can afford and what we can't. Let our elected county council members and supervisor know about it.

August 28, 1991

### **School Trustees of "The Old School"**

When Oconee County had 43 school districts that were eventually reduced to the one we now have, being a school trustee was a very important part of the system of smaller country schools as well as areas that had high schools.

The late Jim Shirley, for many years Manager and Pro of the Oconee Country Club along with his wife, Nancy, knew many interesting stories. He was raised in the South Union community which is now the general area of Chickasaw Point. He once told the story of how important his father considered the job of being a local school trustee at South Union.

For years, Jim said, his father had served on the local board. It was a time when some of the teachers in outlying schools would

take room and board in areas where they taught. Often this service would be available with one of the local trustees who may have extra room at home for accommodations. Thus, some may have had ulterior motivation in hiring since a bit of extra "board money" could be earned. However, aside from that, local trustee boards took their jobs seriously, and placed great importance on their status as "trustee."

It was also during a time when jobs were extremely hard to get for many people in the early 1930's and on into the '40's. Teachers worked very hard for very little pay, most of the time, and did a good job without a lot of frills.

Jim said his father was so impressed with his job as trustee in the South Union School that he believed if the Congress of the United States sent a delegation from Washington to offer him the job of President of the United States, he felt his father would have refused. "He probably would have told them, " Jim related, "I would like to help you fellows out, up there, but you know I'm a school trustee down here at South Union, and there is no way I can leave right now!"

Mrs. Bobbie Ruth Leard, a retired teacher who continues to work as a substitute, recently recalled some experiences she had during her early years of instructing. Mrs. Leard has never stopped the learning process until this day. During this time of year she has been teaching children of migrant workers who come to the orchards of Oconee County to help with the apple harvest.

For many years, Bobbie Ruth, held the undivided attention of students at Westminster who were in her science classes -- particularly chemistry. Those who availed themselves of her instruction were duly impressed, and most learned, what some consider, a difficult subject. Those students who went further to college appreciate her thoroughness. Many found they had good basis for the subject and were not intimidated by "higher" education.

In addition to academics, Mrs. Leard knows all about the "real world" having faced it on a daily basis where problem-solving is actual and not theory. She recently remarked, "school buildings don't teach our children...teachers with the determination to have

discipline in class with the will to get the job done are far more important.”

These were principles embraced by many of the “old school” teachers that would be just as good today as 50 years ago. Adequate buildings and trustees are important, but only in a small way when compared to the classroom teachers who knew how to get the job done without a lot of high-faluting supervision.

September 4, 1991

## **Revivals Marked End Of Summer**

“Being poor and sinning ain’t too bad...once you get use to it,” someone remarked, but both can be awfully inconvenient at times.

When this area was more agriculturally oriented, about this time of year -- after the crops were grown out and ready for harvest -- revivals would break out. This was a natural event, for most of the churches. Too, one of the “highlights” of the year was when the “protracted meetings” would begin.

Henry Kuemmerer, M.D. recalls some of the outstanding revivals held in the area where he grew up, “Neville Community,” about four miles above Walhalla. Some of the events that occurred, not necessarily an official part of the program, were authorized but nevertheless a result of the “meetings.” For example, one family who lived in the area had three daughters who attended the big “meetings.” Through some stroke of chance or by design each of the three became pregnant in succession. This was at a time in our history when pregnancy outside of marriage was “frowned” upon and kept tongues-a-waggin’ for miles around.

Closer home, there would be tents pitched up the Long Creek highway near the old “knitting mill” area. Complete with sawdust or shavings from Gaines Lumber mills, the preaching would “set in.” Souls would be saved long before many of the present televangelists were born. There would be “string band” musicians that could hang in there with the best of them. To this day I can recall seeing Fred Carver playing the mandolin at some of these meetings. The guitar and piano players were enthusiastic as were the singers



and ministers. It was a time of joy, relaxation, collection-taking, entertainment and fun, and perhaps more importantly, according to the preachers, a time to put aside your sins, take up the cross, and arm oneself with the Gospel as told only by the King James Version of the Bible.

All of the revivals were not “tent meetings.” Many originated in the churches. Reverend Jack Stansell, for many years pastor of the First Baptist Church, often invited outside speakers for these meetings. One in particular that impressed me as a youngster of four or five years, involved a visiting preacher by the name of Harold Smith. Harold was from the Anderson area and had a wide reputation as a great speaker who sprinkled his preaching with great dramatics. While I was hardly old enough to understand all that was happening around me, somethings stood out clearly. When my parents carried me with them to this particular meeting to “hear Harold,” it was hot, the windows of the church were “up” in the open position. The one or two small fans hardly made a dent in the humid summer night where the church was packed with some even standing around the doors and windows to hear this God-sent man speak the message.

As best I recall, the podium in this now demolished church was in two or maybe three levels. Harold was a great speaker, among other things, but on this occasion, he was preaching about the “feast of the passover” and chose to illustrate how the “death angel” was going about killing the eldest male child of those homes whose gates were not marked with the “blood of the lamb.” Holding forth from the second level of the podium, Harold grabbed himself by the throat to illustrate how the death angel was operating. In this theatrical rendition, he became so enthused he became entangled of his own feet and fell out amongst the congregation!

It was really a hot, humid and interesting presentation. One that has stuck with me down through the years. Harold went on to do other things...some of which were not necessarily a part of protestant doctrine as it turned out.

September 11, 1991

## **Crossing Highway 123**

### **“No Problem” For “Uncle Ozzie”**

Seeing increased traffic on highway 123 during the apple festival week brings back interesting memories.

