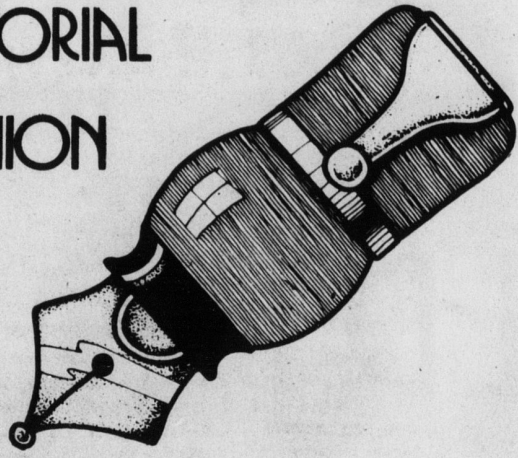


EDITORIAL
OPINION



Don't hang virtues in a dark closet

There seems to be a problem in the toy department this year. What the problem stems from we do not know. The Kings Mountain Fire Department members don't have any answer to the problem either. All we know is the response to the annual Toys For Tots project is falling flat on its face.

In years past the firefighters have had almost more toys to repair and distribute than they could handle. And that doesn't include the new toys donated by merchants and businessmen. This year the firefighters have collected less than one pick-up truck full for the project.

Toys For Tots is a project designed to put something under the trees of the youngsters in less fortunate financial situations. The toys are collected by the firemen, repaired at the station and placed in a clearing house, which is operated by members of the Kings Mountain Ministerial Association. Families are given dates to come to the toy house through their individual churches. This is to make sure the needy get the toys.

Come on, KM. You've been known for your generosity and compassion in the past. Don't hang those virtues in the closet this year.

You can still drink the water despite claim

Last Thursday The Mirror-Herald published a story about the N. C. Department of Natural and Economic Resources Environmental Management Commission hanging a \$500 civil penalty on the City of Kings Mountain.

The penalty was the result of an investigation by the NER-EMC which determined that the city had not lived up to the terms of a permit secured for the construction and operation of a wastewater treatment facility and that the city was dumping raw untreated wastewater into Buffalo Creek.

The story made Mayor John Moss hit the ceiling and little wonder. The NER-EMC release didn't bother to explain that the initial wastewater treatment facility plans were far too expensive for the amount of wastewater to be treated. Nor did the report explain that it is not untreated sewage being dumped into Buffalo Creek, but the water used to wash the filters and flush the settlement basins at the water plant. This dumpage occurs about once every 90-hours and adds about one percent of the total volume of water flowing through Buffalo Creek.

The original plans were devised to comply with environmental protection policies. Since 1976 it has been discovered that the requirements were far in excess of what is actually needed. It was an overkill, much the same as the current OSHA requirements for safety in manufacturing plants.

A story in today's issue explains that a wastewater facility can be constructed and operated for about half of what the original concept would have cost. We go into this detail to let Kings Mountians know that the delay has actually saved the tax money expenditures. Also to calm your fears that raw sewage is being dumped into the source of the city's drinking water.

State is 286 years old

The birth of North Carolina as a separate geographic or political unit is said to have taken place on November 28, 1691. This week our state is 286 years old!

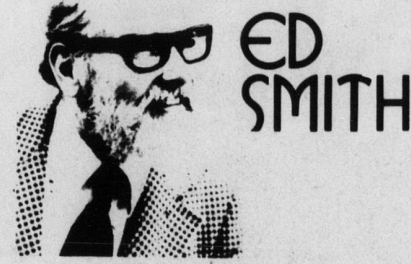
Until that time, the huge area had simply been known as Carolina. On that date, however, Governor Phillip Ludwell was instructed . . . "to have the Counties of Albemarle, Colleton, Berkeley and Craven elect five delegates each to meet at a designated place and separate Carolina into two political divisions with specific limits." Thus Ludwell was the first Governor of . . . "that part of the Province that lies North and East of the Cape Fear."

There remains some question as to who was the first real governor of North Carolina, however, since the separation did not become official until December 7, 1710, with each half being formally identified as North and South Carolina. At that time, the Governor of the colony was the controversial Thomas Cary.

On Nov. 27, 1766, an act was ratified by Parliament . . . "to make a government building within the Town of New Bern for a residence of the Governor." This led to the construction of "Tryon's Palace" by Governor William Tryon.

One year earlier, the residents of New Bern had petitioned the King to establish the colony's capitol there, and the Colonial Assembly had appropriated funds for the construction of a Governor's residence. Before its completion, however, many of these same citizens would be complaining bitterly that the project was draining off the colony's wealth.

Tryon completed his "Palace" in 1770. It contained a hall where the Assembly would meet, the Council Chamber, public offices and the Governor's official residence. Tryon himself did not remain in North Carolina long to enjoy living there, however, nor did his successors in office. Tryon was tran-



ferred to New York shortly after the building's completion, to be Governor there. His successor, James Hassell, remained in office only one month, and Josiah Martin, the next Royal Governor, spent an uneasy four years in office as resistance to the Crown began to boil in the colony.

Alfred M. Scales, Governor of the state from 1885-89, was born in Rockingham County on Nov. 26, 1827. His term in office was not regarded as outstanding. Historians

regard his military service (as a twice-wounded brigadier general of N. C. troops during the Civil War as his major achievement.

General Nathaniel Greene reached CharlotteTown on December 2, 1780, and took command of the Southern Continental Army. He relieved Gen. Horatio Gates, who was in disgrace following the American rout at the Battle of Camden the previous summer.

