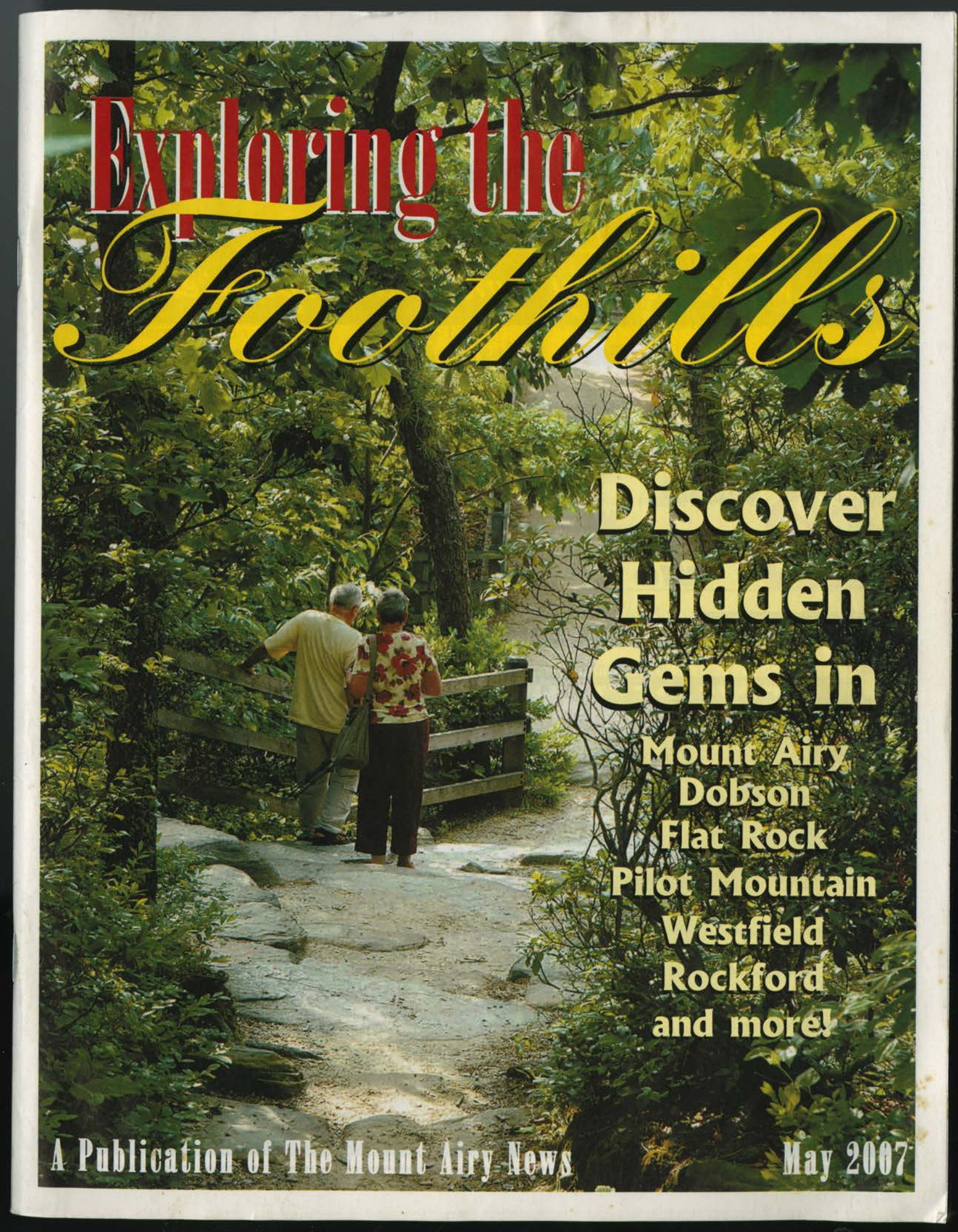




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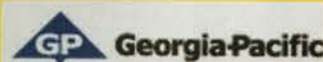
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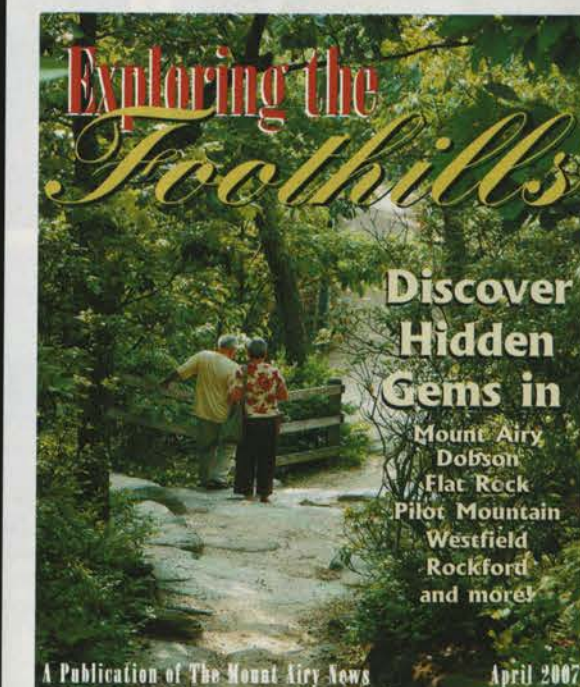
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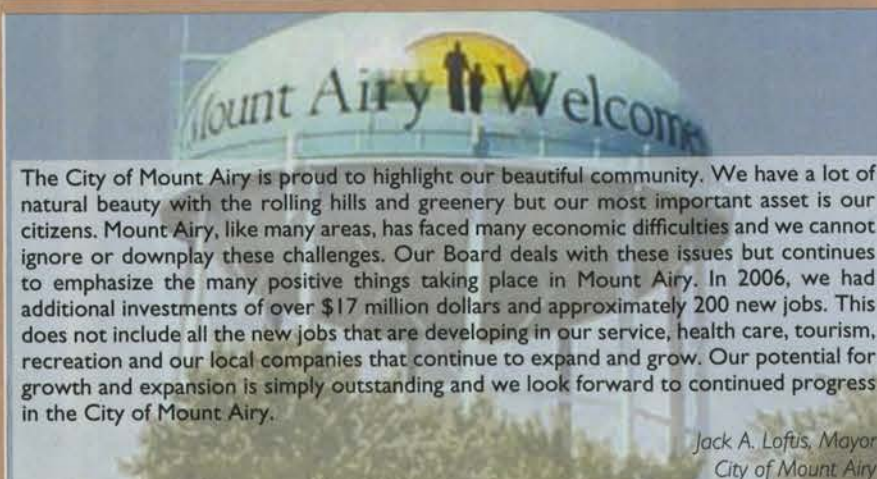


Discover Hidden Gems in
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A Publication of The Mount Airy News

April 2007

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The City of Mount Airy is proud to highlight our beautiful community. We have a lot of natural beauty with the rolling hills and greenery but our most important asset is our citizens. Mount Airy, like many areas, has faced many economic difficulties and we cannot ignore or downplay these challenges. Our Board deals with these issues but continues to emphasize the many positive things taking place in Mount Airy. In 2006, we had additional investments of over \$17 million dollars and approximately 200 new jobs. This does not include all the new jobs that are developing in our service, health care, tourism, recreation and our local companies that continue to expand and grow. Our potential for growth and expansion is simply outstanding and we look forward to continued progress in the City of Mount Airy.

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Lights, camera ... showtime!



Jonathan David Phillips
Dwayne Hemrick stands in the projection room at the Bright Leaf Drive-In. He and his wife Hope purchased the business in 2005.

By JONATHAN DAVID PHILLIPS

MOUNT AIRY — When the sun goes down on the weekends, Dwayne and Hope Hemrick get to show off their handiwork. The Bright Leaf Drive-In on U.S. 52 is alive and well.

According to the National Association of Theatre Owners, there are only 648 drive-ins left in the United States in 2005, eight in North Carolina. Now, there are three, Hope said.

The Hemricks have invested a lot in their "baby." The couple worked at the drive-in for almost seven years for the previous owner, Don Davis, selling concessions and helping out.

"Back then we did popcorn and candy," Dwayne said. "We both loved it. We didn't do it for the money."

When Davis passed away, the Hemricks said, they just had to buy it to keep the movies going.

"We didn't want it to close," Hope said.

After purchasing their dream, the couple quickly realized they might have gotten in over their heads.

"We just got this crazy idea," Dwayne said. "I love the drive-in, but we've really been tried."

"Everything that could go wrong has gone wrong."

Both can rattle off a laundry list of mishaps, flubs and mistakes in their first year of being first-time business owners.

"Opening night, with a packed crowd, the projector broke," Hope said. "We didn't know how to fix it."

Dwayne said that during one sellout showing, the septic tank backed up.

"The building wasn't ready for it," he said. "We had a sellout crowd and every

time someone flushed the commode, the smell got stronger near the concession stand.

"We call that, *the Night*."

The couple isn't shy about admitting the fact that everything they have learned has come the hard way. Dwayne said he didn't even sleep the first year, and he probably ran off the first group of employees.

Has it been a headache? Yes.

Did they think they made a mistake? No. Why?

"The customers," Hope said. "It's exciting to be here for the customers, to see two movies for \$5 and eat something affordable. Especially for those who haven't been here. It's just exciting."

And the customers have responded with their attendance. Grandparents, families, people with their dogs and college students from Wake Forest University have been tak-

ing advantage of the lowered ticket prices for the same new releases, Hope said.

Friday through Sunday, year round, Dwayne, Hope and a bevy of close friends run the projector, sell tickets and fix what Dwayne hails as, "The best hot dogs around."

Tauna Hall started out as a customer, and now she's the employee supervisor. The rest of her family even pitches in, she said.

Fresh coats of paint, fresh attitudes and the love of movies have the Hemricks eyeing a good old-fashioned celluloid happy ending.



Jonathan David Phillips
Drive-in co-owner Hope Hemrick reaches for a bag of popcorn in the concession area of Bright Leaf Drive-In.



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Former Bear keeps tabs on Florida

By JONATHAN DAVID PHILLIPS

FLORIDA — Who is Alex Sink?

Her great-grandfather Chang Bunker moved to the Mount Airy area in the early 1840s with his twin brother Eng. Sink even grew up in the original home on the famous Siamese twins' farm. The Granite Bear, class of 1966, says her Mount Airy roots have played an important role for who she is today.

So who is Alex Sink? She's the Chief Financial Officer for the state of Florida.

The chief financial officer of Florida is an elected position, Sink said, combining what North Carolinians know as the state treasurer, state comptroller and part of the insurance commissioner's responsibilities.

"We safeguard and protect the taxpayer's dollars through effective management of the business of the state, educating and advocating for consumers about financial matters, and enforcement of insurance, fire safety and worker's compensation laws," she said in an e-mail interview.

Having a high-profile position in another state hasn't taken away the special place Mount Airy holds for Sink.

"Mount Airy has a big place in my heart," she said, adding that during her campaign around the state of Florida for the last 18 months, she felt proud of her heritage as the daughter, granddaughter and great-grand-

daughter of farmers, and of growing up in "Andy Griffith's hometown."

"You wouldn't believe the number of people who came up to me afterwards with some Mount Airy connection," she said. "Our small town is famous."

Sink, who ran as a Democrat, told the story of childhood friend Theresa Fleming Greene, now living in Jacksonville, who was willing to put aside her strong Republican leanings to go out campaigning for her "hometown girl."

When she can, Sink said, she and her sister, Dottie Sykes, visit Mount Airy frequently. Sink's father, Kester, still resides in Mount Airy. Sink, her husband, attorney Bill McBride, and their two children live outside Tampa.

Yes, Florida's CFO says Mount Airy has definitely played a role in who she is both personally and professionally, from the education she hails as "fantastic" to the "many wonderful teachers who convinced me I could do whatever I set out to accomplish in life."

Personally, Sink said, Mount Airy instilled her with "small town values."

"My upbringing on the farm there, and my heritage as part of the Bunker Family, definitely molded me and led me to a life of giving to others, teamwork and, now, public service."



Chief Financial Officer for the state of Florida Alex Sink is a Mount Airy native.



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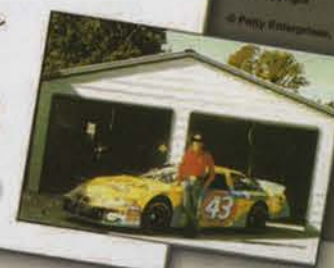
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Mount Airy



Jonathan David Phillips
Linda Stanfield, director of the
Mount Airy Museum of Regional
History, digs through archives
for odd facts at the museum.

Some odd news ...

By JONATHAN DAVID PHILLIPS

MOUNT AIRY — It was on the front page of the *Mount Airy Times*, the story demanded a major headline.

The date? Sept. 11, 1930.

The story? Carl Roberts was fast approaching hour 200 in his attempt to become the North Carolina tree-sitting champion.

He was going for the record, he had 700 hours to go, he was "Mount Airy's hope," the article said.

Did he do it? Who knows? No follow-up article was found in the archives at the Mount Airy Museum of Regional History.

All that is known is that Roberts, or "young Roberts" as he was coined by the paper, was "perched up on Renfro Hill for more than a week." He said he would make "good intentions" to stay up until Christmas Eve of 1930.

There are more quaint stories from Mount Airy's past ...

■ March 2, 1899 — House not haunted says owner; rumors are from enemies.

"For the past two months I have had few boarders at my house, and it seems, when I get some, they become very restless until finally they leave, and, recently, I have heard that my enemies are circulating the report that my house is haunted and that ghosts and hobgoblins are frequently seen and heard in the house since Jack Mays was hung, all of which, I wish everyone to take notice, is entirely false and only done to injure my business. It is true that some little scratching, kicking and groaning has been heard within the house, but nothing has ever been seen that could be called dangerous. Now, therefore, I do hereby give notice to all persons wishing to board and lodge with me, that they will be kept in perfect safety and need have no fear of haunts. So you need not believe false statements that have been put in circulation to my injury." — Mat Norman

■ November 11, 1895 — Cost of a cow for the year.

"Mrs. S.C. Jones, of South Mt. Airy, has furnished us with a statement of the actual expense and profit of keeping a cow for one year. For the year beginning Nov. 1st, 1894, and ending Oct. 31st, 1895, Mrs. Jones kept an itemized statement of the actual expense incurred in keeping her cow, and it was as follows: Paid out for chops, \$29.25; for ruffness, \$13; for pasturage, \$9.75; total, \$52. She realized from the sale of milk and butter, \$61.80, after having supplied her table for an average of seven persons for the year with milk and butter. She made 239 pounds of butter after having sold one quart of milk every day for the year. It is a pleasure to publish such items as this."



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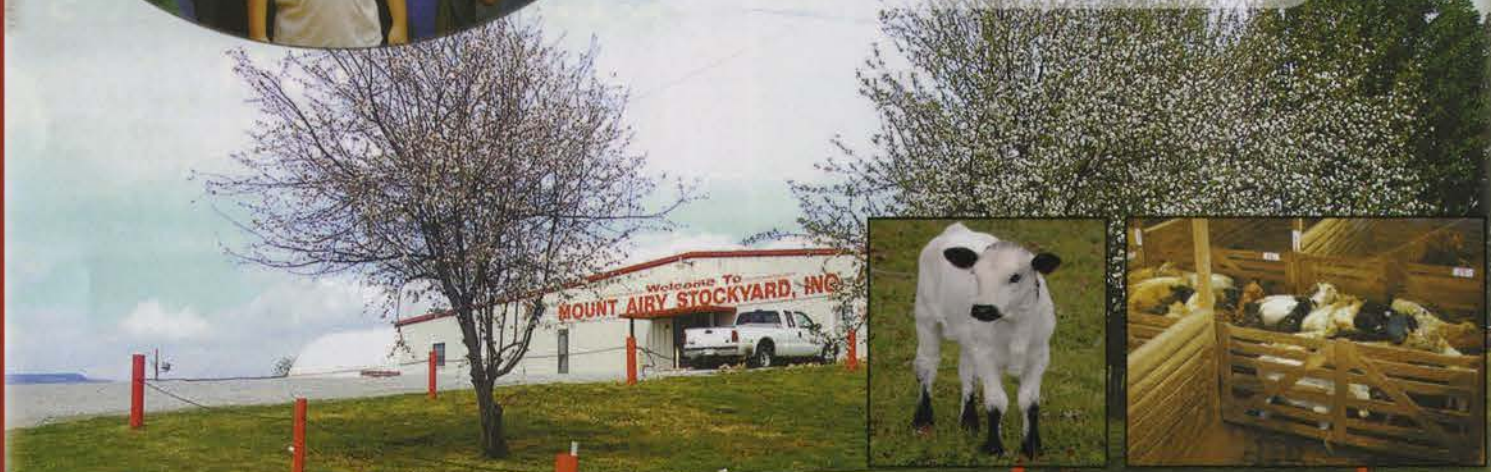
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Taking a guided trip down memory lane

By REBEKAH TAYLOR-MARTEL

FLAT ROCK — He may well be the mayor of Mount Airy, but Jack Loftis is an expert on the community of Flat Rock and makes a great tour guide.