In the area of Sandifer Funeral Home, now a parking lot and part of the Sandifer property, once stood the home of the Cashin family. Mr. O. E. Cashin and his family lived there for many years. Just across the street was the original location of “Foggy” Dickson’s restaurant and dance hall pavilion. Mr. Cashin was a skilled sign painter. He established a reputation that carried his work to many parts of the upstate area. Friends and close associates referred to him affectionately as “Uncle Ozzie.” His first name was Oswald, and many referred to him by the nickname. He was a skilled painter, and did most of the sign work in this part of the county. He painted a sign for “Foggy” that hung outside the building and proclaimed, “Dine and Dance With Foggy...Here On Earth.” No doubt, “Foggy” was ahead of his time. No one around here had thought of making a trip to the moon back in the ‘30’s, but “Foggy” anticipated a need to distinguish this planet from some of the others.

Nearly every day when he wasn’t busy painting signs, “Uncle Ozzie” would meander across the street to “Foggy’s” place where he relaxed, and more often than not, would read all the newspapers on the premises. There were two metal lawn chairs that “Foggy” kept near the front door for visitors, friends and customers. One of them was located just in front of the window that was next to the grill and sandwich area of the restaurant phase of the business.

Just to the rear of the counter, where customers sat on iron stools to eat and drink, was a small, partitioned kitchen which had a big sink. It was here pots and pans used in cooking were washed and hung on nails just above the sink. From “Foggy’s” usual position behind the counter, he could see both the outside area, and to his left could see through an opening into the kitchen sink area. Just to the right of the sink was a screened door that led out the side of the building -- east toward the home of Joe Berry Sanders.

“Uncle Ozzie” usually sat in one of the big lawn chairs just outside

“Foggy’s” front-view window to read the newspapers. He was a well-read and travelled man. He told me once that he had played a piano in a circus band. Too, he had been in the Merchants Marines and had travelled to foreign ports.

On this particular day, “Foggy” was having some disagreement with his employees, Will Teasley, a young, black man who wore the restaurant white uniform jacket and cap. Part of his job was to keep the serving utensils and pots and pans clean for cooking. He was in the kitchen doing “his thing” but kept mumbling something, sort of under his breath, toward his employer.

“Uncle Ozzie” was in his usual chair reading the paper. Whatever it was that caused sudden action is not entirely clear, but for some reason, “Foggy” reached down and got his .38 revolver. He levelled it on his left arm and aimed just above the sink where Will was bent down washing pots and pans. “Foggy” fired the gun at one of the pans just above Will’s head. The explosion was immense! Will took off out the screened door and nearly took the door with him. “Uncle Ozzie” was not in slow motion either. The blast of the gun just behind him was enough to get his undivided attention. It was reported that he crossed highway 123 without ever taking time to let the newspaper down from in front of him. He negotiated all the traffic without any problem. Will, on the other hand, finally returned to work after about a mile run down the Southern railroad tracks where he could have, no doubt, been a contender with any modern day track star.

September 18, 1991

### **The “Columbus System” Ain’t All Bad**

Mr. W. C. Felder, local printer, once jokingly remarked that renowned editor and publisher of the old Westminster Tugaloo Tribune, Mr. A. L. (Gus) Gossett, used the “Columbus System” in typing his stories on the Underwood manual typewriter.

Explaining how this system worked, he said, “He would simply discover a key and land on it!”

Whatever it was called, the system worked. At least well enough for Mr. Gossett who had a style strictly expressive of a man who knew how to get the reporting job done. We've so many time-saving devices today we don't have time to use them.

It is rather amusing and amazing how dependent we've become in all kinds of business. Go to any modern check-out counter to pay for goods received where an electronic beam reads a code on the product. The price is then printed by electronics. The clerk doesn't need to know how to do simple math. You put your money down, it is entered into the computer, the machine tells the clerk exactly how much change to return.

But...let the power go off on the machine...the business world stops right there. Yet, we are scratching our heads or some other part of the anatomy, wondering why high school graduates can't read, write or do simple math. The truth is we've created a world where most of them see no need to get involved with those technicalities.

I'm not trying to say we ought to "sell the tractors and go back to mules" but there is something to be said for knowing how we operated a system before there were tractors.

Cutting through "red tape" and paper work that, too often, isn't necessary is a skill that is nearly a lost art.

Talking recently with one of the managers of Jim Smith's garage, Bill Smith, I think, the matter of getting stickers (inspection) came up. It all seems like a joke to me...this business of having a sticker placed on your windshield for \$3. However, if you don't have a sticker, the fine is \$45, according to Bill.

Another thing mentioned was insurance. State law requires it on vehicles. Bill suggested, and with merit, that the law should require individuals to have insurance as opposed to vehicles. Now, that makes sense to me. If you have more than one vehicle, then why can you not be covered for any vehicle you are operating at the moment as opposed to having coverage on each vehicle individually?

Since it is only likely that one person may only operate one vehicle at a time, then why not just "cover" that person? Oh well, I know and you do, too, that the people who hold the note and mortgage on most vehicles aren't going to loan money to buyers who

won't and can't provide insurance...on the vehicle, regardless of what happens to the driver.

If we can only get that illiterate 25 percent of our population to buy the phonetic system of reading which says the English language has only 44 sounds, we can begin to make some progress toward raising SAT scores. That is, if anyone considers it important enough to know the meaning of any of those sounds -- understanding, that is. Don't worry, the next generation will solve this problem!

September 25, 1991

### **“Send Them A Message”**

If you are interested, and you'd better be, then you'll need to “send them a message” on October 1, 1991

“Them” is our county council, supervisor and all others concerned with the idea that a new hospital is needed in Oconee County now.

While this voting is a referendum, it will clearly indicate to our council, how you feel about the matter.

There's been enough propaganda splashed around through an intensive and expensive campaign by the hospital administration promoting the idea of a completely new building. The contention is a structure costing about 25 million or so can be built without raising taxes. However, just recently, the hospital again raised rates. Regardless of what you want to call it, it is your money that will pay the bills.

