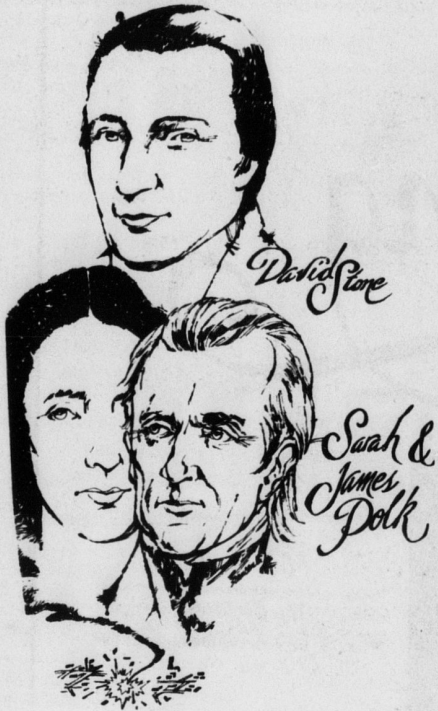


Polk never forgot Valentine's Day



James K. Polk, the North Carolina-born eleventh President of the United States, never forgot Valentine's Day.

It was at a party on that day in 1823 that he met Sarah Childress, his blind date for the affair. It was love at first sight for Polk, then a young Tennessee lawyer. He immediately asked her for another date the following night, but Sarah kept him dangling for three days before accompanying him on a picnic, well chaperoned by another couple. When he quickly proposed, she kept him waiting until he proposed a second time — the next day! They were married on New Year's Day, 1824.

Polk never regretted his impetuosity. When he died in 1849, his last words were "I love you, Sarah, for all eternity. I love you."

A series of tornadoes, one begetting another in a fearsome chain reaction, spread across six Southern states on February 18, 1884, leaving an incredible toll of death and destruction in their paths. The twisters raged from Tennessee to Louisiana. Although North Carolina was apparently less severely mauled than some, widespread damage was done here too on a belt stretching across the center of the state.

Raleigh was "devastated" according to the newspaper reports. In Rockingham, a mammoth twister struck with such sud-



ED SMITH

deness that no one had time to run. "A path of destruction some 400 yards wide" was carved through the town. People were whirled through the air for "distances up to 300 yards, then smashed to the earth with killing force." Others were crushed by flying wreckage and even impaled by fence rails. It was later estimated that the Rockingham twister lasted from two to three minutes. The air was dark with flying debris. In the path of the storm "everything was swept off the face of the earth as if by fire." Even "... the birds of the air, as well as all the chickens, were picked clean of feathers." The total loss of life (over 800) and destruction of property across the six states was the greatest on record for any tornado or series of tornadoes in this nation's history.

In 1864, as confidence in the South's ability to win the Civil War faded, a ruinous inflation spread across the state. The February 13 issue of one Northern periodical, "Leslie's Illustrated Magazine," carried an account of an auction held "near Danville on the North Carolina border." A five-dollar gold piece, the story said, had been sold for \$150 in Confederate paper money.

As faith declined in the South money, coupled with the acute shortage caused by the war, prices of ordinary items reached incredible levels. A pound of tea ultimately cost \$500. Hams sold for as high as \$175 and turkeys for \$250. By the war's end the exchange rate would zoom to \$2,000 in Confederate paper currency for one dollar in gold!

David Stone, the famous "dove" in North Carolina history, was born February 17, 1770. Few political careers in this state have begun more auspiciously than Stone's. Elected to the Legislature at the minimum legal age of 21, he went on to serve as U. S. Congressman and Governor 1808-1810. Stone ran into trouble. He opposed some of President Madison's wartime measures of the War of 1812 and was censured by the General Assembly.

Stone resigned his Senate seat, his career at an end, and died a few years later, some said of a broken heart.



The Poet's Corner

THE PRECIOUS GEM

Tell me that you love me
'tis music that stirs the heart
Today is the day for love
'ere the sunshine may depart,
Bluebirds will seem much bluer
Bluebirds sweeter will sing
Tell me that you love me
Love is such a precious thing.

Tell me that you love me
And I shall remember thus,
When the glow of the stars are hidden
hushed is the song of the thrush.
Dreams have turned to a shes
Yet the heart shall ever sing,
Tell me that you love me
Love is such a precious thing.