His knowledge and memory of the town where he grew up are vast and detailed and they provide an appreciation for the history of the small, but tight community.

Flat Rock was mostly an agricultural community, he said. Rows of mill houses lined the streets which surrounded the center of town, called the crossroads. People made humble, yet honest livings in factories, textile mills and farms. The North Carolina Granite Corporation, founded in 1928, provided natural materials for building, but limited jobs.

The center of activity was found at churches or schools. Boy Scout troops were active, and fishing and hunting were favorite activities, especially for fathers and sons. Girls learned the art of mastering home economics and the people worked together to maintain family and social values. Teachers at the school were from outside areas and lived in a boarding house across the street from the school. The two-story house still stands today.

Loftis' father worked as a stonecutter at the quarry, and his mother worked at a hosiery mill. He said his parents were sensitive and conscious of the need for education and sacrificed so their children could receive one.

"Everybody was poor back then," he said. "I remember having to get water from a neighbor because we didn't have our own well. It was certainly primitive by today's standards, but we were happy and active. Just good, homegrown people."

Loftis said the biggest change he experienced was electricity, when heating, air-conditioning and indoor plumbing came into the home. The technological advancements changed not only industry, but lives, and they experienced a new-found luxury — convenience.

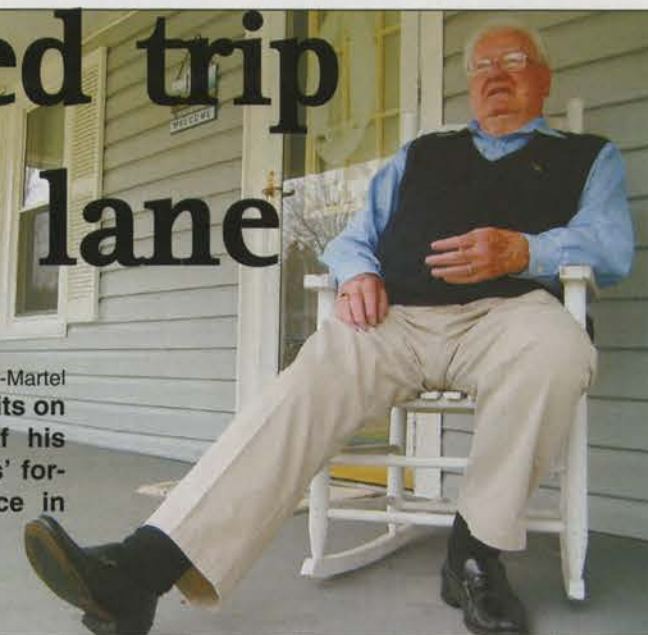
"We still walked everywhere we went because we had to," he said. Another advancement was the development of vaccines and the improvement of health care.

The life expectancy became longer. Loftis noted that the cemeteries are full of people who died of things that are easily diagnosed and curable today.

The way of life was hard, but the means of living were pretty simple. Loftis said the kids were in great shape because they were active.

"We had a great family meal. The adults would take it easy for the day and the kids would just enjoy playing. We'd roller skate over by the old tennis court near the quarry or swim or go get some ice and make ice cream. It was a good life," he said.

Rebekah Taylor-Martel
 Jack Loftis sits on the porch of his grandparents' former residence in Flat Rock.



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REALTOR

Living in the fast lane

By REBEKAH TAYLOR-MARTEL

FLAT ROCK — Grayson Collins recently sold a 1939 Ford Standard Coupe to NASCAR's Ryan Newman. Collins also took his own spin on the Lowe's Motor Speedway. He is a native — and unofficial mayor — of Flat Rock who owns and operates Flat Rock Motors, just two doors down from the house where he grew up. He is a member of the Good Guys Weekend, a club based out of California geared toward car enthusiasts. His office is full of treasured family photos surrounded by memorabilia and souvenirs that reflect his hobbies and passions.

He can be seen around town cruising in his latest purchase, a 1957 Chevy. He has remained in Flat Rock and been in business for the last 40 years. He has seen the town evolve, strengthen and unite in the face of tragedy.

At 5 years old, he stood on the steps of his father's store and watched as Flat Rock Elementary School burned. The visions, smells and sounds of that day, he said, will never leave him.

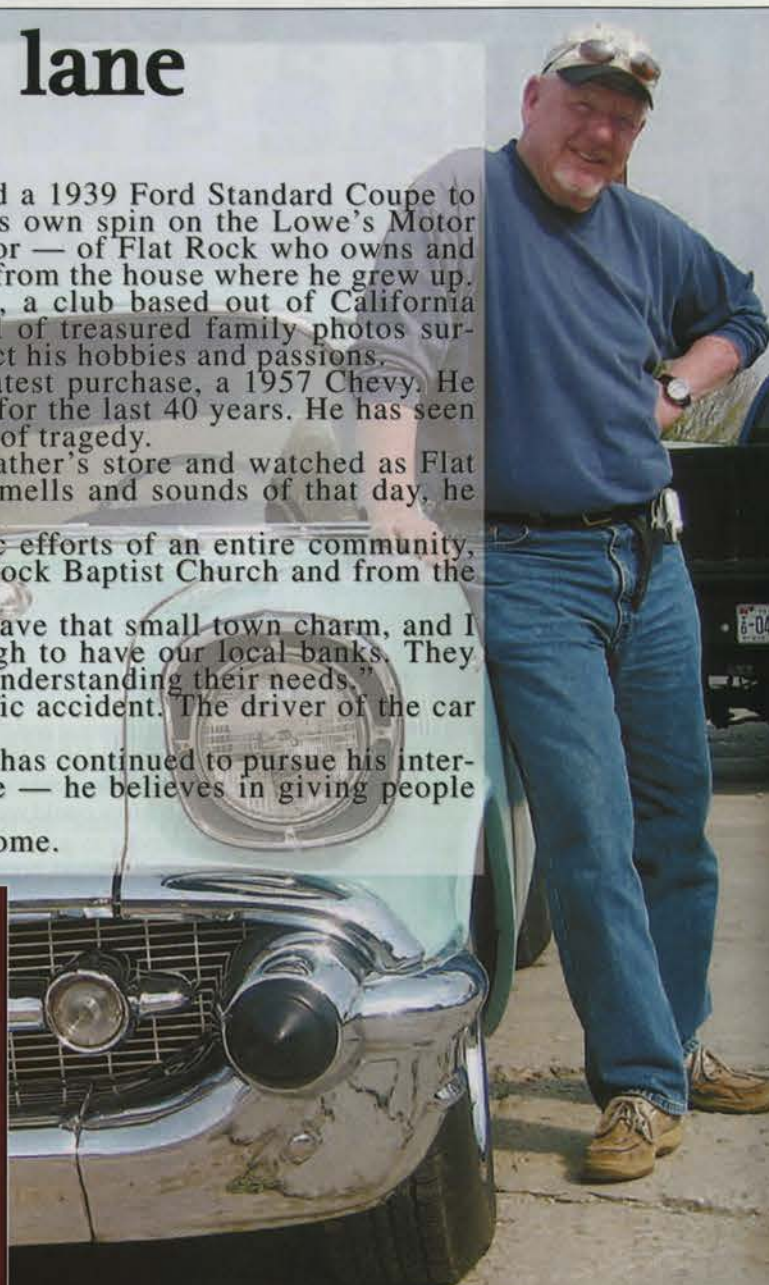
Amidst the turmoil, though, he saw the heroic efforts of an entire community, which was built on Christian values from Flat Rock Baptist Church and from the dedication of the Flat Rock Ruritan Club.

"We're growing here," he said, "but we still have that small town charm, and I hope that doesn't change. We're fortunate enough to have our local banks. They have helped the small-business owner by really understanding their needs."

Collins lost his wife a few years ago in a traffic accident. The driver of the car that struck them had been drinking.

But Collins is once again enjoying his life and has continued to pursue his interest in cars and trading. His philosophy is simple — he believes in giving people fair and honest trades.

Trading to him is thrilling — and so is being home.



Rebekah Taylor-Martel
Grayson Collins stands beside his new ride, a 1957 Chevy.

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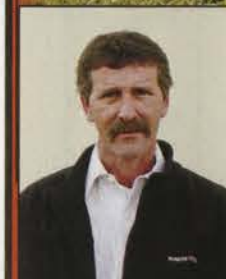
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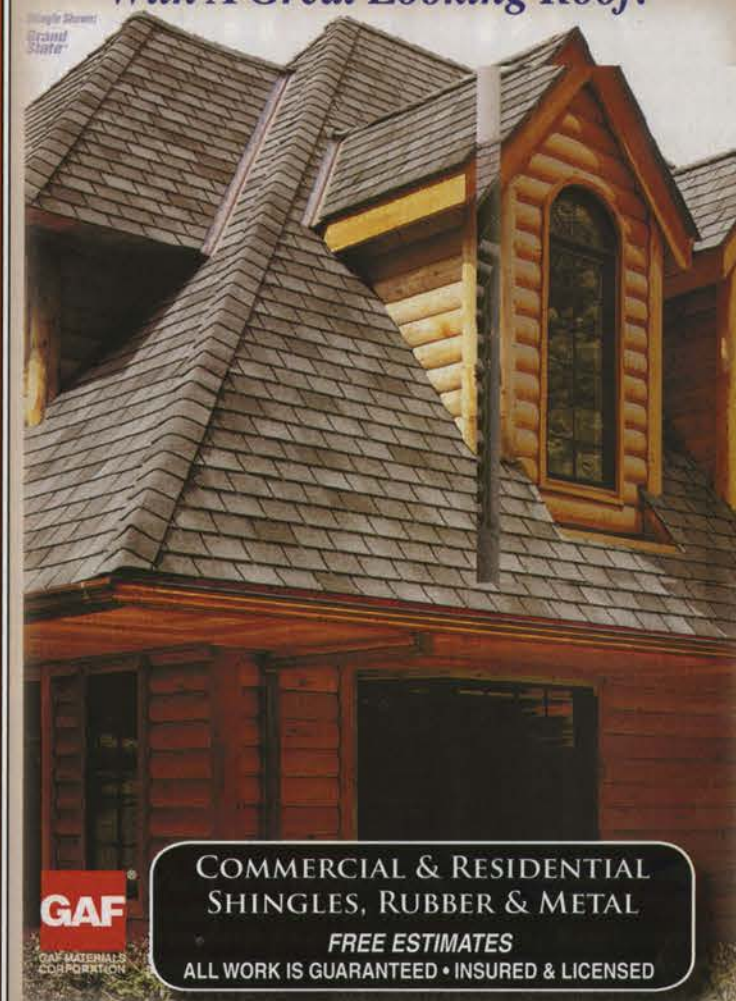
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Flat Rock A special welcome

By REBEKAH TAYLOR-MARTEL

FLAT ROCK — Slick's Pottery can't be missed by anyone driving through the hills of Flat Rock.

There, along the highway in between cow pastures and pine trees, travelers will find many humorous characters and statues looking at them from a large, gated property.

It has been affectionately referred to as lawn art, but the industry term is "ornamental concrete."

Owners Donnie McMillan and Alice Woods have been in business together almost 20 years. While both were working other jobs, they sold deer statues they made from a metal mold. They actually drove around with the 100-pound deer in the back of a truck and did very well in sales. So well, in fact, they stayed in that business.

Today, their inventory consists of various pieces of interest. Pigs, chickens, bison, cows and even an engaging gorilla are only a few examples of the animals — some life-size and some super-sized. Benches, columns, fountains, monuments and other pieces inspired by Japanese, Asian-Pacific and Greco-Roman art and architecture are for sale as well.

Some of the larger pieces are made of fiberglass molds purchased from Indiana. All of the statues are poured on site. Beware though: They are concrete and heavy.

According to Woods, their best sellers are the gargoyles.

Many of the ideas and molds are obtained at national trade shows, where popular molds are auctioned off. The pieces can be painted for clients or left in their natural white cast color. Some pieces look better with color, while columns and Greek statues look more natural left untouched, even with rougher textures.

Special orders usually are usually accommodated. Visitors will find much already to choose from within the vast selection. It is worth the drive, about five miles north from the center of Flat Rock along the country road.

Just look for the giant pink elephant.



Rebekah Taylor-Martel
Visitors to Slick's Pottery in Flat Rock can see this curious character and more.

Flat Rock Ground steak: A Southern delicacy

By REBEKAH TAYLOR-MARTEL

FLAT ROCK — One of the most popular things sought at the Autumn Leaves Festival in Mount Airy each year is the booth that sells ground steak sandwiches sponsored by the Flat Rock Ruritan Club.

The tradition started almost 30 years ago when the festival first began. It is a large undertaking by the Ruritans, a non profit organization that uses all the funds raised by the sale to go back into the needs of the community.

The star of the sale is the ground steak sandwich, which is made fresh. According to Philip Easter, it takes about a week to organize the booth and get the food ready for the event. The Flat Rock Ruritans usually purchase 2,000 pounds of meat from Mount Airy Meat Center. The meat is cooked on the day of the event. A special vinegar-based slaw is prepared a few days prior to soak in flavor. The club makes about 20 five-gallon buckets of slaw for the event.

The festival begins around 9 a.m., and by noon hungry patrons are already lined up around the booth for the famous sandwiches.

The meat, ground chuck, is cooked in a white pepper gravy sauce and served on a bun. Some have enjoyed it with mayonnaise and slaw, and some prefer to pour hot sauce over it. People often have requested the meat to be sold by the pound, like barbecue, but diehards maintain the sandwich is best eaten fresh.

Ground steak sandwiches can be found on some restaurant menus in the area, but the recipe used by the Flat Rock Ruritans has remained the local favorite.

"People have begged us to sell the sandwich at times other than Autumn Leaves, but there is just so much work involved," said Ruritan member Barbara Badgett. She said she is proud of the success of the sales each year and said the club even sold out by late afternoon one year.

The Flat Rock Ruritan Club, founded in 1956, uses all of the money from the sale to benefit the community, in ways such as maintaining the Four Way Volunteer Fire Department, which the club helped to build, and financing education programs and scholarships.

The ground steak sandwich does more than feed hungry stomachs; it feeds the needs of an entire community.



Rebekah Taylor-Martel
Ground steak sandwiches made by the Flat Rock Ruritans are the best-selling items at the Autumn Leaves Festival year after year.



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Rebekah Taylor-Martel
Modern technology has brought the process of cutting the granite stones into the 21 century.

The quarry is

By REBEKAH TAYLOR-MARTEL

FLAT ROCK — Stretching across a 40-acre area of the community of Flat Rock is the largest open-face granite quarry in the world. Visible from space and closer, from overlooks along the Blue Ridge Parkway, it is evident why the community got the name, "Flat Rock."

The term "open face" simply means that the quarry is on the surface instead of underground and can be walked on. It also provides easier access to the stone for harvesting.

The bare, solid rock was discovered in 1872, when John Gilmer, a farmer, bought the land. After Gilmer threatened to back out of the sale, not realizing what the rock was, the seller decided not to charge him for the 40 acres of seemingly unusable land. About 20 years later, the building firm of Thomas Woodruff and Sons was constructing stations along a new railroad which ran from Greensboro to Mount Airy. When the builders about the rock, they realized it's potential value and purchased it from Gilmer for a mere \$5,000. Quarrying of the granite rock began in 1889 and has continued ever since.

Granite evolved through centuries as molten magma beneath the surface of the earth, which contracted from the earth's shrinking crust. This phenomenon raised the magma to higher planes. It eventually cooled and solidified, forming the massive stone known as granite.

In 1904, Thomas Woodruff and Sons was reorganized as The North Carolina Granite Corporation.

The white stone from the site, now known as Mount Airy Granite, has provided the material for impressive structures all around the world, especially in Washington D.C. The look of the nation's capital has been maintained with much of the natural rock from the quarry. The memorial bridge, the World War II memorial and other structures were built using the Mount Airy Granite, as was 95 percent of the street curbing.

Other structures built from the rock of the quarry are the Wright Brothers Memorial in Kitty Hawk, the base of the Stonewall Jackson memorial in Richmond, Va., and large buildings like the United Arab Emirates Chancery in Washington D.C. and the Amoco building in Chicago, Ill., which is the tallest granite building in the world. The granite stone also has been used to construct mausoleums, fountains, planters and flooring, and much more, all on a grand scale.

Closer to home, the stone can be seen in many structures throughout Surry County. The Flat Rock Ruritan building and Flat Rock Baptist Church both were built with the natural stone. From churches to the police department, the Mount Airy Public Library, City Hall, the Blackmon Theater and numerous others, the white Mount Airy granite was used to build beautifully designed structures that helped

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Rebekah Taylor-Martel
The surface of the North Carolina Granite Corporation's quarry spans about a mile wide, and the solid granite stone has been measured to six to eight miles beneath the surface.

to develop and enrich the community.

Throughout the years, technology has had a great impact on how the stone was harvested and processed. Multi-blade saws, diamond cut-off saws, pulleys and hydraulics are only a few of the types of machinery used. Some of the work involved in shaping the stone is still done by hand with blasters, hammers and chisels.