Too, the estimated cost for a new hospital, including financing charges is said to be in excess of 75 million dollars -- not 25. That's a lot of difference. If you've ever had experience sending money to the IRS, you can bet you will help pay for any new buildings plus you are already paying for the spiraling cost of operating today.

The truth is, folks, there ain't no free lunch. You can bet the present hospital isn't operating on charity. It's either your cash, insurance you pay for, or either federal or state government taxes you pay in addition to the local county taxes that are used at this and most other hospitals.

It really doesn't make much sense to argue about whether or not a new hospital would be nice. That is not the primary question for most people in this area. Rather, it is whether or not the already over-burdened tax payer, struggling in a sluggish economy, are willing to add more on the heavy load. It's not what may be nice, buy what can we afford?

Some people who recommend a new hospital are generally those who have some association with the facility. We are sure many of them are sincere, dedicated people. That, too, is not the question. For the facilities we have and personnel there, perhaps we're as well off as any in the business. This is not a personality matter, but rather a cold business decision that voters will have to make.

We've come a long way from a time when there was no hospital in Oconee county to the present, but it wasn't made in sudden leaps. At least two of the present hospital board members were very active in getting the building now in use built. These two members are in a minority, no doubt, but they have publicly stated that whatever needs Oconee County hospital has, at present, can be adequately met without having to build a completely new structure. Their judgement was good in the past and it seems there's little reason to doubt them now.

Whatever your feelings about this matter, you can express them at the polls on October 1st. The final outcome of this matter -- insofar as county government is concerned -- will be greatly influenced by the voters who vote on October 1st. It is a great American privilege to vote...but you must make an effort to do so, or it won't matter what you think or want your government to do.

It will be your choice, and you can bet, it will be your bill to pay if you want it that way!

October 2, 1991

## **Back To The Top Of The Mountain**

Dr. E. L. Shuler, retired founder of Westminster Medical Clinic, has once again visited a mountain top that impressed him early in life.

The top of Mt. Washington in New Hampshire is 6,288 feet, according to literature, and is a close second to Mt. Mitchwell in North Carolina, at about 6,800 feet -- the tallest two in the eastern states.

Mt. Washington has special meaning to Dr. Shuler, who now lives in Chochee Valley, during spring and summer, along with wife, Patsy.

Both often visit friends in Westminster where he practiced medicine and reared his family.

What about this mountain and its meaning to Dr. Shuler? In essence, it was a real factor in his pre-medical education at Clemson. Clemson College (during the 1930's) was a military school. There were few options for students needing financial help. The cost was minimal, or nearly "nothing" compared to modern costs. But money was extremely scarce for most people during the '30's. A \$100 had near equal purchasing power of about \$1000. You needed money to go to school then as now. Most of the time the only helping hands to be found were at the end of your arms. It was here that Shuler, a young man determined to learn and earn his way, began the long journey through medical training.

Mt. Washington became a factor in this quest when Shuler landed a job at the top of the mountain as a waiter. The owner of the mountain at that time had gone to great lengths to build a steam powered cog railroad up the steep incline (37 degrees in places) to the top. There, he established a hotel and restaurant for visitors and hikers. It was here that Shuler worked. For five summers, he was able to work and earn enough money in salary and tips to pay \$300 yearly tuition at Clemson and at the Medical College of South Carolina.

This mountain, of course, had special meaning when he revisited it for the first time in 56 years. It is no longer a privately owned facility at the top, but a New Hampshire State Park and an official U.S. weather station where the wind has been officially clocked at 231 miles per hour, the swiftest record so far recorded on earth. According to a sign in the weather observatory, it was "the world's worst weather." Cold, foggy, rainy, snow and icy weather whipped

by wild winds is the “order of the day” on top of Mt. Washington. There are moments of relief when everything will clear and you can see “forever” from this majestic point, but don’t depend on it.

Dr. Shuler said this recent visit in September was a good illustration of how changeable conditions are at this point. Leaving the base of the mountain in clear, warm sunshine, the little steam engine pushed us through strong winds, bright sunshine, fall coloring, and above the tree-line to the top where blustering fog and cold rain restricted visibility to near zero. It was a typical day, Shuler recalled, as he compared the weather then and now.

It was for Shuler a great moment to return as it was for those who make the trip for the first time. Colleague and present physician/owner of Westminster Medical Clinic, Dr. Henry Kuemmerer, was very interested in Shuler’s return visit as was Claude Knorr, local friend in retirement who ably furnished skilled driving in his van to the mountain site. Also making the trip to this mountain wonderland was Shuler’s wife, Patsy and his sister, Mrs. Joyce Pattishal from Pennsylvania, along with Jack and Aline Hunt.

A recent visit to the local dental office of Dr. D. G. Johnson revealed that at least four of those making the trip had been to the dentist immediately upon returning home. Johnson said that Claude Knorr reported “We did a lot of eating along the way.”

It’s hard to turn down “real maple syrup” and waffles for breakfast in a climate and atmosphere of friends ready and willing to stop at any yard sale or restaurant. Especially any restaurant!

October 9, 1991

### **“Old Time” Politics Was More Interesting**

Recent interest in the hospital referendum vote brings back a few memories. No one enjoyed local and country politics any more than the late J. Walter Duckworth. He would go to all the “stump” meetings when candidates hit the trail, and would stir comment on nearly either side of any issue for the sake of fun and debate. It was sometime like a circus. Too, Boone C. Brock, always took an active interest in most political issues. Local candidates and county offi-



cers often sought his support or opposition depending on the person and/or office. Boone was smart enough to know that he could sometimes help a candidate by either talking for him or against him. It was kinda like the late LBJ was reported to have made an offer to help a friend seeking re-election to Congress. "I'll be glad to come up there and help you," Lyndon said, "And I'll be glad to talk 'for you' or 'against you' whichever you think will help the most. President Johnson was also smart enough to know that not everyone liked him, and there would be those who would take any opposing view to his in any election.