Tell me that you love me
I shall reach out with hope,
No mountain clouding the horizon
Too large with which to cope.
The winters of yesterday forgotten
Everyday shall be sweet as spring,
Just tell me that you love me
Love is such a precious thing.

VIVIAN STEWART BILTCLIFFE

GIVE US THIS DAY A SMILE

Lord you take us under your wing
Cover us with your Grace,
But for some of us dear Father
We need adornment for the face.
You can see the heart Lord
But people will never know,
If re-birth makes one happy
When we never let it show.

Father we ask you today
For blessings all the while,
But who among us ever think
To ask you for a smile
We plead dear Lord please
Ease the many aches and pains,
Let the sun shine upon us
Please cease to send the rains.

We look for the rainbow
Shining brightly through the clouds,
But hold firmly to the sullen
Like mourners wearing shrouds
Dear Lord just take a look
At the gloomy expressions below,
What we really need to plant
Are smiles and make them grow.

Who among us in this day
Is ever brave enough to smile
Unless you give us one
And fashion it in style
Give us a smile dear Lord
Let it bless our pride
Put the heart and spirit in it
At least a mile wide.

VIVIAN STEWART BILTCLIFFE

EDITORIALS & OPINIONS

Page 4-A Thursday, February 17, 1977

Third year CD grant application is made

Application for the 1977-78 Community Development block grants program is in the processing stage. The city's entitlement for this third year of the five year program is \$1,040,000.

The total entitlement under the Federal Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 is \$4,180,000. The allocations drop dramatically during the remaining two years of funding.

The majority of the third year application is taken up with continuing city projects such as expansion and updating water and sewer lines to better serve the entire residential, business and industrial community.

Also with expansion of city recreational facilities and renovation to the community center. Further, for the continued support of a program for the elderly and for a home based child care program and for the development of a cultural program.

All of these programs have proved their worth repeatedly and should take the lions share of the annual funding.

A couple of new proposals for funding are also highly worthy of mention. First, the request for planimetric and topographical mapping.

This project would provide the city planners with vital information for long-range planning for the entire city. Not only as it exists today, but in the areas the community possible will expand in the future. Planimetric mapping is actually aerial photos broken down into sections of the entire city and shows exactly the position of residences, streets, green areas, business and industrial development. From these mapping photos definite plans for future expansion of not only what is seen above ground, but where underground services should be considered.

Our forefathers, at best, could only expand as money and immediate need dictated. Today, the present residents and local government have those obstacles to overcome. As city planner Al Moretz calls it, "a maze of outdated water and sewer lines to be sorted out and replaced."

The topographic mapping is an equally valuable tool in future planning for the city. With these maps planning can be done to best results because planners will have detailed data and the dips and rises of the city's landscape.

The other proposal of great merit was presented last Tuesday night by the ministerial association and deals in a more definite and immediate need the development of human resources.

Based on the "wagon train theory," that all of the travelers must stick together and pull together against common adversity.

The ministers call the proposal a Community Service Officer. This project would pull together all of the local people assistance programs and organizations now existing in Kings Mountain and create other areas of need as determined by people in individual situations.

This project may be more difficult to pull off because it would be dealing with people and professions from all walks of life urged to come together for one common goal — to extend a hand to those in need.

The project has two levels of operation; first, immediate relief for needy citizens, and secondly, an all out effort to discover the reason the emergency arose in the first place with answers that could possibly erase those emergency-causing reasons.

The project would not require money from the city, the ministerial association and all other agencies that participate, but would require a willingness on the part of citizens with capabilities to help fellow citizens to in fact do just that. And do it on a volunteer basis.

The only individual who could hope to gain any monetary benefit from this project would be the Community Service Officer — the fulltime force that would keep the program rolling.

The third year applications will be in the hands of the powers at the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) by April 1. Early summer should see final decisions made on the eligibility of all programs. Implementation funding will be in the city's grasp by 1978.

Ladies tv favorite sidelined with cancer

There's been a great deal of discussion among the ladies in the WBTB viewing area about Betty Feezor being away from her usual 1 p. m. stand.

Several weeks ago the personable Ms. Feezor took a vacation and "Betty's Friends," other BT station personnel, filled in. And they continued to fill in "while Betty is away."

Then Betty returned to the show and viewers were disturbed because she appeared very disoriented.