Officials said tours of the quarry are not given to the general public due to safety. Because it is an active mine, it must adhere to the regulations of the Mine Safety and Health Act set forth by the U.S. Bureau of Mines. Visitors can get a look at the quarry, though, from an overlooking observation deck. From there, visitors can watch workers and get a pretty good perspective on how vast the quarry is.

It has been estimated by the North Carolina Granite Corporation that the supply of the granite rock will continue for hundreds to thousands of years to come. The deposit has been said to measure six to eight miles below the surface and will still be available for this generation's grandchildren's grandchildren.

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Westfield

Delivering Westfield attitude

By JONATHAN DAVID PHILLIPS

WESTFIELD — Grant Christian is proud of where he comes from. The former postmaster of the Westfield Post Office has experienced a lot in his 63 years on earth.

He's a father, a grandpa, a former fire chief, a farmer and a veteran. In the backyard of his home on Westfield Road, Christian surveys his land with wide eyes.

When he speaks, he can't help but smile. When he passes by a bush or a tree, he can't resist the urge to touch a branch.

"The people," Christian said of his favorite part of working at the post office. "You meet a lot of people from all different walks of life."

In 1966, after leaving the U.S. Army, Christian returned to the place he was "reared at."

"I was a clerk part-time when I started out," he said. "I saw a lot of changes. The biggest was the price."

When he joined the post office, he said, stamps cost 6 cents.

He found his knack for the postal life while in the service, he said, when his company commander at Fort Bennett, Colo., asked him to help out with the mail. Christian said there were so many service men on the base that the mail situation was a task.

"I worked in the military post office for four months," he said. "In fact, the company commander gave me a commendation for it."

In January, Christian's time ended and the military asked him to re-enlist to go to Vietnam. He said he came out because the oldest of his three daughters, Sabrina, had just been born.

Christian left in January. In February, his company left for the war.

Back in his hometown of Westfield, he knew what he wanted to do.

"When I got out, the post office in Westfield opened," he said. "It paid off. No complaints."

For 32 years, Christian's face was a familiar sight at the post office. He said people wouldn't believe the things some tried to mail.

"People were always trying to mail firearms," he said. "We were always accepting bees and chickens."

Christian smiled as he began listing the various animals that passed through his post office during his time. "Ducks? I don't think we ever received any rabbits."

As the years flew by, he said, he laid his roots in the area. He was a charter member of the Westfield Volunteer Fire Department and even served as chief for 10 years.

Still, nothing compares to his family — three daughters, "all daddy's girls" — and seven grandkids.

When he retired in 1998, he set up a system of family, cattle and landscaping his acres.

"I do a smart bit of gardening," he said. "I mess with a few old cows."

"You have to stay busy."

One fact that causes the outgoing man's face to turn red is his cameo in a 2001 film by students of the North Carolina School of the Arts. He refuses to release many details and says he'd like to remain tight-lipped.

"No, no, no," he said with a laugh. "I can't think of the title of the movie, but I was a wholesale store clerk."

A "wholesale" store clerk, not just a clerk. Details, Christian still appreciates the details. He treasures them and, he said, that's why he focuses his time on his family.



Grant Christian

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The Westfield community sits under cloudy skies as Pilot Mountain is visible in the distance.

Jonathan David Phillips



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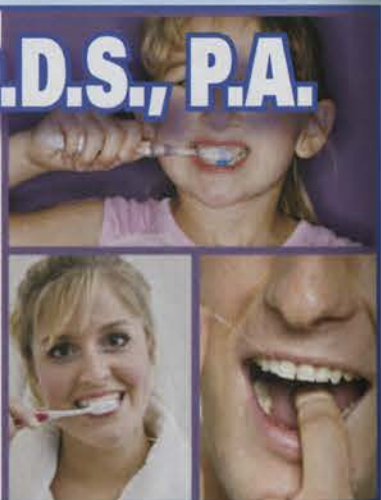
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By JONATHAN DAVID PHILLIPS

WESTFIELD — The place to be in Westfield? That's easy. Open your front door or pull off to the side of the road and take it in. It's outside.

Whether sitting on a hill behind Woodville Baptist Church or at the ball field, there's something calming about the area. Playing in the creek, letting your imagination explode in the woods, you can literally spend hours daydreaming the day away.

"This is God's country," Nora Snody said while on a visit to her sister-in-law's house. The sun perched overhead with the blue sky and clouds fighting for its attention. "It truly is. People just don't know how good it really is."

Frances Jessup, Snody's sister-in-law, knows that feeling. She's lived in Westfield all her life, she said, all 78 years.

"I just love the outdoors," Jessup said sitting on her lawnmower, a chore she said she wouldn't trade, especially for housework.

"It's a wonderful area, everyone knows each other," she said. "I just try to work on it, keep the neighborhood nice."

"My husband always said, 'Leave things better than you find them.'"

So that's what she tries to do. She sits on her yellow lawnmower and tends to her three acres, waving her hand to a neighbor or a car driving by.

"I can't see as good anymore, so I just wave and go on about my business," she said.

The 78-year-old, with her yard work gloves on, cranks up her yellow chariot and does what she enjoys best.

"I wouldn't be anywhere else," she said.

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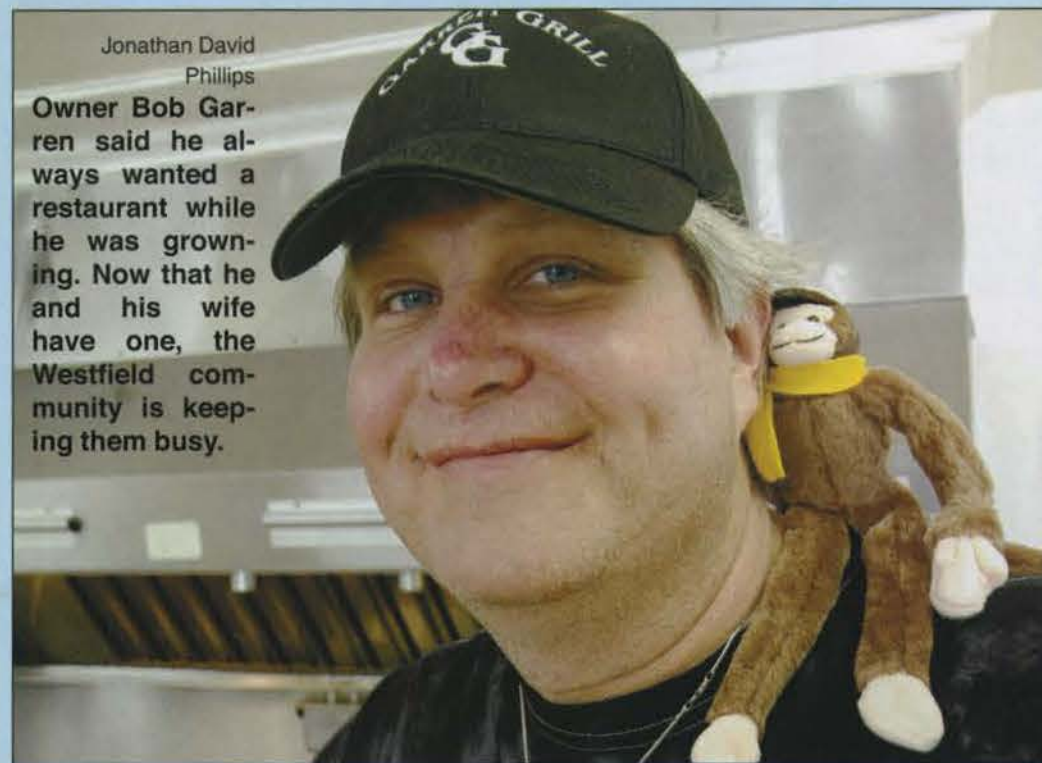


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Garren Grill has a few little rules —



Jonathan David Phillips
Owner Bob Garren said he always wanted a restaurant while he was growing. Now that he and his wife have one, the Westfield community is keeping them busy.

By JONATHAN DAVID PHILLIPS

WESTFIELD — There are two things diners agree on about Garren Grill: The food is good and the people are great.

"It's the best place to eat in Westfield," said Allen Huff, a regular who says he eats there about every day — even on the weekends.

"I've driven from Pilot Mountain to Westfield just to eat here," he said.

That's the loyalty that owners Bob and Lori Garren say keeps their business venture going.

"We offer something different," Lori said. What they offer is comfort.

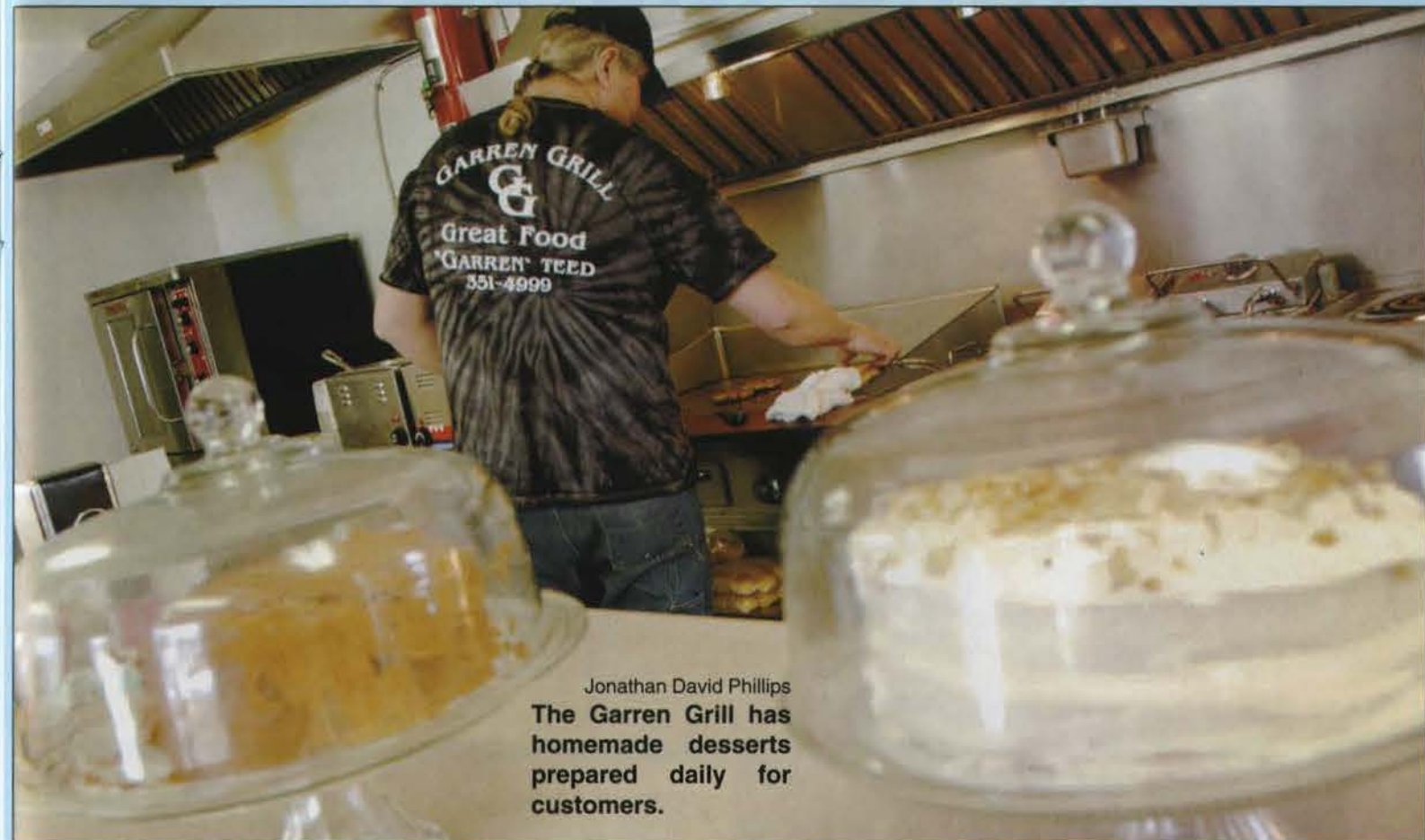
The pair have owned the grill for more than two years. People familiar with the area know the location, the former home of the Westfield Sandwich Shop since 1982.

When he was in high school, Bob said, he always wanted to have his own restaurant.

"I always dreamed of a restaurant, but instead I got this one," he said, cracking a grin and laughing.

Sarcasm and jokes abound at Garren Grill

shirts, shoes, sense of humor required



Jonathan David Phillips
The Garren Grill has homemade desserts prepared daily for customers.

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and diners appreciate that. They also get in on the banter.

"It's the best place," said diner Chico Thomas as he winked at Lori. "They got pretty waitresses."

As for the food, the menu gives visitors a wide range of options to choose from. Homecut fries prepared daily, quesadillas, cakes, sandwiches and entrees, Huff said he recommends everything on the menu.

"I eat just about all them," he said.

Thomas agreed.

"Whatever your heart desires, it's all good," he said.

Lori said she was proud they offered an affordable place for

families to visit.

"It's a lot of work, but a lot of fun," she said.

As for Bob, the more comical of the Garrens, he likes his place because it gives him a chance to talk with the community.

"I can keep up with all the latest gossip," he said.

Paul Porsche, another regular, summed up the general feeling about the grill when he said, "It's good food and good conversation."

Maybe the folks at Garren Grill should change their slogan from "Great Food" to "Great Place, 'Gareen' teed."

Garren Grill is at 6463 Westfield Road.

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White Plains

Jones picks up ball, coaches

By JEREMY MOORHOUSE

When Sammy Jones received word that White Plains Christian School needed a baseball coach, the decision to step in wasn't a tough one.

Now, in his sixth year with the team, Jones said he'll coach as long as he's needed.

"We had a good basketball team, but they wanted to play baseball," Jones said after his team played a game on Apr. 5 at Fisher River Park. "It's not my coaching, it's the talent the kids have got. They just needed some direction, some coaching. They didn't have anybody, so I did it."

Jones, originally from Surry County, got his first taste of coaching when his sons were younger. He had coached Little League and Pony League.

"My kids wanted to have a baseball team," he said.

To do that, Jones had to get a schedule that would work with his work schedule. Jones works 12-hour shifts, four days a week at Sara Lee in Winston-Salem, where's been for seven years.

He often has to work nights as well.

"The biggest reason I really started coaching was my boys. I got tired of seeing coaches playing their nephews or their boys playing positions they weren't good at," he said. "I always said if I was ever coach, I'll play the boys by how good they are. If my kids can't do the job, they aren't going to play."

"That's the reason I started, and they needed somebody," he said with a chuckle.

In their first season, White Plains didn't win a single game. Following that year, they won the 1-A state championship — playing against teams including Calvary King, Oak Level and Stone Eden.

The Patriots recently had to move up to the 2-A level, and the competition got a little stiffer. White Plains struggled a bit against Woodland, Liberty-Durham and Union Grove.

"The schools were bigger so we had some rough games," Jones said.

Jones, who has now been coaching for 10 years, went to Mount Airy High School.

"When I was young I was real rough and mean. Then in 1981 I got saved," he said. "I was kind of honored that they'd let me do something like this."

His son, Andrew, pitches for the Patriots and his daughter, Samantha, plays fastpitch softball and AAU basketball.

"I just love to see them perform to their best ability," Jones said. "Some boys have never played Little League ball. Yeah, they are going to make errors, but (the experience) is something they're going to remember for the rest of their life."

"(Baseball) keeps them out of trouble, keeps them involved and hanging around the right people."

Jones' wife, Gaye, helps with

the team as well.

She is in her seventh year teaching second grade at White Plains Christian. How long will the Jones family stay involved in sports at the school?

"Until the Lord leads us in another direction," she said. "It's wonderful to see the kids play and see them get involved."

Sammy Jones said he knows all of the teachers at White Plains very well.

"You can pray, pull a Bible out and not worry about being sued," he said. "A kid gets in trouble, he can get whooped."

The state baseball tournament begins in May with regionals.

Andrew Jones will be in high school one more year. Sammy doesn't know if that will signal the end of his coaching days.

"If they still need somebody (to coach), I will," he said.



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Booby Trap Kills W. F.

Local Officers and SBI Seek Clues; FBI Crime Lab Report Awaited

POLICE SEEK MOTIVE IN MONDAY MORNING MURDER

An aroused and highly indignant Mount Airy population heard the news late Monday evening and early Tuesday morning that William Homer Cochrane, Jr., popular agriculture teacher at White Plains High School, died at 9:42 p.m. Monday in Martin Memorial Hospital, here as a result of injuries sustained when his 1951 pick-up truck exploded mysteriously at the Franklin Apartments early Monday morning.

Police Chief Boone, the town's top law enforcement officer, said the town's police officers in the area were alerted to the explosion at about 8 a.m. Tuesday. Boone said he was not sure of the exact time of the explosion, but he said it was somewhere between 8 and 9 a.m. Boone said he was not sure of the exact time of the explosion, but he said it was somewhere between 8 and 9 a.m. Boone said he was not sure of the exact time of the explosion, but he said it was somewhere between 8 and 9 a.m.