There was fear in the hospital referendum vote that a sizable number of people would ignore the election. This did not happen. While there were many more eligible voters, any time you can get 8,000 people to the polls in Oconee County, you have a pretty good consensus. Now, we understand, there is some "mumblin'" about the outcome of the vote since it didn't come out the way the advertising agency hired by the hospital administration had predicted and financed to the tune of \$50,000 or more.

County Council will have the final say in this matter since it is their legal and moral obligation to commit themselves and full fidelity of the county regarding bonds. While this campaign was "based" by the hospital on paying for bonds with revenue income, you and I should realize, for sure, that any default would revert back to the good old taxpayers of this county...and the taxpayers advised in this referendum that they're not yet ready to make this commitment. Certainly, those who studied the issue and took time to vote have every right to expect county council to know and respond to their sentiments expressed in this referendum. The people have spoken, and "they" is "us." Surely county council "got the message" even if the hospital administration has a "hearing problem."

The "old time" politics often had "venom" interspersed with facts, and throwing in a few appropriate lies was not uncommon in a hotly contested race. Sometimes it worked and sometimes it didn't.

One candidate in the past became quite concerned when it was learned that a story was circulating about him that somewhere in his past he had "stolen a mule." This was considered a high crime in

years past. The man's wife told him as she tried to console him a bit, "John, you know and I know that you have never in your life stole a mule."

"Yes," he answered, "that is very true, but that is not the problem," he continued.

"The problem is," he explained, "that lying s.o.b. runnin' agin' me is about to prove it!"

While the modern system of elections cost much more and are more sophisticated in some respects, they're a great deal less interesting than the more personal "stump meetings" once were. For example, how many recall Henry Miller challenging Joe McCarey in the race Joe made for supervisor? Henry approached Joe at the auditorium at the old Westminster High and told him point blank, "That's a lie," as Joe came down on an issue that involved the county Grand Jury where Henry had served as foreman.

October 16, 1991

### **Local Cafes Were Favorite "Meeting Places"**

If you wanted to know "what's happening" about 50 or so years ago, you'd probably visit one of the local cafes along main street. This was true in Westminster as with other small towns of the county.

There were several worthy of note. Among the first to "spring up" just after WWII, was the "Greasy Spoon" located near Lucky and Main Streets. This was a small establishment, as best I recall, started up by Fred Martin and Henry Griffin. It was very popular place for youngsters and especially returned veterans of WWII to meet, eat and enjoy lovely conversation as well as 50's jukebox music. Fred Martin continues to live in Westminster on Augusta (that's the way it's spelled on the street sign) with wife, Lottie and daughter, June, who once worked for the famous Southern airlines as a flight stewardess. Fred and Lottie operated restaurants in town for many years at several locations -- including the Carolina Cafe on Main street and later Martin's on Windsor and eventually Martin's where the Westminster Motel is located near city Hall.

Too, down the street on the corner where Dr. Billy Campbell

now has his office, prior to Cleroy Freeman operating a barbershop in the corner building, Tallmadge Seigler operated Seigler's Cafe along with wife, Billie, who, incidentally is a sister of Fred Martin and James Martin.

These were popular gathering and eating spots in the community, along with "Foggy's" combination restaurant/ grocery/ beverage place, Ed Melton's restaurant, located next to Boone Brock's pool room on East Main street near the corner at the "76" station then known as the "all night gas station." The list goes on with others in the area such as William's Restaurant, once located near Oconee Mill. There was Tannery's Restaurant, operated on Main Street just above the Cheswell Building -- on the corner at that time. Also, Billy Fennell's.

It was an era long before the "fast food fad" hit the south. These places to meet and eat were very popular with each being distinct in a special way.

Songs on the jukebox at that time are now being remarketed via t.v. as albums. You probably see them on CNN or other cable channels. Most were real classics back at a time when songs were more easily understood with real words that, more often than not, made sense. Many were ballads that had special meaning to those who heard them at distant points away from home during WWII or immediately thereafter. A few may have been considered risqué at that time, but now would hardly cause anyone to raise an eyebrow compared to what's seen and said on radio and T.V.

It was amusing for me to visit home for a short time just after WWII, drive up the street near Dickson Motors and hear the jukebox blaring from the Greasy Spoon with a down-home beat as some crooner belted out a popular song at that moment, "She's got freckles on her...but, she's pretty!" Where else could you hear that kind of entertainment at that special time in our history? It was all in good fun and frolic for a brief moment.

These were special times for a lot of people. The operators of these establishments were themselves great and interesting people to their clientele. You can't get that atmosphere anymore. It is a diminished institution that hardly exists anywhere.

October 23, 1991

## **Ah! Yes, Changes Do Begin Early, Kendra**

Perhaps it's the age we live in. Perhaps it's weather patterns. Perhaps it's a new generation of highly intelligent youngsters who may do a better job of solving problems than those of present. Whatever it is, you can depend on kids to "cut through the static" and come out with astounding observations. If not observation, at least vivid imagination.

Kendra Grogan, cute, clever, intelligent granddaughter of Bob and Evelyn Grogan of Doyle Street, visits them occasionally. Recently she came with her father, Tony Grogan, who has been with the U. S. Navy about 18 years, and is presently stationed in Norfolk, VA. As usual, she is entertained by her grandparents, great grandparents, other kin, friends and neighbors. At the same time, she reciprocates with her wit, humor and wisdom.

While Kendra is only three years old, she sometimes reflects imagination beyond her age. In fact, recently, she just turned three and was in the process of receiving gifts and congratulations from one of her great grandmothers.