Art that time, the southern American Army was starving, scattered and totally dispirited. General Washington described their situation as "desperate", and questioned if the American cause could survive.

Under Nathaniel Greene's extremely able leadership, however, the course of the war was reversed. Though he would win no major battles, many historians today believe that the American Revolution was won in the South during the twelve months that followed Greene's assumption of command there.



ODE TO A STAR
(c) 1977

His fans called him, "Elvis the King"
An honor so fitting when you heard him sing
He put his heart and soul in it and did it his way
With stars in his eyes that beamed through dismay.

True devotion was touching he sang with a smile
Built a mansion for his mother and dressed it in style
How she must have rejoiced in the glory of her son
And wished many a time he was more than one.

He knew the Giver of life you could feel it in his tone
A spirit so vivacious with His spirit shown
The depth of true emotions gave the secret away
In renewed glory he is singing today.

Remembering Elvis is the sunshine of today
Refreshing as springtime that buds a bouquet
Forever to shine brightly, Elvis in his glory
His life to become a legend, a never ending story.

No wonder they called him, "Elvis the King"
You just had to the moment you heard him sing
His voice is not silent but shall forever ring
The story of Elvis, "Elvis the King."

VIVIAN STEWART BILTCLIFFE



So long, Jim and Father Cuthbert

Two men who meant something in my life died recently in my old hometown of Belmont.

One entered my memories back in the late 1940s and the other after I got into the newspaper game.

The first was Jim Dixon. The second, Father Cuthbert Allen.

Dixon was a dark-haired, small statured man who spoke softly and wore a perpetual grin. He was employed at Stowe Mercantile in Belmont. In itself that job was not too exciting. But Mr. Dixon had a sideline. He operated a film rental business out of his Eagle Rd. home.

Back in the late 40s he came to the Aberfoyle Playground a couple of nights each week during the warmer months and ran films free of charge for the kids and grownups alike.

We didn't question our good fortune then, but I'm sure the Aberfoyle Mill compensated Dixon for the shows. I wasn't a resident of the mill community proper, but I lived only half a mile from the playground, so attendance was no problem.

The textile company constructed the playground, complete with recreational equipment, a concession stand, an open air shelter and a clubhouse. In the center of the playground were several rows of wooden benches and an iron pipe frame to hold the screen. There would be tons of youngsters and a handful of adults there before dark on show nights exhausting some of the energy only the very young are gifted with. When Dixon arrived in his station wagon and began setting up his equipment, we beat it to

TOM
MCINTYRE

the concession stand for popcorn and soft-drinks, then flew back to the benches to wait for the show.

Dixon's shows usually meant a short comedy or cartoon, the latest chapter of a serial and the main feature, usually a western, mystery or comedy — the type of fare commonly called grade B movies.

Without a doubt it was through Jim Dixon that many of us from the eastside of Belmont developed our love for the movies.

Of course nothing ever stays the same and in the early 1960s when Television came to the fore the Dixon shows were gradually dropped. But memories of those warm

summer nights perched on a hard bench watching the flickering black and white images on the Aberfoyle playground screen are still vivid.

Kids rarely remember to say thanks, so, hey up there, Jim! Thank you.

I first made the acquaintance of Father Cuthbert E. Allen about 1958. I had just gone to work at The Gastonia Gazette covering the county beat. Belmont Abbey College was on my agenda and that's where I met Father Cuthbert.

He was an impressive figure of a man; tall, white-haired (which always looked as if it had been attacked by a high wind), a deep, cultured voice and a vocabulary that would have you running to the dictionary.

Our first meetings were cordial and brief until the day my publisher chewed my rear out because he had had complaints from The Abbey that their news wasn't being covered.

I knew that wasn't true, so I beat it over to Father Cuthbert's office with blood in my eye. He and I went round and round over the issue. From that day on we had an excellent working relationship. I was in his office a couple of times every week filling up pages in my notebook with newsy items.

As a matter of fact I became such a regular fixture at the college that in time Father Cuthbert became convinced he had first met me when I was a student at The Abbey. I never was an Abbey student, but after two or three attempts to set the record straight I didn't bother denying it anymore.

Father Cuthbert was Chancellor of the college back then so he was very much in-

volved with the education process and was in no way a cloistered Catholic. He knew what was happening in the outside world and consequently had developed a great sense of humor.

I recall one afternoon when he and I had dormitory students hanging from the stairwell watching in wide-eyed wonder and listening intently.

"Come on up, my son," Father Cuthbert was saying. "We'll have coffee and talk."

"Not on your life, Father," I said.

"Don't be that way. I know you're a Protestant. I won't try to convert you."

"Forget it," I said. "I've heard what goes on over here."

"Misinformation talked around by the narrow-minded," he said.

"I ain't going upstairs. You people are weird," said I.

"Weird," my boy?"

"Yeah. Anybody who walks around all day dressed up like Zorro is weird in my book!"

By that time we had both cracked up.

Another time I popped into his office to seek some news. This was right after some huge program that had taken place on campus with dignitaries from all over the country taking part.

"My God," he said. "After the week we've just been through, isn't that news enough to last you for a month?"

"It was alright while it lasted," I said, "but what have you done for me lately?"

"Get out of here. Go talk to the Mother Superior over at Sacred Heart. Maybe she has some news for you," he laughed.

I was just one of thousands of people who knew Father Cuthbert. I imagine we all felt sad when he died Dec. 1 at the age of 71.

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