Mysterious bomb explodes, killing area teacher

Mount Airy Times, Jan. 4, 1952: An aroused and highly indignant Mount Airy population heard the news late Monday evening and early Tuesday morning that William Homer Cochrane, Jr., popular agriculture teacher at White Plains High School, died at 9:42 p.m. Monday in Martin Memorial Hospital, here as a result of injuries sustained when his 1951 pick-up truck exploded mysteriously at the Franklin Apartments early Monday morning.

First in a series by R.J. Berrier, Staff Writer.

A few minutes after 8 a.m., Cochrane went to the back of the apartment house where he had parked his pickup. He opened the door on the driver's side, stepped on the gas, and a devastating explosion rocked the area. The truck was demolished. The windows on the upper floor of the apartment building were blown out. Homes were shaken and many neighbors thought an earthquake had struck.

Bill Cochrane was blown 12 feet from his truck.

Neighbors who rushed to the scene found the popular teacher lying in a pool

of blood. The explosion had ripped off one of his legs and badly mangled the other.

"Somebody help me," he pleaded. "I don't want to die."

But he did, more than 13 hours later.

He was rushed to Martin Memorial Hospital, where physicians began a fruitless effort to save his life.

Cochrane remained conscious during the morning, until he was taken to the operating room. There, surgeons had to remove his other, badly mangled leg.

A large number of his students at White Plains High School came to the hospital, seeking to donate blood to one of their favorite teachers.

Cochrane lived until 9:42 p.m. His wife, keeping vigil in a private office at the hospital, collapsed at the news of his death.

The late Wama Council, society editor of the old Mount Airy Times, lived two doors from the apartment building. She called a familiar number, 600, the telephone number of the Times, and, voice quavering, said "Come down here. There's been a horrible explosion...maybe gas."

"...William Homer Cochrane, Jr., popular agriculture teacher at White Plains High School, died at 9:42 p.m. Monday in Martin Memorial Hospital, here as a result of injuries sustained when his 1951 pick-up truck exploded mysteriously..."

Mount Airy Times

It was an unspeakably horrible explosion that even a dense fog could not conceal.

Officers Howard Tolbert and Jack Ledford were dispatched to the scene, to be joined a few minutes later by Mount Airy Police Chief Monte Boone and W.H. Sumner.

Shortly afterward, W.M. Johnson, the publisher of The Mount Airy Times, arrived on the scene, substituting for his honeymooning news editor son, William Henry Johnson.

The cab of the pickup was a shambles. Portions of it had been blown completely over the apartment building; other parts around the sides of the structure. A shoe that the blast victim had been wearing was found

in a pool of blood some four feet away.

On the seat inside the cab were found the student assignments Cochrane had prepared for the day — the first day of school after the Christmas vacation — a leather zipper notebook and his keys.

Cochrane told the officers that he entered the truck, turned the ignition key, stepped on the starter, and then the vehicle blew up. He was blown out of the top of the truck.

His wife had left for work in Dobson some 15 minutes earlier. She said the truck had not been moved since the Friday before.

State Bureau of Investigation agents John B. Edwards of Elkin and Guy Scott of Winston-Salem were called into the investigation, and Police Chief Boone traveled to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's crime laboratory in Washington to deliver the fragments of the booby trap in an effort to learn the type of explosive used.

School was dismissed at White Plains in Cochrane's memory, and hundreds of students were among the 3,000 people who called at Moody Funeral Home to pay their final respects.

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Exploring the Foothills May, 2007-April, 2008

Exploring the Foothills May, 2007-April, 2008

29

White Plains Friends Meeting one of oldest in the area

By JEREMY MOORHOUSE

Established in 1850, the White Plains Friends Meeting began with people getting together for worship in private homes.

Today, the Friends Meeting on Old U.S. 601 is stronger than ever.

The first church was built in 1884 at the current location.

By 1891, the church had more than 100 members and the present church was completed in 1961. The first pastor was T. Wesley Wooten.

The current pastor is Wayne Johnson, who has led the church for more than 45

years. White Plains Friends Meeting is a Pastoral Meeting, where the pastor has a leadership role and is hired by the congregation.

Johnson was a Quaker by birthright.

"Some evangelical Quakers are very liberal or very conservative," Johnson said. "There is not much difference from the way we worship from other Protestant churches.

"Christ is the center of our worship. We believe in order for a person to get to heaven they have to have salvation."

Johnson said that some Friends Meetings focus more on the Holy Spirit, while others look more at the historical figure of Christ, as well as the cross and resurrection.

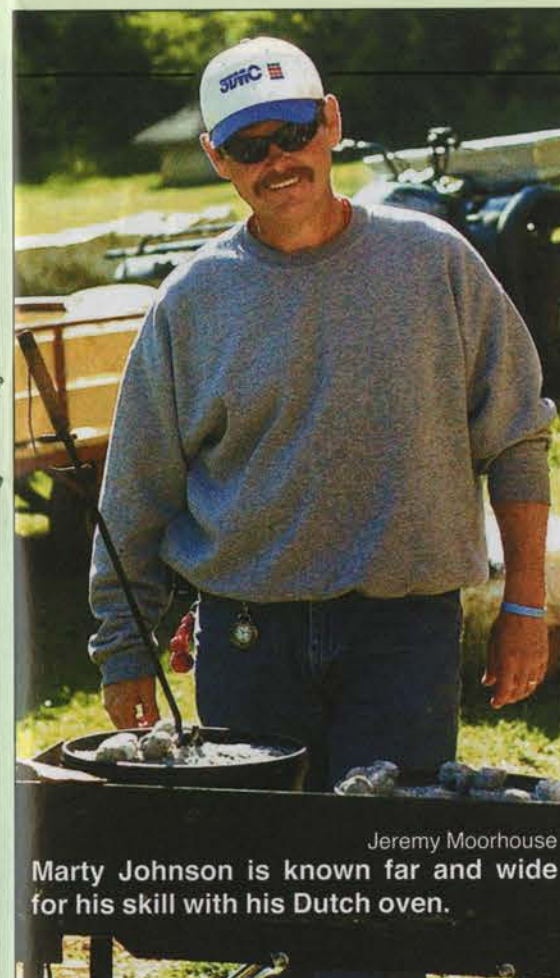
"White Plains has both types of members," he said. "It's not uncommon for that to happen. We don't try and judge about what is right or wrong."

Other area Friends meetings include Union Hill Friends, Mount Airy Friends Church, Ararat Friends Meeting, Old Siloam Friends Church, Pilot Mountain Friends Meeting, Pine Hill Friends Meeting and Westfield Friends Meeting.

"The church itself is a growing church. We are getting ready to employ a part-time youth director," Johnson said. "We have lots of activity."

The schedule on Sunday consists of a morning prayer, Sunday school and worship. During the week, there are Bible studies, evening services and prayer groups.

Unlike some of the more traditional churches, the Quakers in Surry do not wear the black suits or gray clothes.



Jeremy Moorhouse
Marty Johnson is known far and wide
for his skill with his Dutch oven.

White Plains A Dutch oven wizard

By JEREMY MOORHOUSE

WHITE PLAINS — Marty Johnson can toss just about anything in his Dutch oven and leave anybody's mouth watering.

Johnson was introduced to the cast-iron cooking pots as a Scout leader going on camping trips with his son five years ago.

He told his wife, Liz, he wanted a Dutch oven for his birthday.

"I found out what you can cook. I just accumulated them. Then you find out the food is good and it's fun," Johnson said.

Chili, stir fry, ground steak — you name it. Johnson has probably given it a shot. He adds his blend of spices, and it's time to start slow-cooking over the hot coals.

"I love anything. Whatever you cook in one of these pots is good," Johnson said. "I like to cook peach cobbler. One of my favorites is vegetarian chili."

Johnson said he loves being able to cook in the outdoors.

"You can go out in the woods and cook anything. It adds a different flavor, too," he said.

On a recent camping trip, Johnson took the Dutch ovens and encouraged the Boy Scouts to bring a variety of different foods to throw in.

"The boys loved it. You just have to have an open mind and have fun," he said. "I might cook the same thing tomorrow night and it might have a whole different taste."

At a recent chili-cookoff, Johnson came home with an empty pot — which is what he shoots for.

In a day where fast food is often the norm, Johnson said it's nice to be able to set up the Dutch oven and take the time to put together a good meal.

"This brings back the old style. With this, you appreciate it," he said. "I'd do it for a living."

He said it's much more difficult to burn food with a Dutch oven, where heat is easier to control, versus a cooking over an open fire.



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HOW IT ALL BEGAN:

1953: Martin Memorial Hospital, which was located on Gilmer and Cherry streets in Mount Airy, was founded by Dr. Moir S. Martin in 1915. The small hospital, which housed 75 beds, was destroyed by fire in 1953. That year, voters approved a referendum to create the Northern Hospital District of Surry County and the Martin Memorial School of Nursing.

The Women's Auxiliary to the Northern Hospital was formed under the sponsorship of the local Junior Women's Club to provide volunteer services.

1957: With 98 beds, Northern Hospital of Surry County opened its doors to patients in 1957. John K. Lockhart served as the hospital's first administrator, a position he held until 1991.

1958: The Martin Memorial School of Nursing was re-established next to the hospital in a facility now known as the Martin Memorial Building. However, in the early 1970s, the school closed and a new nursing program was established at Surry Community College.

1969: An intensive/coronary care unit, which was one of the first such facilities in a rural community hospital, was added in 1969 along with a 24-hour emergency department and physical therapy service.

1974: The construction of a 14,000 square foot ambulatory care addition, which included pathology, radiology, outpatient/emergency and office space added on to the hospital's north wing, was completed in 1974.



1977: Because the service area of the hospital was medically underserved with about half of the citizens leaving the area for admission to other hospitals, a long-term plan was implemented to increase the number of physicians and services offered by Northern Hospital. These new services included cardiology, internal medicine, orthopedic surgery, urology, pediatrics, and anesthesiology.

1985: In 1985, the hospital increased its bed capacity to 160 beds to eliminate the use of four-bed wards. Nearly 80% of patient rooms became single occupancy. At this time, virtually the entire building was refurbished and modernized to provide state-of-the-art services. More services were added during the late 1980s, including a short-term in-patient psychiatric unit, an adult day care program, a hospital-sponsored home care service, and a skilled nursing facility.

1993: Additions to the emergency department and day surgery area were completed in 1993.

2002: As part of its commitment to excellence, the hospital completed an extensive \$26 million expansion and renovation project that has enhanced access to quality care in a safe environment. Patients benefit from a host of new technologies, expanded services, and streamlined patient care.

2007: Renovations continue within the hospital as the Nuclear Medicine Department expands. Plans for a breaking ground for the new Surgical Services Building are underway as well.



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Harris grows unique herbs

By JEREMY MOORHOUSE

WHITE PLAINS — If you want an unusual plant or herb, you can find it at Foothills Nursery and Herbs.

Karen Harris, who has been in business for 14 years, doesn't carry your average plants. "I started primarily with some of the herbs and some unusual shrubs and things, and then it sort of expanded to two acres of plants," Harris said.

"I really liked unusual things. At that time there really weren't a whole lot of places to get unusual plants. Everybody had the same thing. That was about the time the state arboretum was promoting a lot of unusual plants that had been collected in Asia, China, Japan and so forth.

"We sort of guided the nursery along the lines of what new plant materials were being offered and just continued in that vein."

Now you can find all kinds of interesting plants such as Snow Fountain Contorted Cherry, Taylor's Perfection Camellia, Lenten Rose-Helleborus, Forest Pansy Red Bud, Winter Bud Corylopsis, 'Shannon' Kerria and Greensboro Red Camellia.

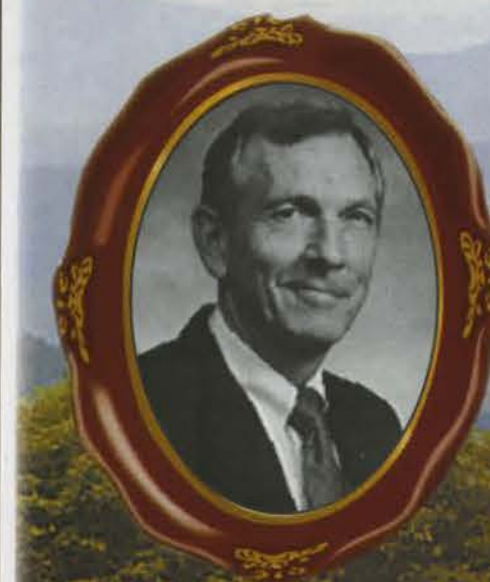
"Instead of a red bud we might carry Forest Pansy Red Bud with a burgundy leaf or an Oklahoma with a glossy leaf. We have a lot of Japanese Maples," she said. "I'm trying new plants coming out. Last year I tested Bee's Blue, a small, more complex hydrangea."

Harris said the demand often hinges on whatever the garden writers are featuring.

"David Bare wrote in his column about a certain dogwood and, all of a sudden everyone is asking about it," she said. "Last year we tested several types of dogwoods. The native dogwoods are struggling in this area.

"Sometimes you are ahead of the trend. All of a sudden somebody writes about it, and I've got huge plants of it so that works out sometimes."

Foothills Garden and Herbs is located on Siloam Road, about a half mile from Old Highway 601. Harris said in addition to customers from Surry County, the business sees customers from Greensboro, Winston-Salem and High Point.



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The Big Rock in Pilot

PILOT MOUNTAIN — There is no missing the mountain. It's not in a range or towering thousands of feet in the air, but Pilot Knob is distinct.

The mountain is made up primarily of quartzite, according to geologists from the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Quartzite is a stone composed chiefly of quartz grains, derived from sandstone or from chert. Through heating and pressure, usually related to tectonic compression within orogenic belts, the original quartz sand grains and quartz silica cement were fused into one.

The stone is extremely tough and resistant to weathering, often forming protruding ridges since it provides little area for soil.

Quartzite is most commonly found in the Appalachians as well as areas of eastern South Dakota, southwest Minnesota and the Wasatch Range in Utah.

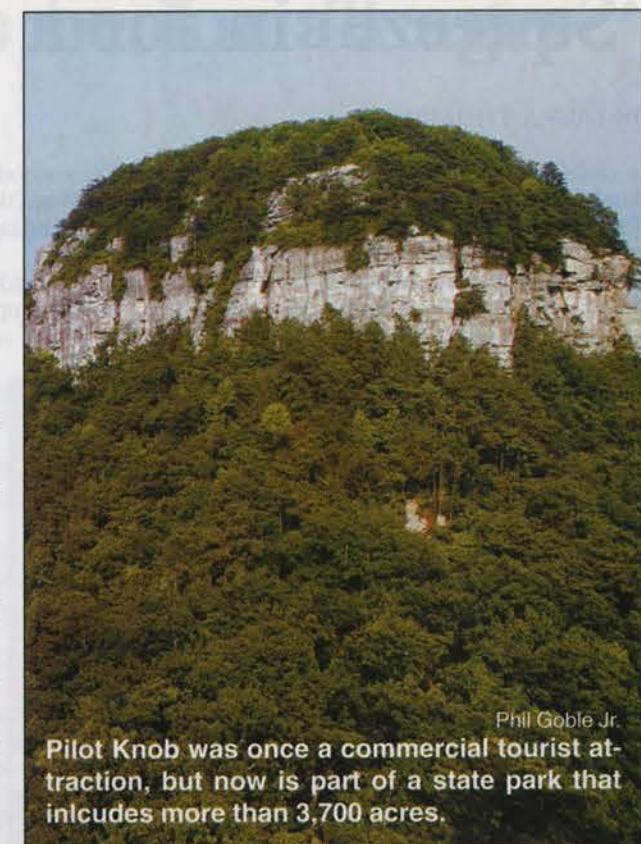
Pilot Mountain was first mapped in 1751, according to the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation. It became the 14th state park in 1968.

Before joining the North Carolina park system, Pilot Mountain was a commercial tourist attraction.

William Spoon owned the property. He opened it to the public for the first time in July 1929. He sold it to Mr. and Mrs. J.W. Beasley in 1944 and it stayed under their ownership until it became a state park.

The Pilot Mountain Preservation and Park Committee wanted to create a state park out of the area to protect it and the surrounding forests from future development.

A group of concerned citizens secured options on the land, raised funds for matching grants and purchased the property. In 1970, the group acquired about 1,000 acres adjacent to the Yadkin River. Currently, including additional purchases, the park encompasses more than 3,700 acres.



Phil Goble Jr.

Pilot Knob was once a commercial tourist attraction, but now is part of a state park that includes more than 3,700 acres.

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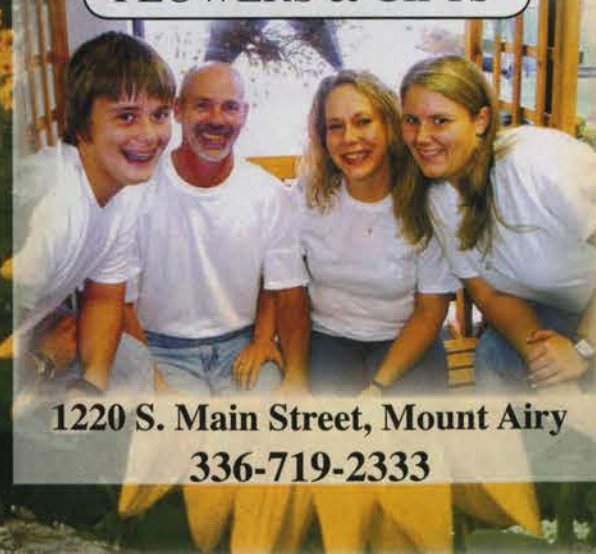
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Pilot Mountain 'Squeeze' in for a good meal

By LAURA THOMPSON

PILOT MOUNTAIN — A newspaper clipping in a wooden frame rests against the wall behind the counter at the Sandwich Shop on Main Street in Pilot Mountain. It's an advertisement from 1956 in which a hamburger is priced at 25 cents and customers are encouraged to "Make our friendly counter a habit."