The doting grandparent quizzed Kendra about how it felt to be three years old. The conversation may have gone something like this:

"Kendra, now that you are three, what changes have you noticed?"

Kendra looked puzzled and yet the little wheels in her brain were beginning to spin. At first, she didn't answer the question, but, no doubt, was pondering it.

Pressing on for an answer, the question was rephrased: "Kendra, now that you are three years old, some thing must be different for you, have you noticed anything since you are now three?"

With serious delivery, after great thought about the matter, Kendra finally threw out an answer.

"Why yes," she responded, "I have noticed something different since I turned three...now I have hair growing on my legs!"

Oh, well, that sort of thing just kinda grows on you when you begin to grow up. But who would have believed this little "angel" would have made this observation and expressed it with so much convincing sincerity.

October 30, 1991

## **Oconee Mountaineers Was Tough Team**

Nearly everyone who has the slightest interest in sports has been watching the world series games. Perhaps because of the nearness of the Atlanta team to our area, but in general the overall interest in baseball runs high at the close of the season and series time.

While we admit there are many skilled players in the business today, there was extreme personal interest in the textile teams of years ago when Westminster's Oconee Mill "Mountaineer" teams hung in there with the best of them.

There were many good players that passed this way during a period of the late 1930's and 40's. Probably T. Henry Wood, then general manager of Oconee Mills, did as much as any individual to promote baseball locally. Henry moved here from Calhoun Falls which was another great baseball town. As things progressed, he actively promoted the local team, improved the baseball park, built bleachers and had some of the finest players available.

All of this occurred in an era when most textile towns had teams and leagues that competed fiercely. The Oconee "Mountaineers" were tough when they played in the textiles leagues of the area. Bob Grogan was an active player and manager of some teams that won championship games. There were many outstanding players over a period of years, with some of them moving into major league ball as a profession. One who comes to mind is Marvin Rackley, an outstanding fielder who went on to play with several major league teams including the former Brooklyn "Dodgers." Also, Neil Chrisley, one of several outstanding Chrisley ball players that played professionally.

Baseball was a lot of fun for local players and fans back then. The games meant as much to us as the world series did to their most serious fans. Today, it is a very big business. At the time when local teams competed, players were playing for love of the game and a job at the mill during the week. The companies involved provided necessary equipment but the players themselves had to buy certain items such as shoes and gloves. It was an entirely different economic climate.

Many outstanding individuals come to mind when the

“Mountaineers” competed such as Bill Robertson, Pete McGuffin, Lefty Carrithers, Double-Ugly Cannon, all pitchers. Then there was A. V. Seymour, E.E. (Junior) Smith, Bob Gettys, (Big) Red Simpson and his brother (Little) Red Simpson, Melvin Cobb, Bob Grogan and a host of Hawkins boys: including Ed, Willie, Melvin, Waymon, Granville and Clarence (Pokey). Too, there was big “Foots” Gilden, a dependable hitter who played first base.

Each team was allowed to hire two players during the season from outside sources. The “Mountaineers” were sometimes supplemented by a player from the professional ranks of the Atlanta “Crackers,” a AAA team that played in old Ponce DeLeon park across from Sears mail-order house. Bob Grogan said some of these imported pitchers brought in for important games were paid \$100 each game pitched. That was considered a huge wage at that time.

It was, in many ways, a wonderful era. Fans knew most of the players personally, and the entire town closed for the ball games at Oconee Mill park. It was generally a full to over-run stadium with fans such as “Roddy” King, King Dillard and Rob Simpson harassing the opposition from the bleachers along first base line. Some of the teams that were always tough included Newry, Orr Mill, Utica, Pelzer, Williamston, Gluck, New Holland, Lavonia and N.E. GA Trade School.

Life seemed to be a lot simpler back then, and surely the cost was in line with reality.

November 6, 1991

### **John A. Reynolds Was An Interesting Man**

The newspaper business has traditionally attracted some very unusual and interesting characters. Among those who passed this way several years ago was John Allen Reynolds. John, now deceased, was a native of the Madison area. Early in his life his potential for swaying public opinion was manifest. I was said he was the youngest man ever elected to the House of Representatives in South Carolina. He was a member at the early age of 21, though he was not returned to office after one term.

For whatever reasons, John did not let his reelection bid failure keep him from joining in many adventures. He perhaps did a lot of things that many others just thought about doing, but never did.

For about three years, after John was well beyond the age of 50, he worked in the advertising department of The Westminster News. While he was not always consistent in this effort, he sort of had a charm about his personality that kept your attention and hopes alive that he would somehow get the job done. This, however, is beside the point when his total life-span of activity is considered.

For example, John, had, at one point, been a deputy sheriff in Texas where he reportedly married the Sheriff's daughter. He said he had played professional baseball at one time in his varied career. At another time he engaged in the art of Grapho analysis. That is, he would examine a bit of individual handwriting and proceed to render a view of the personality traits by his findings by the way letters and words were formed. This ability took him all the way to the Cherokee Indian Reservation in North Carolina, according to the late Walter Duckworth. Walt reported he was riding in the mountain area at one point during the summer tourist season when he spotted a big billboard that said: "You've heard him on radio...you've seen him on t.v....now's your chance to meet him in person...John A. Reynolds, Graphologist."

According to the "gospel" of John, later he described his appearance at Cherokee as strictly a business deal he had arranged with the chief (Saunook) of the Cherokee nation. In a wigwam, John set up his desk for handwriting analysis when bus loads of tourists came in. For each \$2 he received for his services, he was to place \$1 in a cigar box the Chief provided for his rental space to John.