Wednesday we found out why. Betty Feezor entered a Charlotte hospital for diagnosis. That diagnosis is cancer. Cancer in the lungs and brain.

Fuzzy Walker in WBTB's public relations office called to read me the news release which channel three will broadcast.

"This isn't an obituary by any means," Fuzzy said. "Betty is well aware of her condition and knows what she must go through with chemotherapy and radiation treatments."

Betty will be released from the hospital soon and will undergo treatment as an outpatient.

With this announcement, WBTB will also say that Betty Feezor will not be a part of the new "Top of The Day" program scheduled to begin March 7. The show will be seen from noon to 1 p. m. daily and will include the news and many other features. Ms. Feezor was to incorporate her own show into this format.



TOM MCINTYRE

"The program is being designed, however," Fuzzy said, "to allow the Betty Feezor segment to be included at any time she is well enough to return to work."

Betty Feezor began her daily TV show with cooking feature and household decorating and sewing tips 23 years ago. The program was also telecast over WBTB's sister station WWBT in Richmond, Va.

Presently, "The Phil Donahue" talk show is being telecast in the Feezor time slot. On March 7 Donahue goes to 9 a. m. and "Search For Tomorrow," the long, long running daytime drama, will be telecast at 1 p. m., delayed half an hour from 12:30 p. m. Meanwhile, Betty Feezor's physicians are very hopeful her clinical treatments will have a positive effect and that she will be well enough to return to her TV viewers.

Independent audit favors Bell

An independent audit of Southern Bell's performance has concluded that the company's North Carolina operations serve the state's telephone subscribers effectively and efficiently according to T. M. Graham, district manager of Bell's Gastonia operations.

The audit was performed by Arthur D. Little, Inc., an independent audit firm based in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The North Carolina Utilities Commission authorized the audit in accordance with the state statute enacted in 1975, which required audits of public utilities in the State by a qualified independent firm once every five years.

Graham said of the audit, "It is very gratifying that a firm with the fine reputation of Arthur D. Little, Inc. has made such a thorough review of our operations and given such a favorable report.

"Our primary objective, of course, is to provide high quality service and to provide it at the most reasonable cost. We feel we have been successful in meeting that objective, and the performance audits just completed by Arthur D. Little, Inc. gives further evidence of it.

"We are pleased with the report, but we recognize some suggestions for improvements were made. We take these seriously, and we will consider them very carefully to do all we can to further improve the quality of our service and the efficiency with which we provide it."

The Arthur D. Little audit team gave Southern Bell high marks for the efficiency of Bell's operations. "We found no significant opportunities for savings to the consumer," the report states. The audit points out that, "the cost of telephone service to North Carolina Southern Bell customers has risen substantially less than the consumer price index."

The auditors further said, "In general, the service offered by North Carolina Southern Bell is better than that offered by the majority of Bell companies and no major deficiencies were noted."

Also, service indices were well above average when compared to the Bell System at large. North Carolina, according to Bell System results, is clearly a superior operating area, the audit reported.

The report found room for improvement in the company's sensitivity and responsiveness to customers' needs. Among other areas singled out for criticism were the discontinuance of TELSAM (Telephone Service Attitude Measurements) which provided valuable feedback from customers, and the failure to routinely provide trouble service on Saturdays. The report strongly recommended that the policy of providing Saturday installations and after-hours service be continued and that the quality of that service be re-examined.

Graham said "Our TELSAM measurement was discontinued after usage for several years because it provides practically no information to management which is not available from our own internal measurements of our performance. And our internal measurements were complimented in the audit report. In addition, the cost of this monthly survey of customers was an expense we felt was not justified in view of its value to us."

In regards to Saturday installation, Graham said, Saturday installation is not encouraged, but to meet the customers' needs the company does install telephones on Saturday. If the need can be met at another time — even in the evening — Southern Bell makes the installation then.

The audit also reported that North Carolina Southern Bell customers benefit directly from financial, technical, computer and management support provided by corporate Southern Bell and AT&T. And, they said that throughout the organization they found a constructive, competitive thrust aimed at improving service and reducing costs.

"To receive such high marks naturally makes us feel very good," Graham said. "And we will continue to do our best to give our customers the kind of service they want, when and where they want it." Graham said.

KINGS MOUNTAIN MIRROR-HERALD

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