Fifty years later, prices at the "Squeeze Box" have gone up — a hamburger now costs \$1.80 — but not much else about the tiny, freestanding shop has changed. The counter, stools, bun warmer and ice cream box are all original.



Laura Thompson
Customers sit at the counter to eat and talk.

When he bought the business, Crump said, he had no intention to alter the already iconic restaurant. "It wasn't broke, so I wasn't going to fix it," he said.

But a few things have changed over the years.

"When I started, we didn't serve diet drinks," said Crump. The store also used to stay open until 7 p.m.

Now, a crew of three runs the Sandwich Shop from 5 a.m. to 2 p.m. every weekday, grilling meals to order for the scores of regulars who line the counter each day, and fixing sandwiches to go for those who can't sit and chat.

Crump was at a loss to guess how many people a day come through his door.

"Count the egg shells and divide by two," suggested retired dentist Duke Fowler, another frequent patron.

Some people stop by the shop every day. Staffers Crump, his sister-in-law, Cindy, and Cindy's daughter Tiffany — estimated the number of daily-diners at somewhere between 20 and 100.

The shop is an institution in town, and not just when hunger strikes. Many young people, like Tiffany Crump, have worked part-time behind the counter to help pay for school. Dickie Crump also opens the shop some Sundays for meetings of the men's Bible study class from First Baptist Church.

Visits to the Sandwich Shop are practically required of anyone seeking political office, said Smith. Candidates from town commissioners to District Court Judge Chuck Neaves and current U.S. Rep. Virginia Foxx have stopped at the shop during their campaigns.

And customers are still making lunch at the shop a habit.

"It's a gathering place," said Rick Smith, a retired educator and civic leader who said he eats at the shop a couple of times a week. He said it's a spot to swap local news and eat a hot dog or a sandwich specially prepared by owner Dickie Crump.

Crump assumed ownership in 1975, but the Sandwich Shop had been building a local reputation since its was opened in 1954 by Buster Wilmoth and Claude "Preacher" Willard.

The name of the shop has never changed, but over the years it came to be known as the "Squeeze Box" and "Preachers." Newcomers looking for its phone book listing usually don't know to check "Willard & Wilmoth Sandwich Shoppe" — the name it was given to separate it from other sandwich shops in the book.

Crump began working in the shop the summer after his second year at High Point University. It was supposed to be a temporary job until the shop could hire someone else, he said, but "they didn't find anybody." So he stayed.

"I enjoyed the work, I enjoyed the people," he said.



Dickie Crump
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Armfield is the place to be for all ages

By LAURA THOMPSON

PILOT MOUNTAIN — People looking for a workout spot, an afternoon play place for the kids, a gathering spot for friends or even a summer concert venue can find all that and more at the Edward M. Armfield Civic and Recreation Center in Pilot Mountain.

Located on the Old Highway 52 Bypass, the center has expanded both its facilities and its offerings through the years to provide activities, information and other resources for the community.

"We listen to what our members are telling us, and our seniors," said Donna Collins, program director for the center, which also houses the Pilot Mountain Senior Center.

Seeking to meet the needs and interests of its approximately 950 members has led the Armfield Center to offer more than just extensive fitness facilities.

For members, access to the gym, fitness room, indoor pool and raised walking track is supplemented by a full slate of classes including spinning, yoga, clogging and shag dances, water aerobics, weight training, and jazzercise. A licensed masseuse and a certified personal trainer are also available.

"We have instructors who come in and say, 'I can do this and this,'" said Collins. Some classes will be successful immediately, she said, while others might be shelved for a couple of months before being tried again. But she said the center always strives to give members something new and interesting.

For the younger crowd, the center offers before and after school programs, child care while parents work out and summer camp.

"After school, it's really popular for the high school and middle school kids come hang out," said Collins.

Outside the main building, several sports fields play host to the East Surry Little League, a soccer league and other community groups and tournaments.

As the home of the oldest senior center in Surry County, the Armfield center is an established venue for events, seminars, activities and informal gatherings for Pilot Mountain's senior citizens.

Senior Center Coordinator Clara Fountain said local seniors enjoy getting together and socializing, "and this is an opportunity for them to do that in a nice setting."

The center draws in seniors for activities such as bridge club meetings, continuing education classes through Surry Community College and special events like the Valentine's Dance.

The playground, picnic shelter and walking trails invite community members for casual exercise or simply an afternoon outdoors.

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Pilot Mountain

children cried

By LAURA THOMPSON

PILOT MOUNTAIN — Twelve-year-old Margie Chilton's fourth day at Pilot Mountain School was one neither she nor the communities of eastern Surry County would soon forget.

On Jan. 10, 1935, a school bus left Pilot Mountain carrying 45 students from the school home to Shoals Township. It wasn't a big, yellow school bus with a seasoned driver, but a wooden vehicle operated by a 16-year-old who wasn't used to the route.

"The bus that we were supposed to ride was broken down mechanically, and he was making extra runs," said Margie — now Margie Denny — of driver Archie Barker.

A combination of excessive speed, blinding afternoon sunlight and the distraction of a mule wagon parked by the side of the road caused Barker to lose control of the bus.

According to a *Mount Airy News* report of the event, the bus left present-day N.C. 268, "plunging down an embankment 10 feet high and stopping almost suddenly as it buried itself in the ground ..."

"We were all injured except one, and he was able to slip away from the group and walk home," Denny recalled.

No one died as a result of the wreck, but the terror, concerns and questions raised by the incident stayed with local leaders and residents long after the scene was cleared.

The task of transporting and treating the dozens of injured children strained local emergency services. The *News* report states that ambulances responded from Pilot Mountain and Elkin, but many students were taken to Martin Memorial Hospital in Mount Airy in private cars.

"Some of us rode in a flatbed truck," said Denny, who suffered a broken pelvis. She added that the cold January air made the ride to Mount Airy that much more uncomfortable.

Once at the hospital, Denny said, many of the 24 students needing treatment had to lie in the hallways "until they could secure beds for those of us who were going to have to stay."

Denny and several other students with broken pelvises were bed-bound in the hospital for six weeks. They were then discharged to spend another six weeks in bed at home.

The community responded to the tragedy. County commissioners discussed helping pay hospital bills for the children, although they were later advised by county attorney R.A. Freeman that they did not have the legal authority to spend county funds in that way.

The *News* reported two weeks after the wreck that Mount Airy school children had sent "some of their books, play articles, dolls, candy and fruits which have been greatly appreciated by the injured patients."

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Step back in time at the General Store

By ANGELA SCHMOLL

DOBSON — Stop at Rockford General Store for a grape Nehi or a bologna sandwich and you might find yourself sitting on the wooden bench out front, listening to gossip and stories about the neighborhood hours later.

Time, it seems, moves at a different pace in the historic village of Rockford, especially at the store where Paul and Carolyn Carter weigh the candy and run the register most days of the week, sometimes aided by their partners in the venture, Paul's sister, Pam, and her husband, Robin Foy.

"When you come to Rockford, it's like stepping back in time," said Carolyn, relaxing on the front porch with customers, neighbors and the rest of the store team on a mild spring afternoon. "This is the meeting house. It's where locals gather on the front porch and you can hear anything — news, gossip, who's sick. They say during the war they all came to the store to listen to the radio. Now they listen to the radio and come to the store to tell us what's happening because we don't have a radio."



A group of horse riders stop and tie up across the road, then walk over to the store. One of the owners goes inside to run the register. It doesn't matter which one — whoever is not talking at the moment.

Soon everyone is back on the porch, the riders relaxing at one end with their drinks and snacks and the gossip continuing at the other end. After less than three years in Rockford, the Carters and Foy are part of the community, visited by area residents who stop by to check on the progress of their new addition — a grill and the first running water and toilets to ever be installed in the 117-year-old store.

"We believe it was built about 1890," said Paul Carter, "but no one really knows." Paul and Carolyn Carter weren't looking to run a store or find their way back in time when they found Rockford General Store three years ago. In fact, they were lost.

"We're all originally from the Winston-Salem area, but we moved here from Myrtle Beach," said Paul, rocking in a wooden chair as he talks. "We'd already made the decision to move back to this area, and we wanted to get out in the country."

He said they started looking for a house, but weren't finding exactly what they wanted. His sister, Pam, persuaded them to go ahead and list their house. "We signed the paperwork to put the house on the market at 4:30 p.m., the realtor was putting up the sign at 5 p.m., and the next morning we had a guy at the house wanting to buy it and we had to close in three days," he said.

They were living in a rental house and had driven to Yadkin County to look at a home when they got lost and wound up in Rockford, Carolyn said.

"We missed a turn and came down Rockford Road," she said. "We saw we were in Surry County and couldn't figure out how we got here, then we came into Rockford and couldn't believe it. We rode around five hours that night and found five homes for sale. We decided we were going to move here."



Angela Schmoll
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"Then we came back again the next day and were asking about a house, and Paul asked when the store opened. They told us that the lady died who owned the store and they were going to sell it, with her house. When we asked where her house was, they pointed across the street at this depot-looking building."

Paul went to Dobson to the courthouse the next day to find out who was handling the estate, and two days later they were walking through the doors of the store for the first time.

"When we walked in the store, we said, 'This is us!' The house was not exactly what we were looking for, but this was it."

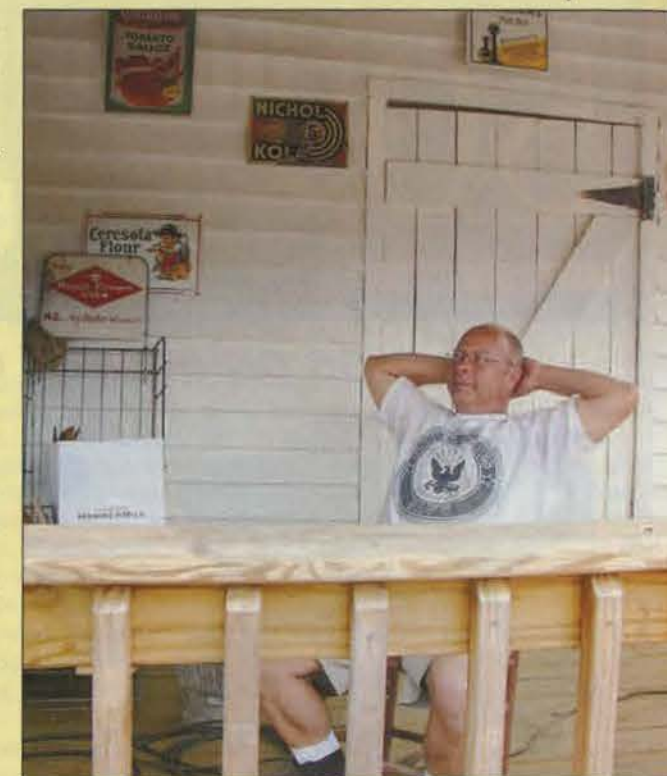
Paul Carter, store owner

The 117-year-old store is much as it was when built — a frame building with wooden floors and a woodstove for heat in the winter and strategically placed rocking chairs to take advantage of the heat. Dried legumes and candy

are stored in bins and jars and sold by the pound. The candy choices take up an entire room and include all kinds of old-fashioned favorites, dried fruits and sugar-free choices. The room is a favorite with children and those who just remember their childhood favorites.

Not long after the Carters became the new proprietors of the store, land behind and adjacent to the store lot came up for sale and the Foyes became Rockford land owners as well. Now the foursome own what used to be three different properties and, in addition to the store, are constructing a grill, remodeling one store as an ice cream parlor, and have put a canoe/kayak rental business (the Yadkin River is nearby) in part of the railroad building where the Carters live. All four have a vision for Rockford that not only has the historic village restored and thriving again, but embraces locals and tourists alike.

They're trying to learn more about the history of the village because they believe it needs to be recorded and preserved and because being able to share it brings the village that was once the county seat to life for visitors.



Angela Schmoll

Sitting on the front porch is a favorite hobby in Rockford.

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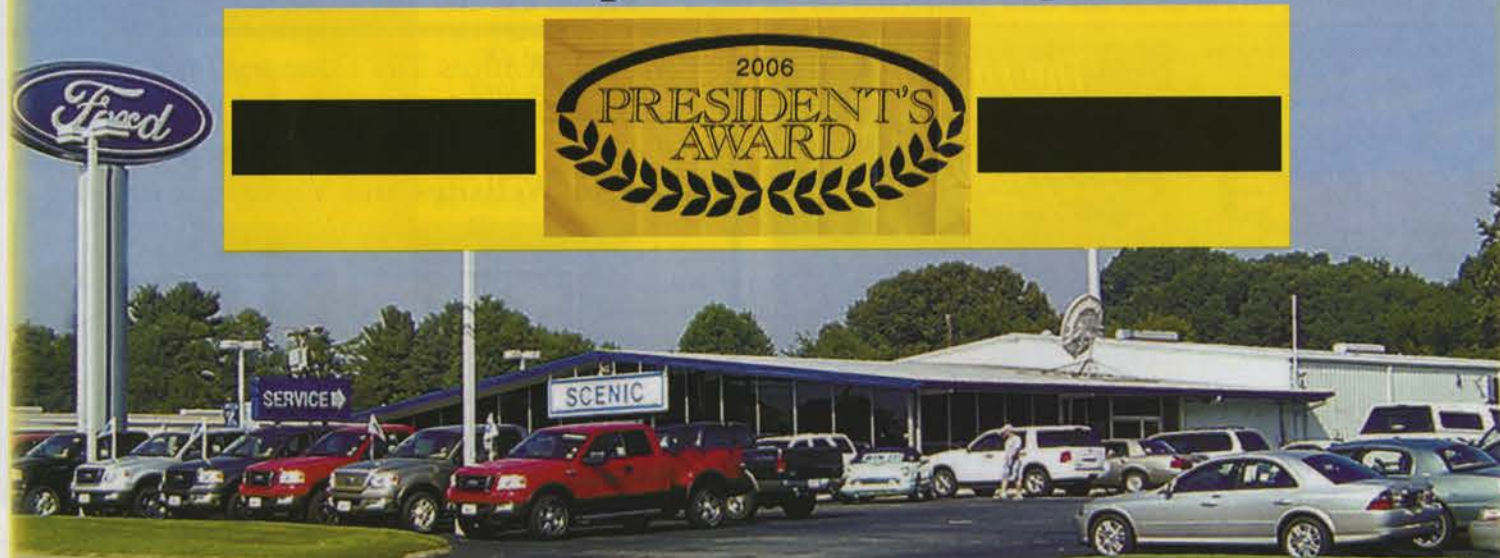
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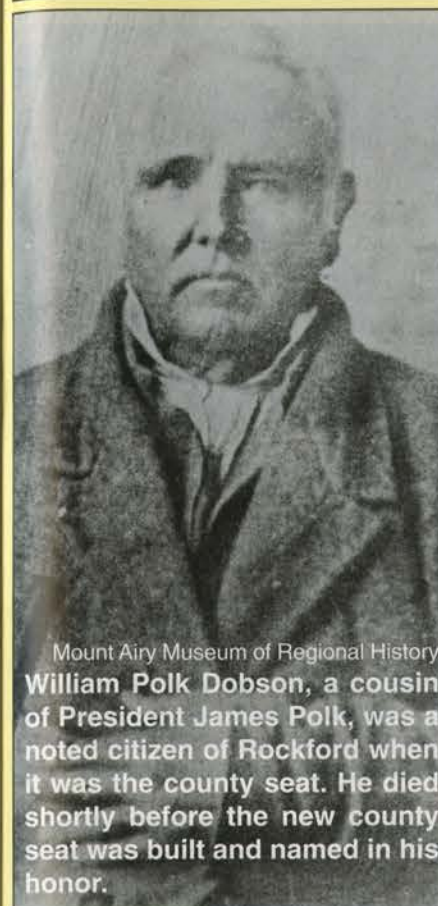
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Dobson is a Rockford native

By ANGELA SCHMOLL



Mount Airy Museum of Regional History
William Polk Dobson, a cousin of President James Polk, was a noted citizen of Rockford when it was the county seat. He died shortly before the new county seat was built and named in his honor.

DOBSON — When Rockford relinquished its position as the county seat, it was perhaps only fitting that the name of one of its most prominent citizens went with the county seat to the center of the smaller Surry County. The county split to form Surry and Yadkin counties.