The fact that he did engage in this interesting business was reaffirmed recently when Dr. E. L. Shuler reported he first knew John when he moved his practice to Westminster during the 1940's. Being responsible for a Rotary Club program, Dr. Shuler said he invited John to the meeting where he gave a presentation to the local Rotarians. Shuler says members reminded him of this on several occasions.

Among endeavors somewhere along the way John became a preacher for a "spell." Exactly what kind of denomination is not known for sure, but there is little doubt that he gave it solid effort until some kind of "sin" overtook him. From that he probably took up writing as a profession which doesn't count "Sinning" as real liability. Especially if it's reduced to a "drinking" habit. In this area John excelled. And marrying! When James G. Brown was serving as editor of the News, he and other fellow staff members were always intrigued by John. The question of marriage came up, and Brown asked, "John, how many times have you been married?"

With serious deliberation, he finally replied after searching his memory bank very carefully: "Three, that I remember!"

Such was the interesting man John Allen Reynolds.

November 13, 1991

### **Memories For Sale At Pickens Flea Market**

There are flea markets and then there are flea markets. None in this area are quite like the Pickens Flea Market which convenes every Wednesday morning -- bright and early.

This is not intended to be a commercial for the event. In fact, with recent good weather, the crowds are unusually large and the thing just keeps on growing...kinda like "Mopsy." It seems to be self promoting.

Just exactly why hundreds, yea, thousands of people come in from everywhere in the hills, country, towns and from three or four states to stand out in the early morning cool air, in darkness to sell whatever, is mystifying. Like the commercial for a product says, "why ask why?" there is no single answer to this question. No doubt, many people in this time of economic crunch need money. They look around the house, barn or whatever and come up with something to sell and head for Pickens. If you aren't open by early daylight, you may be too late. This affair starts early and is usually over by lunch time.

Probably, most of the people in attendance for buying or selling have traditionally been "Early risers." Maybe from being raised on a



farm or having to rise to meet an early morning work shift in a plant.

It appears from the wares available on the “outside” tables, that many of these folks have items that more often than not bring back a host of memories. Old farm tools, chickens, dogs, birds, parts and pieces of equipment, books, guns, cameras, plows, axes and heaters. If it’s ever been made or used, you may find one at the Pickens flea market.

A lot of those attending not only sell, but also buy for each other. It’s kinda like antique dealers...they all seem to be able to make a living by selling to each other.

Roy and Robbie Luckadoo, former residents of Westminster, loved to go to the Pickens market each Wednesday morning when the weather was anywhere near reasonable. Aline Hunt often accompanied them and learned the “fine art” of bargaining from Robbie who is a masterful trader. Half the fun, they say, is seeing how low the seller may go to strike a deal. Of course, a lot of the “stuff” for sale is automatically classified as “junk.” But what is “junk” for one may be a “treasure” for another. Especially, if it generates a pleasant memory or fills a need.

Otis and Bea Mason sometimes make the trip to Pickens to see what’s “new,” on the market. Otis, more often than not, can identify many of the mechanical tools used by generations past.

Recently, Harry and Sarah Love were among those with an outside table of wares. Harry, for many years operated the movie projector at the Broxy Theatre on Main Street, Westminster. He also worked as a sewing machine mechanic at Beacon and Kendall textile plants. Finally he operated his own trucking business before retiring. He said it’s a lot of fun to “set up” at Pickens and observe the flow of humanity as well as making a sale now and then.

If you want to recreate memories and maybe see some old friends, this may be a place to begin. It is different from most of the commercial markets that offer mostly new merchandise.

November 20, 1991

## **Sidney Ballenger -- A Great Citizen**

A great void has been left in the county with the recent passing of Sidney Ballenger of Walhalla. To paraphrase Will Rogers a bit, it seems that Sid never met a person that he didn't like. Apparently the feeling was reciprocal for those who knew him. At his graveside services, it was obvious from those attending that this man had reached a wide cross-section of humanity and impressed them in some special way. In his professional life as a teacher, no doubt he made a positive difference for many. Yet his influence reached far beyond the classroom to those who knew him simply as a friend and neighbor.

Sid loved this area and especially this beautiful county. He and two close friends -- John Danner and Maxie Duke made special effort to visit remote places in Oconee County. Their mission was to find and photograph natural beauty that is here -- especially the many waterfalls. This collection and this effort led by Sid and his friends will surely live on in a special way. Few realize how many beautiful waterfalls there are in Oconee County unless they've had the treat of seeing their collection of slides and pictures. Fortunately, they left these memories to the county libraries all over and especially for the school system.

Life is such a fleeting and uncertain arrangement that it keeps you in a constant state of ebb and flow among your fellowman. Thus, you only get a quick glance and a darting acquaintance with so many. Yet, there are those few you chance to meet and know who will somehow impress you in a kind and good way that may cause you to be a bit more appreciative of everyone and everything about you. Sid Ballenger was that kind of unique person. You could hardly forget him, once you met him, and certainly only good and positive thoughts surface when his being here is recalled.

## **Lowell Ross Interested In Preservation**

Lowell Ross, presently a member of the Oconee delegation as a House member, has always been interested in historic significance

of various parts of the county.

He recently pointed out the site of Oconee's oldest building, Oconee Station, located just off highway 11 above Walhalla, is situated on a 240 acre site that is controlled by the county or state.

Lowell has an interest in trying to preserve some of our history and perhaps utilizing this location for a collection. For example, he mentioned the old school building that once housed Block school. This building, still intact, stands at the rear of the formerly Block church which has been renamed, I think, Mt. Pleasant. In a long range suggested plan, would it not be reasonable to establish an area where the old one and two room school houses -- such as Block -- could be relocated and preserved as part of our heritage? A typical school house of the early part of the 20th century would surely have appeal now and even more in the future.

Too, he mentioned the possibility of creating some kind of plan to restore or recreate an old Indian village at this location where constant maintenance and care could be provided.