Thus, the new county seat was located in the geographic center of the county and named for William Polk Dobson, who was not only a state senator but a cousin of James K. Polk, the 11th President of the United States. He was also closely associated with Andrew Jackson, the seventh U.S. President who, in the 1800s, frequented the courthouse in Rockford as part of his practice of the law.

According to a family history of the Dobsons written by Anna Lula Dobson in 1956, six Dobson brothers landed in York, S.C., sometime prior to the Revolution. William C. Dobson, who married a sister of James K. Polk's father, was one of those brothers and later settled at Kernersville, which was then called Dobson Cross Roads. He served as a colonel in the Revolution.

Adelaide Fries' History of the Moravians notes that Dobson administered the oath of allegiance to the Moravians at the time of the Revolution. Following a visit to Salem, George Washington and his party had breakfast with the Dobsons, according to a monument on the corner where they lived and operated a tavern. Washington's diary reportedly described the food as decent and Mrs. Dobson as a very fat, 80-year-old woman who her husband called "Honey."

In 1801, according to a mathematics notebook kept by William Polk Dobson, son of William C. Dobson, he was a citizen of Stokes studying under Robert Brittain. The name Polly Hughes is written throughout the notebook, and in 1802 William P. Dobson married Mary (Polly) Hughes. During the Revolution, Hughes' father, John, was quartermaster general until he resigned to the post of captain in the Army.

The younger Dobsons moved to Rockford from the Richard Horne Plantation. The house was believed to have been built in 1786, according to a date in the chimney when it was torn down, and it stood on a hill overlooking the Yadkin River near the county seat, which was then located in Rockford.

The county seat moved to Dobson in 1850.

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Angela Schmoll
Dominic
Payson slices
cheesecake.

Bakery thrives in countryside

By ANGELA SCHMOLL

DOBSON — With its exterior decorated to resemble a Bavarian lodge and the interior brimming with the scents of European-style baked goods, Strudels Bakery and Gifts seems displaced in the middle of the Surry County countryside.

But for first-time visitors and local regulars alike, the bakery fulfills its unspoken promise to those who stop for a bite of something sweet, even if it's a taste they've never tried before. Perhaps it's a taste of New York, where Karen and Dominic Payson lived before moving to Rockford, or perhaps it goes farther back to their respective German and Italian heritage.

"We're getting deeper into European baking," said Dominic Payson on a busy Saturday afternoon as he filled carryout boxes with goodies ranging from fresh-baked cheesecake, cookies, and eclairs, to more exotic sweets such as lebkuchen, pf-effernuesse and bienenstich. "We're refin-



ing our baking to the more elegant dessert menu and doing more breads."

For summer, he said, they plan to add ice cream, Belgium waffles and perhaps light quiches to their offerings.

The menu is still changing and developing, according to Karen Payson. After all, the bakery only opened last fall, and this will be the couple's first summer in operation. "There are a lot of things I just feel like I have to have that people aren't familiar with," she said. "I say, 'Just try it.' I try to get people to sample it."

The Paysons moved to Rockford from New York seven years ago after Karen's parents retired here.

"My parents actually retired and bought a home in Florida," said Karen. "There were visiting friends who retired here and they decided they liked it better here than in Florida, so they sold their home in Florida and moved here. We had been visiting them and decided this was such a nice place and we had to get out of New York."

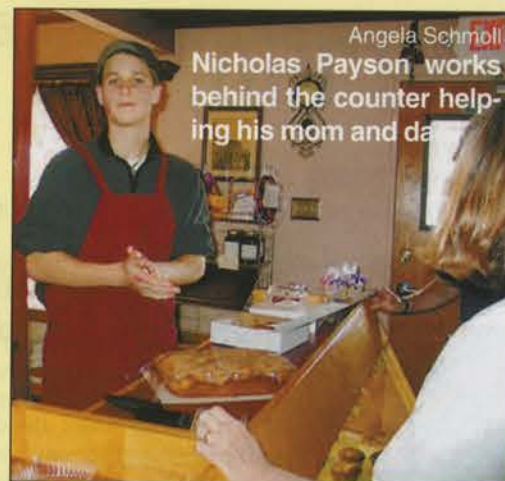
Karen left her job as an office manager in New York and home schooled her children — now 14, 11, and 6 — after the move to Rockford.

They also began driving by the former Stony Knoll Grocery, which had closed in the late 1980s and been vacant for more than 20 years.

"Karen had wanted to do a bakery for a long time," Dominic said. "We live just down the road, and this was vacant for a long time. The Coes, who owned and once ran the store, finally decided to sell it to us, and it seemed like the time to do it."

From there the work began, from getting the property rezoned to meet the county's new zoning ordinances, to putting in a septic system and refurbishing it as a bakery with a front finished to look like the Bavarian home of one of Karen's uncles in Germany.

Inside, the menu varies from day to day and season to season. During the fall there were fresh plum danishes and molasses



Angela Schmoll
Nicholas Payson works
behind the counter help-
ing his mom and da

cookies. Spring has brought new varieties of pastries, and summer promises to bring ice cream and assorted toppings.

During each season, Karen said the bakery tries to take advantage of the fresh products of the surrounding community — the plums were locally picked and the molasses made just up the road. They also buy local honey and other products to add flavor to their recipes.

"Our main concern is quality," she said. "We're not looking to be a huge bakery. Any time a person comes in, they'll find fresh, quality items. It's more of an experience than going to a bulk store. I can remember going to

the bakery when I was a child and the 'Oh, my gosh!' experience. I want to recreate that here."

"I also want it to be the community meeting place that it was when it was a store. We've already had people come in on Saturday morning and sit down and visit over a cup of coffee and say, 'This is going to be our Saturday morning thing.' We've had the whole neighborhood in here."

"It's something I've always enjoyed," said Karen. "I grew up in a household full of scratch-made foods. It's been a dream (for) a long time and it came time to do it."

"This has been an experience for the children as well," said Dominic. "As part of being home schooled, they've had the opportunity to learn about starting a business from the ground up."

The older children now take turns spending part of the day at the bakery when it is open while the other stays home with the 6-year-old. One parent is generally home as well. The Paysons divide the long workday between them.

The early hours mean a late shift for one of the Paysons who has to make dough and get items ready so they can be baked fresh in the morning. They then trade off with the other coming in to open and may change places between the home front and the store front several times throughout the day.

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Toast History rich and full, not burnt at all

By THOMAS LESTER

TOAST — Approximately one mile west of Mount Airy is the unincorporated community of Toast, or "The Crossroads," as it was known for years.

The community's name, while not historically confirmed, is believed to have come from toast, the food item derived from bread, according to local historian Carlos Surratt.



In "The Heritage of Surry County, Volume I," Surratt identified Professor E.P. McLeod, principal of Franklin School, as the source for the settlement's name. He said Carl Snow noted that in 1927, McLeod spotted some groceries in Hutchens Store and found his inspiration.

Surratt said for years, the older generation didn't go along with the new "Toast" moniker, choosing instead to call the area by its older name, "The Crossroads." He said that was a common name for areas in those days.

"The community for many years was called 'The Crossroads,'" Surratt said. "Most areas had a community like that. Older folks until recently still called it 'The Crossroads.' By that time, it had gained respectability as Toast, I guess."

But Toast can trace its beginnings to more than a century before its 1927 naming. Located on Old Toast Road, Stewarts Creek Primitive Baptist Church, or "Old Hollow," has been organized since 1794.

According to Laura A.W. Phillips in "Simple Treasures, The Architectural Legacy of Surry County," the church's black and white congregations worshipped together in the original church building until a newer one was built in 1889. The newer church was built because the congregation had grown too

large for the existing church building, which was an older, log structure.

Another of Toast's more well-known landmarks was the Laurel Bluff Cotton Mill. Phillips wrote that by 1890, the mill, which stood on the north bank of Stewarts Creek, manufactured cotton plaids for its first three decades of service. After that, it began constructing buttons from bone while housing the George K. Hale Company.

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Good food ready at 'Store'

By REBEKAH TAYLOR-MARTEL

SILLOAM — The whistle of the train running through Siloam can be heard more than a mile away, but the pizza and chili dogs cooking at The Store will grab any appetite upon nearing the entrance.

Located across from the square in downtown Siloam is the convenience store known as, well, The Store. It has been run by Doug Ramsey for the last 12 years and provided the community a place to fill up their cars with gas or to pick up last-minute grocery items.

What it also has been is a great place to get something quick to eat for hungry locals and travelers. Stop by any weekday between noon and 1 p.m. and the place is bustling with railroad and state workers and the local regulars.

The staff prepares made-to-order items like deli sandwiches and serves them up with homegrown smiles. Sitting on the counter, tempting patrons, are homemade cakes baked daily. Popular favorites are the chocolate pound cake or the pecan pie.

It is a place in the community where folks gather to take a break from working and to share stories, news, and events of the day.

A favorite among locals grabbing dinner on the way home is the pizza, made as ordered with an array of toppings. Other popular items are hotdogs, generously topped with chili and slaw (or whatever else requested) on a warm bun that rival the ones Southern grandmas used to make. They melt in your mouth, welcome you to the South and make you want another one.

For more fun fare, diners can feast on wings, fries and onion rings. For earlier risers, The Store cooks up sausage biscuits for breakfast.

While there, check out the interesting collection of metal signs by Ramsey's wife, Jo. Hanging throughout the establishment are the antique signs of vintage pop art that advertise products from soda pop to soap. There is even one featuring the Merita Bread company promotion with the Lone Ranger, a hard to find item for modern collectors.



The All-American Hometown Jubilee

By REBEKAH TAYLOR-MARTEL

SILLOAM — It doesn't get any more American than hotdogs and apple pie at a July 4 celebration in the country. For more than 25 years, the community of Siloam has gathered at the downtown square to honor the anniversary of American independence.

The event has been sponsored by the Home Demonstration Club, now known as the Siloam Extension and Community Association, and has recently received participation from the Copeland Ruritans.

The celebration kicks off with a parade that originates at Hardy Brothers Inc. and winds its way down Siloam Road. Some residents enjoy watching the parade and catching a handful of candy from their driveways, while others prefer to await the parade at its destination — the downtown square.

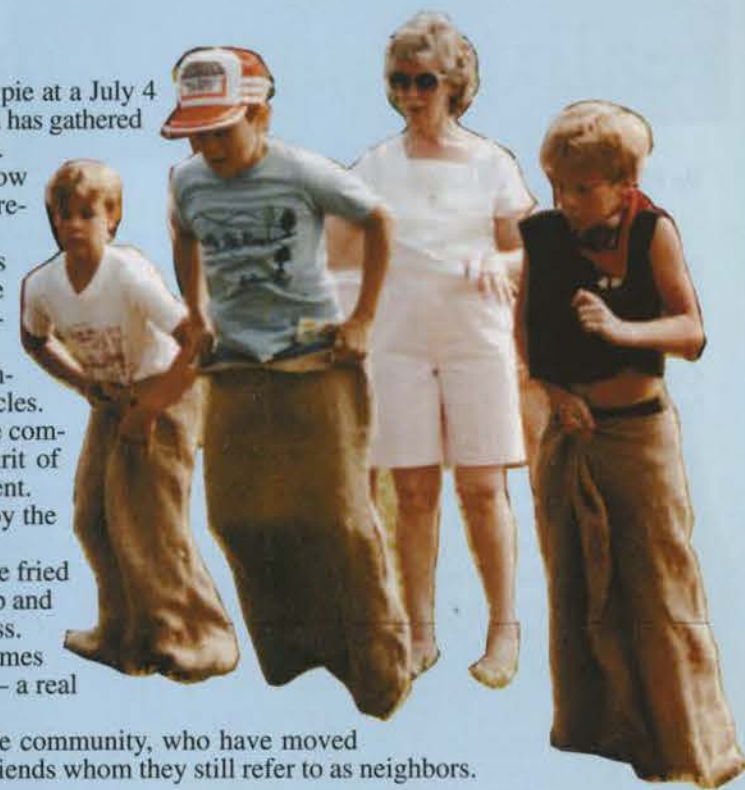
Churches, individuals and civic organizations turn out early in the morning to line up before the parade to decorate their floats and other vehicles. Some floats reflect the holiday and others reflect the way of life within the community. Classic cars and riders on horseback all help to convey the spirit of small-town American freedom and create the festive mood of the day's event.

After the parade, an official welcome is given to everyone, followed by the pledge of allegiance and a performance of the national anthem.

Hotdogs are served up hot and full of favorite toppings, and homemade fried pies are devoured as folks, young and old, delight in the event. Feet stomp and toes tap as bands play upbeat melodies from patriotic favorites to bluegrass.

The children's area is always full with fun games and prizes. Water games always draw a lot of attention, and children often end up getting soaked — a real treat on a hot summer day.

The event serves as a homecoming for some. Former members of the community, who have moved away throughout the years, return every year to reunite with family and friends whom they still refer to as neighbors.



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Truckin' into a really bright future

By REBEKAH TAYLOR-MARTEL

SILOAM — Nestled along the country roads of Siloam is a company that was started years ago by a man who simply wanted to make a good living outside of farming.

Ralph Hardy, owner and CEO of Hardy Brothers Inc., grew up in Siloam. He married his high-school sweetheart, Payge, from Copeland High School, entered the United States Army and returned home to Siloam to farm.

Although farming was hard and laborious work, it wasn't providing much for a wife and three children. Motivated to do more, Hardy was determined to make a better living. He began helping a friend haul produce up from Florida. Back then, most of the industry was within large, commercial markets and Hardy soon learned of the demand for and the rewards in that industry.

Wise in economics, he soon had his own hauling business, even expanding out as far west as California.

"It wasn't easy, really," said Payge, with whom Hardy will celebrate a 50 year anniversary this year.

Payge was employed by the Siloam post office and worked to maintain the household and family while Ralph drove. She also helped with accounting duties for the business.

"I remember having to do bookkeeping with him at 2 a.m.," she said. "But that's how it had to be. I did not dare complain because I knew he was out there making a living for us financially."

The couple said it wasn't the most conventional way of life, but they worked together to keep things operating within the business and family.

"I have to give her a lot of credit," said Hardy. "She really had to be a lot of things for the family and wear a lot of hats when I was traveling."

Although the lifestyle wasn't the most common, their children did get to experience a lot of travel, unlike many of their peers at the time.

As the business grew, Hardy expanded his staff and was soon able to quit driving and be home for the children during their school years.

From its former location on Starlight Road in Mount Airy, Ralph moved the company onto land he had purchased back in Siloam.

After attending Surry Community College, their son Eddie joined the family business, but he had to earn his way up the ladder.

"I started him out cleaning and learning his way around. I wanted him know how everything worked," Hardy said.

Once a business whose equipment included cab-over trucks with 220 horsepower and 40-foot trailers with ice bunkers up top, Hardy Brothers now runs a fleet of 60 trucks with 500 horsepower and 53-foot trailers.

As with most businesses, modern technology has also been a factor in Hardy's success.

"Back when we started, we could only communicate with drivers when they called in from the road on pay phones," Hardy said. "But now, I can monitor them and know exactly where they are 24 hours a day."

The company is equipped with Qualcomm, a vast wireless network. Even temperatures inside the trailers can be controlled from the home office in Siloam without the driver even pushing a button. Hardy said everything has changed dramatically since technology and his business and the industry has come a long way.



Rebekah Taylor-Martel
Payge and Ralph Hardy have built a successful marriage and business.

Did you know?

Did you know..?

It is recorded that the Siloam United Methodist congregation is the oldest Methodist congregation in Surry County. Established in the 1790s as Bold Springs Meeting, the early services were held at a brush arbor. Yet it wasn't until around 1830, that a log church was built on what is now known as Hardy Road. The church was the center of education in the community, holding Sunday school services from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m.

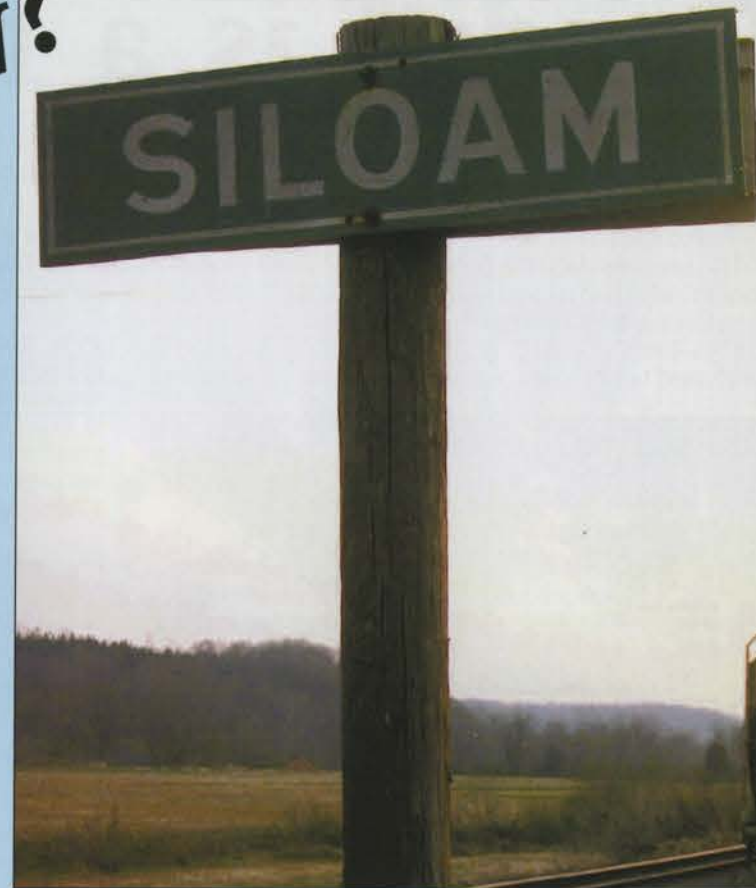
The church also served as a place of worship for slaves, who attended and used the cemetery's north end for burials.