This interest and suggestion is appealing and worthy of consideration in this period where so many are inclined to destroy or let decay many of our historical structures.

Representative Ross may be on to something that is worthy of serious consideration and action.

November 27, 1991

### **If You Ever Send Your Sinuses To Arizona**

There once was a commercial for a patent medicine that made a comparative analysis for sufferers: "It's like sending your sinuses to Arizona."

In the event you decide to send you sinuses to Arizona, and if you want the rest of your anatomy to go along for the ride, you may want to know a little about what to expect.

Having made the trip recently to the Phoenix area to visit with our daughter, Rachel Ann, who has made this part of the country "home" for several years, I can tell you the experience is worth the trip.

Rachel Ann and Jeff Dittburner have been in this area long enough to know the “regulars” who live in Arizona the year around and can easily distinguish the “snow birds” who “fly in” for the usually warm winter climate.

After a visit or two in this section, one can begin to detect the “snow bird” visitors by their driving habits and especially their shopping habits. Most are retired and have come to Arizona for the balmy warm weather which is comparable to the central/south Florida climate of the east.

Rachel says that “snow birds” always know where the best bargains are available and are especially aware of any “senior citizen discounts” offered. Their driving habits of taking their time and turns at their convenience is also known to Jeff Dittburner who has experienced a couple of unpleasant encounters. “You have to watch them all the time and anticipate the unexpected,” Jeff explained, as he negotiated heavy three and four lanes of traffic moving along the expressway at 65 to 75 miles per hour.

One thing that brings back a few memories of the summers past in South Carolina as one views the desert southwest, is the big cotton fields growing in the arid climate. Cotton is big business in this section of Arizona and is mostly farmed by machinery. The desert land must be extremely fertile. When it is furnished water by irrigation canals, crops flourish...not only cotton but citrus farms as well. Rachel and Jeff have oranges, tangerines, and grapefruit growing in the back yard. Also, a very friendly covey of quail visit their yard regularly to feed and observe. The desert is alive with many things, including 2500 varieties of cactus. While the climate in Phoenix is generally warm in the winter to extremely hot in summer, only two hours away in Flagstaff, for example, 15 inches of snow fell two weeks ago.

It really is a worthwhile experience to visit the mountains of Arizona with their breath-taking beauty, to read and hear the legendary stories of gold prospectors and stage coach escapades. Also, to observe the political climate of a state where a governor was recently impeached.

Arizona has many qualities that compare to our state...some of

which aren't outstanding such as crooked politicians and vote selling. However, on balance, like South Carolina, it appears to have more "positive" attributes than negative.

Rachel and Jeff love it, love their work (Rachel at a Day Care learning center and Jeff a student at ASU and full-time employee of America West airline.) It is a pure pleasure to visit with them wherever.

December 4, 1991

## **A Day That Changed The World— December 7, 1941**

If you were old enough to be conscious, 50 years ago, chances are you remember exactly where you were and what you were doing when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. It was a day that marked a great change in most American lives.

To this day, I recall this particular Sunday. Nathan Nuckols was a *Greenville News* paper boy at the time and lived with his parents in the home where Sidney Harper and his wife now reside on Retreat Street. No sooner had the word been received than the presses began to roll in Greenville with banner headlines: "Japs Bomb U.S. Hawaiian Posts, They Say War On." The head was printed in red ink and paper boys all over the area were alerted to distribute the special edition. Nathan, I believe, was to have joined in a sandlot football game that afternoon at a location just to the rear of homes now occupied by Mrs. Sara Johns, Jim Hunt and Bob Dyer. This special edition sent him to work distributing the printed word of this dastardly attack. He delivered faithfully on his bicycle.

I dare say five percent of the population at that time really understood exactly where Pearl Harbor was located and more especially what this cowardly attack was to eventually mean to all the world. However, it wasn't long before students as well as adults were referring to their geography books and maps to learn more about this place and the meaning of this attack. It meant all-out war, death and destruction as well as disrupted lives. While many of the agonizing experiences that were to follow in the effort to win, there was also opportunity for many that may

not have been otherwise. It was, however, a negative way for most Americans to gain travel and experience.

This past Sunday the *Greenville News* published a tabloid edition that commemorated "A date which will live in infamy," as President Franklin Delano Roosevelt termed it. This special edition covered many of the details that were not available until recent years. It was well prepared and written. In one part, there is reference to Paul Greene, a career Navy man aboard the cruiser *Detroit* that day. Paul has long since made his home in Mountain Rest and his wife, Kay Green, has been a correspondent for the *Keowee Courier* for many years. Another survivor mentioned was James S. Pass, an Alabama native 72 who served as an "oiler" on the USS *Helm*, a destroyer with a full crew aboard at the time of the attack.

C.H. Nelson, a well-known survivor of Westminster was also present in Hawaii during this critical moment in history. C.H., I believe, was in the Army at the time of the attack and may have been stationed at Hickam Field. I'm not sure of the base, but I'm sure this day is etched forever in his memory. C.H. returned to the mainland after the war, completed his education with a degree from Clemson and became a rural mail carrier. He retired several years ago, and continues to live with his wife, Carolyn, and family on Toccoa Highway. Charles Nelson, a son who is now in the banking profession in Washington, DC, once served as editor of *Westminster News*, prior to taking a Master's Degree and entered into banking.

C.H. has a sister, Elizabeth, who was a member of my class at high school at the time. She, along with others who understood the gravity of this attack, were especially helpful in enlightening the entire history class of Mrs. Sara Johns. The following days at school were often spent discussing the war, the effort and soon the involvement of most of the class members who volunteered for service rather than wait to be drafted.