The location of the church changed throughout the years after fires engulfed the structures. Miraculously, Bibles and furniture including pews and pulpit chairs were salvaged.

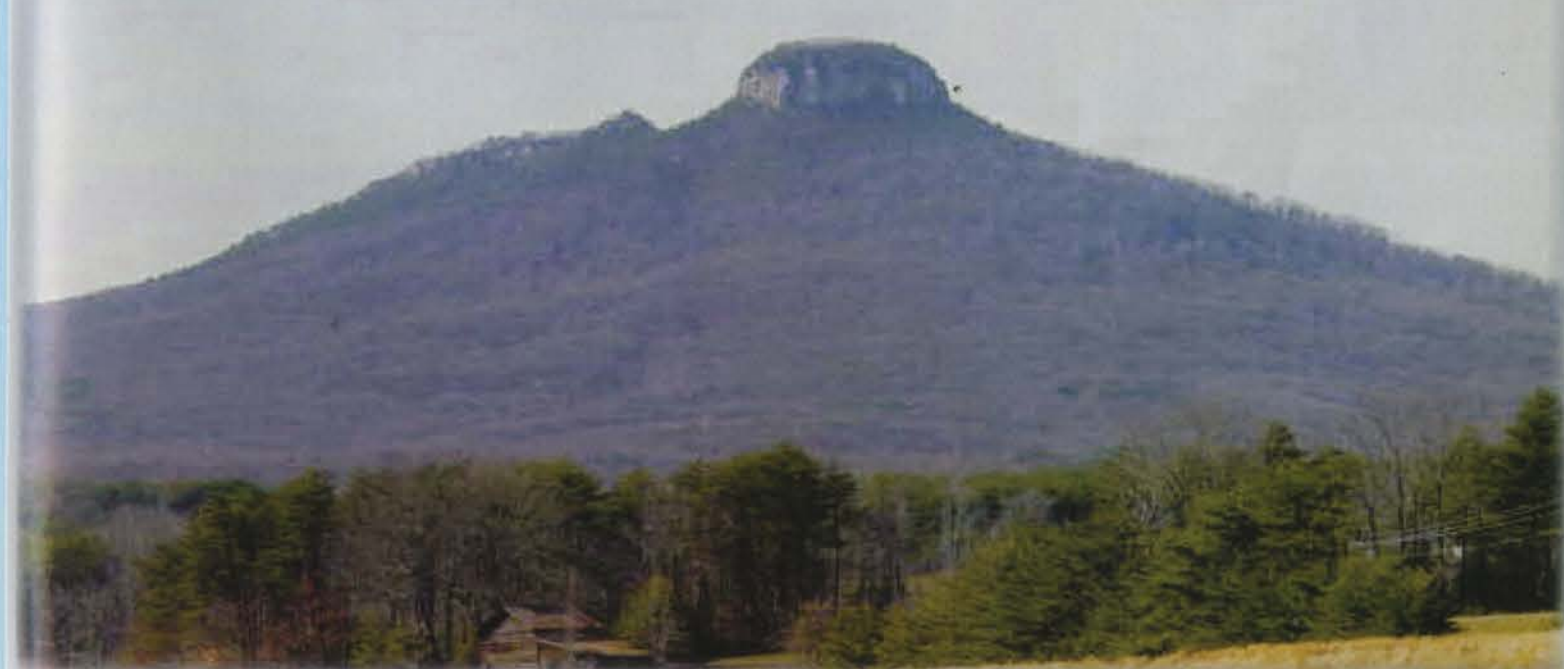
The church eventually found a home on land donated by the J.R. Marion family, where it sits today. From its first worship service there in 1959, Siloam United Methodist Church has continued to serve the community through a congregation of descendants of past members and dedicated families and individuals.

Did you know...?

The community of Siloam sits on the southern end of Surry County, where the Yadkin River runs parallel to the railroad. Stretching from the banks of the river lies the rich, fertile river valley. Hidden and scattered throughout the field are ancient Indian arrowheads. Such treasures have elicited wide interest among collectors and the curious. Archeology students from Wake Forest University have organized past excursions called "field schools" to search for the artifacts.



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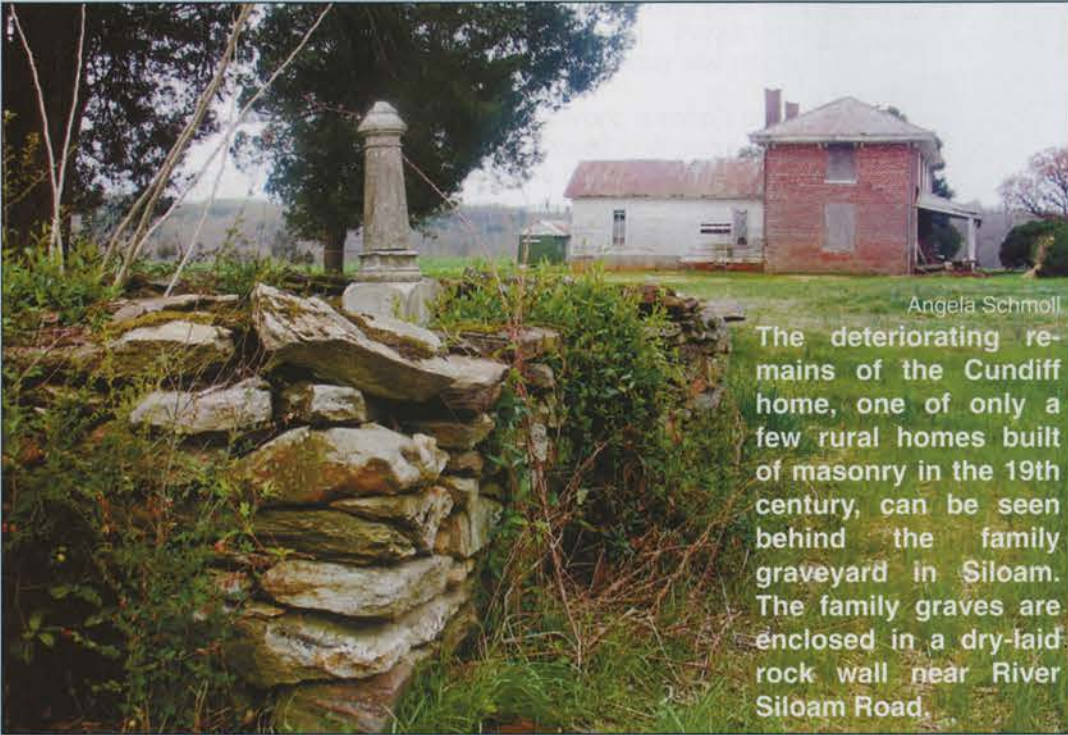


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Cundiff is a favorite son

By ANGELA SCHMOLL

SILLOAM — A granite marker at the road marks the significance of a rambling, weathered, red-brick house with broken windows, blue doors and tumbling chimneys: The former home of C.C. Cundiff on River Siloam Road is on the National Register of Historic Places. The nomination form for the Cundiff House indicates that the house is "believed to have been built shortly after the Civil War by C.C. Cundiff, who had moved to the area in 1861." An earlier house was destroyed by fire around 1865, and in some materials the house is reported as having been destroyed during the war. C.C. Cundiff (1817-1879) and his wife, Sarah (1816-1872), were natives of Bedford County, Va. They moved to Surry County and purchased land from John Womack. The 1870 census shows that Cundiff owned 948 acres, 150 of which were under cultivation. His real estate was valued at \$5,000 and his personal estate at \$500. On that farm, according to the nomination form, Cundiff grew 1,200 pounds of tobacco, 100 bushels of wheat, 250 bushels of corn and 180 bushels of oats. He owned livestock valued at \$250, including 16 sheep and 14 swine.



Angela Schmoll
The deteriorating remains of the Cundiff home, one of only a few rural homes built of masonry in the 19th century, can be seen behind the family graveyard in Siloam. The family graves are enclosed in a dry-laid rock wall near River Siloam Road.

The home is located on a hill above the bottomlands of the Yadkin River, just west of the Siloam community at the end of a drive lined with gigantic cedars with two wings of oversized boxwoods framing the front door and the long covered porch. The two-story brick house with low-hipped roof and simple details of vernacular Greek Revival and later Victorian inspiration appears, at first glance, to be similar to other houses of the third quarter of the 19th century in Piedmont North Carolina. A closer inspection, however, reveals other features probably linked to the original home prior to the fire and a remodeling about 1880 when the home passed to Milton Cundiff following the death of his parents. The brick portion of the home is divided into three rooms per floor, each nearly equal in size. The two northernmost rooms are contiguous, while the south end room is separated from the others by a passage. The two sections were probably erected at different times, as the brickwork is laid in two different patterns and are of different sizes. The northern rooms have exterior rear chimneys, while the south section has a chimney at the end. Each room has a fireplace. The interior plaster walls in the two sections also differ slightly, although an effort was made to make the areas appear the same.

The Cundiffs had four children. William Milton Cundiff was born in 1849 and Henry in 1860 before the family moved from Virginia. Two more children were born in North Carolina, but died in infancy and are buried, with their parents, in a family cemetery near the house, which is surrounded by a dry-laid stone wall. Charles Crissman, an earlier owner of the land, is buried just outside the Cundiff cemetery.

The home is located on a hill above the bottomlands of the Yadkin River, just west of the Siloam community at the end of a drive lined with gigantic cedars with two wings of oversized boxwoods framing the front door and the long covered porch. The two-story brick house with low-hipped roof and simple details of vernacular Greek Revival and later Victorian inspiration appears, at first glance, to be similar to other houses of the third quarter of the 19th century in Piedmont North Carolina. A closer inspection, however, reveals other features probably linked to the original home prior to the fire and a remodeling about 1880 when the home passed to Milton Cundiff following the death of his parents.

The first-story rooms do not interconnect, but instead open onto the full-length front porch with chamfered posts, decorative sawn work brackets and turned balustrade. The one-story frame section in the rear center of the house was probably added in the late 19th or early 20th century and features an interior chimney and hip-roofed porch with turned posts. Several frame outbuildings date from the same period and include a smokehouse and privy, a long horse shed and two collapsed barns.

The house is a rarity in Surry County, being one of only three surviving pre-1900 homes of masonry construction at the time it was listed with the historic register. Its architectural plan is also unique in the county.

About 1880, following the deaths of the senior Cundiffs, the home passed to Milton Cundiff, as his younger brother, Henry, had moved to California. The 1870 census lists Milton Cundiff as a law student, but he apparently never practiced law in the area. He married Lucy Poindexter (1859-1942), a native of Surry County, in 1880. He ran a tobacco warehouse in Virginia, farmed and ran a general store.

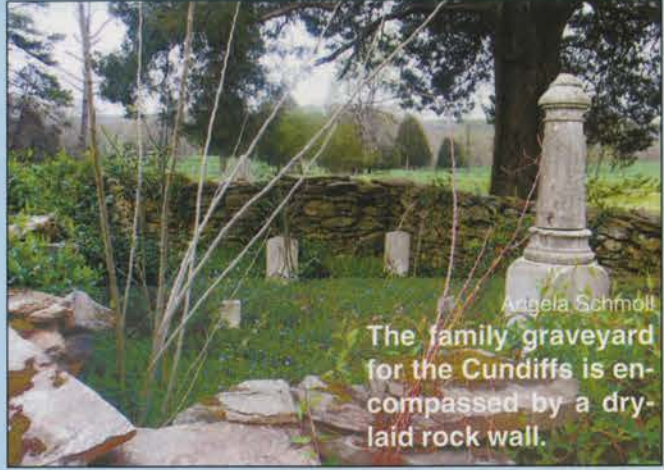
He was best known, however, as an educator. He operated a private school in Rockford, and moved the school downriver to Siloam in 1892. The Siloam academy was credited with educating many students who later became prominent in the business and professional world. Professor Cundiff later served on the Surry County Board of Education and in the early part of the 20th century became the second superintendent of the county's public schools following the retirement of the Rev. J.H. Llewellyn.

Milton and Lucy Cundiff had no children, and he died in 1912. According to his will, he left his wife a lifetime estate over both his real and personal property and the permission to sell items. After the death of his wife, he asked that the executors sell the estate privately or divide the estate among his other relatives.

He also bequeathed to the Children's Home in Winston-Salem, which was on the "property of the Western North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church South," the sum of \$10,000 to be used to build a home for orphan girls. He asked that his wife, if she survive him, continue to receive 6 percent interest from the sum as long as she lived.

"I hereby request my executor to deposit in the Wachovia Loan and Trust Co.'s Bank of Winston-Salem \$250, the interest thereof to be used ... as it may be needed to keep in repair and in fitting condition the graves of my father and mother, and also of my wife and myself wherever we may be interred.

"The plot of ground within the stone wall where lie the remains of my parents at the old home near Siloam is sacred ground and is not to be included in the sale of my lands, but especially excluded after all the above bequests have been fully paid off."



Angela Schmoll
The family graveyard for the Cundiffs is encompassed by a dry-laid rock wall.



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The McGuffin House holds a

By ANGELA SCHMOLL

DOBSON — Little remains in Dobson to recall its earliest days as the county seat and a trading center for the surrounding countryside.

But a small, two-story frame house on Crutchfield Street with an unobtrusive sign declaring it "The McGuffin House" holds a dual role in the town's history, both for remaining as the only home to survive from that period without extensive renovations and as the home of the county coroner in 1892 when Tom Allison was hanged on a tree north of town, earning that area of the village the designation of Allison Tree. The name can still be seen on a store there.

But current homeowner Vera Mears doesn't dwell on the house's role in the town's history. She's more interested in its role in her family's history. She and her two younger siblings grew up the house, and she and her late husband, Ray, bought the home from her siblings in the late 1970s following the death of her parents, Brady and Novella Edmonds.

Although she has followed the recommendations on restoring the home to its 1860s paint and décor and has played hostess to many of the



Angela Schmoll
Vera Mears has owned the McGuffin House for more than 25 years.

descendants of the McGuffins who built the home, Mears remembers the house as her family home many years later.

"I was 15 when we moved here," said Mears. "My brother, Wayne, was 2 and Rachel, my sister, was 5."

Her late husband proposed on the sofa in the front room after he returned from two years in the service, she said, and after being prompted to get down on one knee. "He went to Winston-Salem and got my ring," she said, "and said I'd been faithful to him while he was away, and I said, 'Ray Mears, you mean you're not going to get on your knee?' He said, 'I guess I can,' and he did."

She left the McGuffin house when they married, but when her father fell ill he asked that they not sell the family home. Instead, she and her husband bought out her siblings' interest in the house without any real plans for it.

"It was a rental house," she said, adding that it received little care during those years.



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and she evicted her renter and began the long labor of love that led to reopening the house during a town festival in 1998, and leaving it as a rental property to town visitors — more like the taverns of bygone years — until Mears' son moved into the house. Mears herself moved back to the house last fall, and back into her old bedroom, after an illness made her want to live closer to town than her family farm at Slate Mountain.

R.F. McGuffin moved to Dobson from Virginia sometime between the 1850 and the 1860 censuses, becoming one of the early settlers in the courthouse town that became the county seat in 1850 when Yadkin County was split from Surry County following the natural boundary of the Yadkin River.

The family with seven children lived in Dobson where McGuffin was a merchant. He served as a captain in the 74th Regiment, 18th Brigade of the North Carolina Militia during the Civil War. In the late 1800s, McGuffin served as county coroner, although he was 77 by the time of the Allison Tree hanging in 1892.

McGuffin conducted inquiry into 'Allison Tree' lynching

The Yadkin Valley News, published Sept. 22, 1892, in Mount Airy, carried coroner R.F. McGuffin's report on the infamous "Allison Tree" lynching.

His report includes the following:

"...on the night of the 12th...between the hours of 12 and 2 our town was aroused from its slumbers by the ringing of the courthouse bell, and in a few minutes the information was spread that Tom Allison was taken from the jail by a crowd of masked men who were armed and who overpowered the jailer, Mr. N.J. Reid. About 2 or 3 o'clock I was informed of all that transpired — that Allison was lynched, that citizens of the town had followed on in the direction of the lynchings and that they had found the lifeless body of Allison hanging to the limb of a white oak tree about one mile from the courthouse on the public road leading from Dobson to Mount Airy."

"I took no steps on the premises until daylight, at which time I proceeded to hold an inquest... I summoned such persons as the jurors desired and as I thought could throw any light on the matter... from the testimony of some 30 witnesses there was not development sufficient to warrant the jury in coming to a conclusion as to who the guilty parties were. So that their verdict was that 'T.H. Allison came to his death by hanging at the hands of masked men to the Jury unknown.'

"... this man Allison was a dangerous, reckless man, having taken

By the 1900 census, the home had transferred to the daughter of R.F. and Sarah McGuffin, Eliza Adams, who lived there with her husband, John, and listed her parents as boarders. From that time on, ownership of the home was linked to whoever was a caregiver for Eliza and John's handicapped daughter, Emma. James and Laura Soyars (a nephew of Eliza and his wife) inherited the home in return for caring for Emma, and then it passed to their son, James Soyars Jr., before it was purchased by Mears' parents.

The house is a traditional two-story frame structure that retains much of its 19th century form, despite the replacement of the front porch and the loss of one chimney that collapsed. The interior remains remarkably intact, and upstairs rooms boast vertical planed board walls with boards as wide as 15 to 19 inches. Original windows, doors and vernacular mantels also remain.

Mears said she contacted local historian Marion Venable for recommendations on restoring the home to its 19th century appearance and was aided by her children and neighbor Donnie Bowman.

the lives of two men, he was at the time in the strong grasp of the law and doubtless deserved condign punishment at the hands of the law. I greatly deplore the fact of this assumption of authority by private individuals and were these offenders of the law citizens of Surry County, then there is certainly an abnormal state of society greatly to be lamented."

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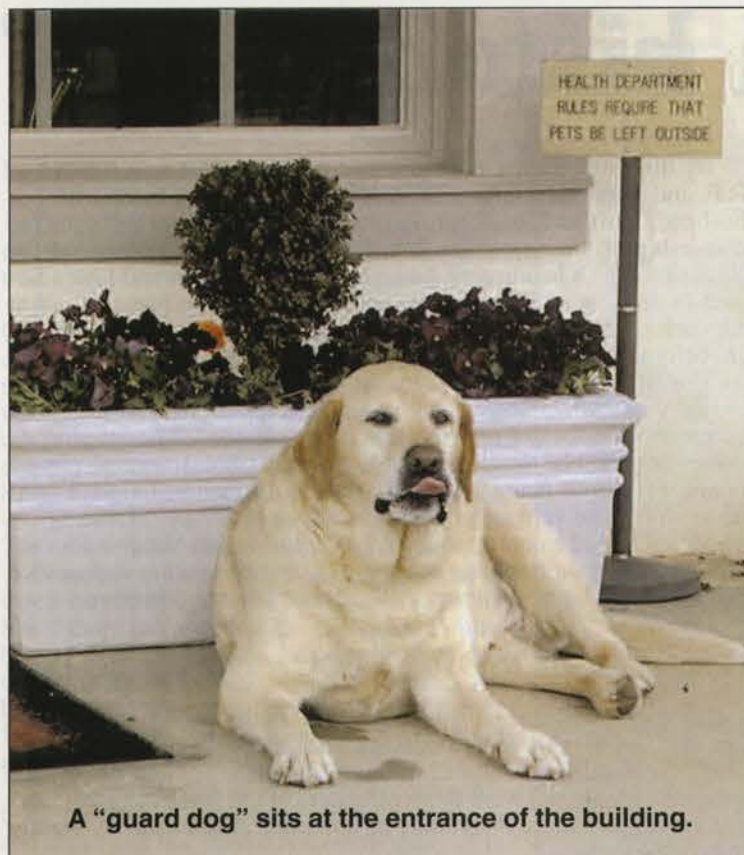
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A "guard dog" sits at the entrance of the building.

Shelton Vineyards

By ANGELA SCHMOLL

When one makes the turn onto Cabernet Lane, the historically familiar farms of Surry County seem far away from the iron gates, the seemingly endless rows of grapevines, the frost-fighting windmills, and, during the summer months, the blooming roses that line the lane.

At the lane's terminus, Shelton Vineyards rises from the Carolina hills as though it had always been there — although the state's largest estate winery didn't begin construction until 1999.

"We always enjoyed wine and decided to give it a try," said Ed Shelton, who along with his older brother, Charlie, founded the winery. "It's been good for us and, we think, good for the community."

Natives of the Toast community in Surry County, Ed and Charlie are the sons of Reid and Bertha Badgett Shelton. The vineyard is just a few miles from their maternal grandparents' homeplace.

It was perhaps that tie to their roots in Surry County that had Charlie Shelton bidding on a dairy farm near his grandparents' home when it was sold at auction in 1994.

Ed Shelton said they had no plans for the land when it was purchased, and it was three years later before they began to do research into the possibility of developing a vineyard on the tract.

"We did some research on the feasibility of growing wine grapes on the land," said Shelton. He said although there were already wineries in North Carolina, including Black Wolf Vineyard, a small vineyard just north of Dobson off 601 that has the distinction of being the county's first, the brothers took their research farther afield.

"We toured some different wineries," said Shelton. "There were a few in North Carolina, and there were several in Virginia in the Charlottesville area where the climate is comparable to here."

What they found convinced them to go forward.

"We saw the impact these vineyards — and others in the area — could have 20 to 30 years down the road," said Charlie Shelton on the vineyard Web site. "With tobacco farming on the decline, we saw it as a great way to diversify the farming industry and open doors to new industries in the area, such as tourism. People love to tour vineyards, taste the wine and hear the story of winemaking. And, at Shelton Vineyards, we believed we had a great story to tell."

Ed Shelton said the planting of the first vines began in the spring of 1999. "We started off planting 40 acres," he said.

Construction on the winery, a 33,000-square-foot structure designed by well-known North Carolina architect Ray Troxell, began later the same year.

Another 60 acres of vines were added in 2000, and Shelton said the balance, which took the vineyard to 200 acres, was planted the

is the state's largest estate winery

following year. "This tract of land has 383 acres," said Shelton, "and we had 200 acres in vines at one point. We've taken some out and done some replanting, so we probably have about 165 acres planted right now."

"That's enough to classify us as the largest estate winery in North Carolina," he said, explaining that an estate winery is one that grows all of its own grapes rather than buying grapes from other vineyards.

"Our first crop was in 2000," he said. "It was small, but we were ready to begin making wine. When we opened the winery, we needed wine on the shelves and had some made on the West Coast in California and Washington. From then on out, it's been our grapes and our wine."

Located in the Yadkin Valley American Viticultural Area, the vineyard shares a similar climate and growing season to that of the Burgundy region of France.

A wide variety of vinifera grapes are grown, including Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Merlot, Pinot Noir, Petit Verdot, Pinot Blanc, White Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc, Sangiovese, Syrah and Viognier.

Winemaking duties are handled by Murphy Moore, who began her wine-industry journey in 1997 in Eugene, Ore., and who has been with Shelton Vineyards since 2005. Wines crafted by Moore have received numerous awards and critical acclaim by top wine publications, including a top 30 ranking by The Wine Enthusiast.

In addition to the winery, the Sheltons added a second building, which initially housed a cheese shop and cheese-making facility. "We converted it to a restaurant two years ago," Shelton said. "We had a lot of people who wanted a place here to enjoy the views and the environment of dining in the winery. We felt it would be a better fit."

The Harvest Grill has expanded both its dining area — enclosing a patio — and, beginning in April, its hours.

"Starting in April we'll be open for dinner Monday through Saturday and open daily for lunch," he said. Hours at the grill are 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sunday. "We serve brunch on Sunday until 3 p.m., then a light lunch until closing."

Vineyard tours and wine tasting are available 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 1 to 6 p.m. on Sunday. During winter, closing is one hour earlier, he noted.

"Our first crop was in 2000. It was small but we were ready to begin making wine. When we opened the winery, we needed wine on the shelves and had some made on the West Coast in California and Washington. From then on out, it's been our grapes and our wine."

Ed Shelton

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Lorene's serves up taste temptations

By ANGELA SCHMOLL

To Dobson and much of the surrounding area, Lorene Moore is simply Lorene — the person to call whether the need is a birthday or wedding cake, a catered lunch for the office, or just something to satisfy a sweet tooth in the middle of the afternoon.

"I've been doing this 25 years," said Moore, busy at work in her kitchen on White Street on a winter afternoon. Shannon Leftwich and Lisa Harris tend to cake frosting in a large mixer on the other side of the kitchen while Moore assembles layer cakes with the deftness of years of practice. "I've been at this location for 19 years," she added. "Some people call it a hole in the wall, but they still find me."

Moore has always loved to cook, so her career path shouldn't have come as a surprise.

"I come from a long line of good cooks," she said. "A lot of good cooks. We're the ones where you want to come to the family reunion because there's a big table covered with food and everything is good."

"I actually started by taking a beginning cake decorating class to do cakes for the family in 1974. Then I started working in the winter months for what used to be Food World and is now Harris Teeter. We farmed in the summer, and I worked in the bakery for some extra money in the winter."

She said the demand for her goodies, be they baked goods or just a meal, continued to grow.

"Neighbors and family kept calling and wanting cakes, and it just grew until I had to make a decision to either do it or not. I always loved to cook, so I decided to do it."

Moore finishes frosting one cake, covers it in plastic wrap, slides it into a box and begins a second one — red velvet with buttery frosting from the same large tub. As she talks, a third cake begins to take shape from the layers baked earlier in the day and individually wrapped and stacked on a stainless steel counter in the center of the room. A tube of frosting is filled and used to add a swirl around the edges of a cake then topped in pineapple, another one is mixed with food coloring for a pink finish and used to write "congratulations" across the top of a sheet cake and add draped swirls around the side.



On the other side of the large kitchen, Leftwich and Harris tend the large, industrial mixer that roars above all other sounds except the occasional "ding" of a kitchen timer, signaling yet another confection is ready to emerge from the oven.

While the business is open Tuesday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Moore said she usually starts her days about 6 or 6:30 a.m. "I used to come in earlier, but now Lowes doesn't open until 6 a.m. I liked it when they were open 24 hours a day."

Moore said all of her creations, whether finger foods, a catered meal or baked goods, are made from scratch. "Everything is scratch made," she said. "We don't order anything premade."

Moore said all of her creations, whether finger foods, a catered meal or baked goods, are made from scratch. "Everything is scratch made," she said. "We don't order anything premade."

that are to die for

made," she said. "We don't order anything premade."

The oldest anything may be is a cake baked a day ahead to be finished and picked up early, she said. Otherwise things are made as they are needed. "I try to keep six or eight cakes made for people that just come in wanting something, but others are made as they are ordered."

"The number we'll do each day varies. There are more on the weekends than during the week. Sometimes we may have 30 or 40 birthday cakes between Friday and Saturday and if it's a holiday it may be more than that. This is a really wild place in December."

Other hot spots ...

The Wolf's Lair, 231 Vineyard Lane, 374-2532
Sue's, 911 E. Atkins St., 374-4496
The Plaza, 310 N. White St., 386-4200
Mama Mary's Pizza, 302 N. White St., 356-7000
Lighthouse Restaurant, 522 N. Main St., 356-8060
The Lantern, 304 N. Main St., 356-8461
The Harvest Grill, 286 Cabernet Lane, 366-3590
Fletchers, 115 W. Atkins St., 356-8646
The Depot, 112 Old Depot Lane, 386-8222
China House, 109 Llewellyn St., 386-0886

Although many people may think of Moore's specialty as her decorated cakes, she said, "we do everything — casseroles, salads, barbecue... If you don't want to fix supper tonight, you can call us and we'll do it. If it's food, we'll

do it, and if we've never done it before, we'll give it a try."

She said she ran into just that situation last Christmas when a man from Laurel Springs called wanting English Saffron Bread.

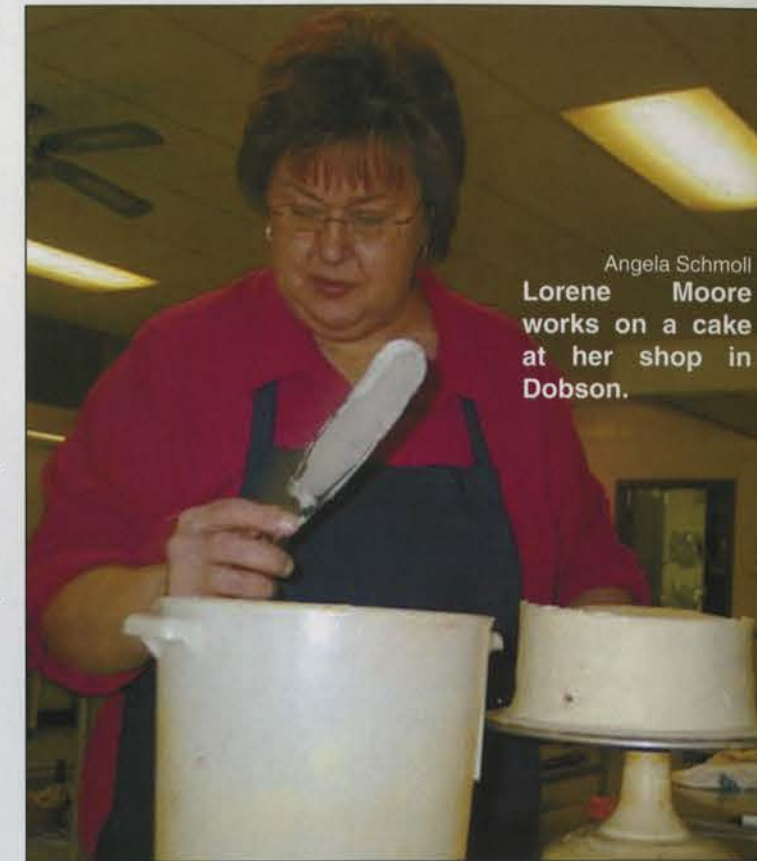
"He said his mother was coming from England for Christmas and their family tradition had always been English Saffron Bread. I told him I'd try. He brought me a recipe that was a page long and one batch made 16 loaves. It takes all day to make a batch, and he's already called and picked up 16 more loaves. He said he wanted three batches a year."

She said while that was the most unusual request she's had in a while, she's used to taking requests.

"Every time the family gets together they like fried chicken or roast beef and any side vegetable," she said. "For special occasions we have steaks on the grill. And everyone in the family (three children and three grandchildren as well as her mom and extended family) has their favorite dessert. I've also got my 'world famous' broccoli casserole, and for every family function I have to make creamed corn and homemade macaroni and cheese."

But while she may like cooking for her family's enjoyment and her own when she's not working, when she's in her commercial kitchen, she's all business.

"They get excited when I have something I'll let them taste," she said, nodding across the large kitchen at Leftwich and Harris, who grin in agreement. "Most of the time I say, 'Don't eat that, that's money.'"



Angela Schmoll
Lorene Moore
works on a cake
at her shop in
Dobson.

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212 N. Main Street, Mount Airy
(336) 786-4696 1-888-786-4696
stalley@trificient.net

Same Day Service

Alterations \$2.50

\$.99 Mens Dress Shirts

CLEANERS

Mon - Fri 7am - 6pm • Sat 8am - 5pm

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(336) 719-0099

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Monday-Saturday 9:00 - 5:00
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Tri-County Gastroenterology

Board-Certified in gastroenterology and internal medicine, Dr. Mendolia has a caring, well trained staff in his downtown Elkin office. From this office, under the umbrella of Tri-County Gastroenterology, he lead Tri-County Heartburn Center and Northwest Piedmont Clinical research, Inc. He is on the medical staff of Hugh Chatham Memorial Hospital.

"Through Northwest Piedmont Clinical Research we have participated in studies to optimize medical treatments for various gastrointestinal disorders. I believe this puts Tri-County Gastroenterology and Tri-County Heartburn Treatment Center on the cutting edge of new gastrointestinal procedures and medications," Dr. Mendolia.



What is G.E.R.D?

Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease, more commonly referred to as Heartburn or Acid Reflux, is a chronic disease caused by a malfunctioning "flap" separating the stomach from the esophagus. This results in stomach acid refluxing into the esophagus which leads to damage such as erosions, scar tissue, a precancerous condition known as Barrett's & cancer of the esophagus.

Common G.E.R.D. Symptoms:

Heartburn	Difficulty Swallowing
Indigestion	Hoarseness
Chest Pain	Sore Throat
Belching or Burping	Difficulty Sleeping
Nausea & Vomiting	

Tri-County Heartburn Treatment Center

Procedures a Tri-County Gastroenterology:

- Colonoscopy
- Endoscopy
- Bravo PH probes
- Liver biopsies
- Feeding tube placements
- IRC (infrared coagulation) for the treatment of hemorrhoids
- Remicade infusions for the treatment of Crohn's disease
- Hepatitis C diagnosis and treatments

Types of patients seen at Tri-County Gastroenterology

(PATIENTS MAY SELF-REFER TO THE CLINIC)

- Patients 50 & over needing colon cancer screening
- Patients 40+ with a family member who has had colon cancer or colon polyps
- Patients with irritable bowel syndrome
- Patients with peptic ulcers
- Patients with liver abnormalities, such as hepatitis B/C
- Patients with pancreatic disorders

Tri-County Gastroenterology

201 West Main Street • Elkin, North Carolina

336-835-5688

Participating with most insurances including • Medicare • Partners • Blue Cross