December 11, 1991

## **Will Rogers Was Far Ahead Of His Time**

Only a few are living now who recall Will Rogers -- a very popular cowboy from Oklahoma who became famous as an entertainer. He was, in fact, part Cherokee Indian, a highly intelligent observer of government, writer, radio personality, world traveller and a great proponent of aviation. He also made a number of movies along with his daily activities of speaking engagements worldwide and was loved and respected by America for his quick wit and wisdom. He died in an airplane crash in Barrow, Alaska, in the 1930's as he was making a tour with his friend Wiley Post, an expert pilot. Will loved this country and the people who made it work. He reserved his comment for the high and mighty of that period, for the most part, but had the ability to say things that made a point but did not personally offend. He was, indeed, a man ahead of his time, and most of his observations are just as valid today as they were sixty or seventy years ago.

Recently, I bought at the Pickens Flea Market a near-perfect copy of a book entitled, "Will Rogers, Ambassador of Good Will, Prince of Wit and Wisdom" by P.J. O'Brien with Appreciation by Lowell Thomas. This volume has a really good summary of Rogers' life and how he affected so many people. He travelled all over the world with the "movers and shakers" of that period in which he lived.

Below are some of the comments as he wrote them for a daily syndicated newspaper column:

"Every invention during our lifetime had been just to save time...Two hundred years from now history will record: 'America, a nation that flourished from 1900-1942, conceived many odd inventions for getting somewhere, but could think of nothing to do when got there.'"

“If I wanted to start an insane asylum that would be 100 percent cuckoo, I would just admit applicants that thought they knew something about Russia.”

“Another disarmament conference disbanded in Geneva without doing anything but getting more suspicious of each other. If any two nations don’t hate each other, why just let them confer on something. And they will before it’s over. Stop conferring and you will stop fighting.”

“1930 was a year of “under and over estimation.” Nothing was guessed right all year. Optimism was over-rated and pessimism was under-rated.”

“We don’t seem to be able to even check crime, so why don’t we legalize it and put a heavy tax on it? Make the tax for robbery so high that a bandit couldn’t afford to rob anyone unless he knew they had a lot of dough. We have taxed other industries out of business; it might work here.”

“Here I go and make a week’s mistake in my time, and arrive back in the midst of the most colossal rodeo of applesauce in the history of our national pastime. I honestly believe there is people so excited over this election that they think the President has something to do with running the country.”

December 18, 1991

### **Keeping Warm In Winter Once Required Effort**

Most people who have a place they call “home” usually have a way of keeping it warm with a modern heating system. This may be



gas, oil, or electric systems. It is a real blessing to those who need a way to fend off winter weather when it dips below freezing levels.

Many may recall when winter required effort to keep warm and even summer was not totally free of need for heat which was often required of those cooking with the old woodstoves.

While there are yet many people who like to heat their homes with fireplaces, inserts, efficient wood burner stoves, etc., the most part do not have to worry very much about fuel supply. Particularly in the 1930's, it was a must for every home to have a good source of fire wood. It was often a continuing job for someone in the family to wield a double-blade axe to keep trees cut and firewood in the house.

Distinctly, I recall my grandfather, Leo Hunt who lived in the "knitting mill" section just off the Long Creek highway. He seemed to love cutting wood for their fireplace in the little house where he and Granny lived. He had a big, two bladed axe that he kept razor-sharp. He was a rather large and powerful man who could wield it easily and with art that came only with experience. The chips he would knock loose from a big hickory or oak log were big enough and wide enough to be split and used for fire starting or to help feed the wood cookstove in the kitchen. While it was entertaining for me to watch this process and perhaps carry in a bit of wood, it was a necessity of that period.

Later, coal-burning systems came into the area. Sometimes a combination of wood and coal was helpful in home heating for those who had stoves and grates to accommodate. It was, however, a never-ending chore to keep fuel supplies for the average home.

At that period of time in the 1930's and on into the '40's, there were some innovative people who utilized cut-off saws to expedite wood cutting production. Many of the cut-off saws were powered by one-cylinder gasoline engines. One remembered belonged to the Spencer family that lived just above my grandfather Hunt in a home that is now owned by Harry Love. Mr. Spencer was a well-known saw miller and understood the complexities of power systems. In his yard, he had a two-wheel, one cylinder engine, that was cranked by spinning one of the fly-wheels. Once in motion, you could hear

the clackety-clack rhythm of this engine running for miles around. On days when the wind was still, the exhaust pipe would blow a continuing series of perfectly formed smoke rings that floated softly across the yard. More importantly a circular saw blade that could easily generate a pile of firewood if the operators kept it busy. It was a miracle machine for that period of time.

Later on, Mr. Jim King rigged an A-model car with a cutoff saw on wheels that he would pull around to various homes with big wood piles. This ingenious contraption featured a pulley attached to one of the rear wheels. Mr. King would jack the back end of the A-model, position his cut-off saw, attach a big leather belt from pulley-wheel to saw pulley, crank the A-model, and a power system was in place ready for wood cutting production. Some used T-model engines in a similar manner. Keeping firewood for the fire was not always a "picnic."

No doubt, Otis Mason recalls other similar mechanized systems and probably had a great deal of experience operating them.

January 8, 1992

## **What About The Economy For '92**

The events of 1991 left the economy of the U.S. in turmoil. Who would expect us to enter and win a war and see the Russian empire fall apart all within the period of one year?

This, however, presents a problem. We don't know how to deal with it, apparently. For example, we haven't won a decisive war since the "big one," WWII, though we've had some limited success in places. Now, we don't really know how to cope with the shambles of USSR.

One of the Russian dictators, Kruschev once said "We will bury you," as he admonished us and other adversaries.

Little did Kruschev know that his government would eventually fall apart...not from our military superiority, but from within. It came unglued from its own inefficiencies. A government that was supposed to be all for one and one for all was never quite that. No government ever really is what it says its going to be. Witness the