

# MIRROR

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It's time to stop counting birthdays, if you can remember when Captain Bill Davis was at the helm of one of New Bern's bouncing street cars, a huge slice of cafe pie was only a dime, and what is now the Tryon Theatre wasn't the Show Shop or the Kehoe but the Athens.

You're likewise an antique if you recall "Big" Hill sunning in front of his establishment on South Front, church groups peddling big hominy door to door, and Sunday afternoon loafers gathering on the stone ledge around Basnight's Hardware at the spot where McLellan's now stands.

Don't admit being an oldster, however, if you never faced the problem as a barefoot boy of crossing a street newly surfaced with oyster shells. Count yourself young too, and doubly blessed, if you escaped the childhood experience (an utterly impossible task) of trying to make the legs of your long-handle drawers look less than lumpy in a pair of black cotton stockings.

There were a lot of things not so good about the good old days, but folks who met you walking two abreast always stepped aside in single file and gave you your just share of the pavement. They even smiled when they did it.

"Ras" Royall, whose daylong gait would have left the best trotter breathless, sold two cones of homemade ice cream for a nickel at his fruit stand on Broad street. And Sadie Kafer (bless her wonderful heart) made you feel like the most important customer in the world, when you bought a sack of wine candy or rock candy at the bakery.

An oldster is a fellow who remembers when riding "around the belt" at 20 miles an hour in one of the town's few autos was considered an outing, and the man didn't live who could tote \$3.00 worth of groceries all the way home.

Yesterday was when every pantry shelf had a supply of Octagon soap, Bon Ami and Old Dutch cleanser, and the miracle drugs in the medicine cabinet were castor oil, calomel, Savodine, Vick's Vaporub and Carter's liver pills. Lydia E. Pinkhams and Black Draught were present too.

Having to eat light bread instead of hot biscuits three times a day was sufficient to get any husband a divorce, and no woman in the neighborhood would blame him for doing so.

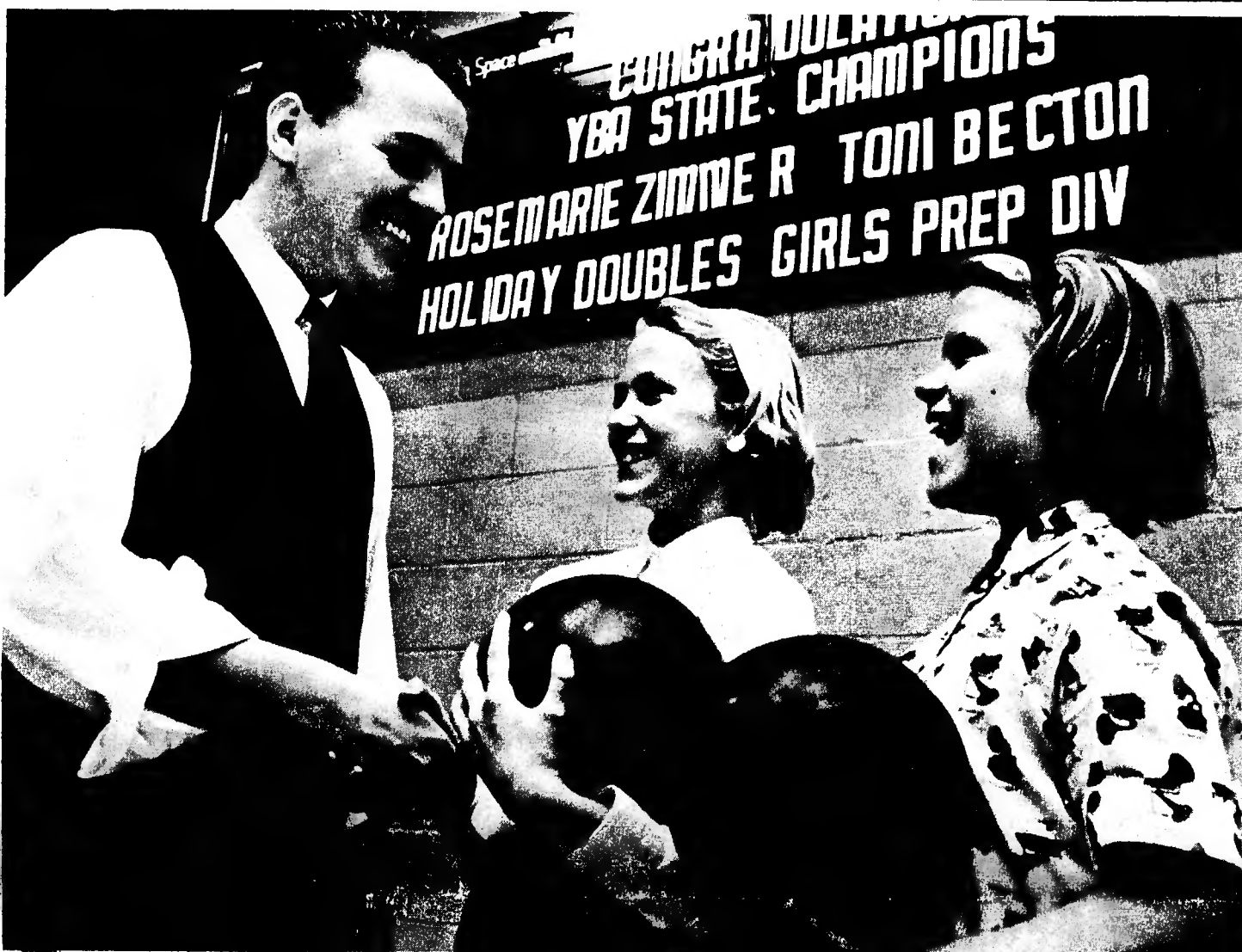
Yesterday was also that period of human existence when parents went to Sunday school with their kids instead of dumping them at the church door and picking them up an hour later. This despite the fact most fathers and some mothers had to work late on Saturday night.

No one can question your credentials as an oldster, if you used to balk at paying five dollars for a pair of dress shoes, and felt splendidly attired in a two-pants outfit with vest included that sold for \$15 or less.

Those were the days when the standard price for the birthday present you took to a kid party was ten cents. Now a child feels disgraced to show up with a gift that costs less than ten times that amount.

Speaking of the small fry, nobody whined about not having

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**STATE CHAMPS**—Toni Becton, 11, (born in New Bern) is complimented at party in her honor after she and partner, Rose Marie Zimmer, 10, won New Jersey's bowling title in girls' prep division. Toni, daughter of "Spec" and Shirley Tucker Benton (both

New Bernians) lives at Willingboro, N. J. Her proud grandmothers here are Alma Tucker and Sadie Benton. Amazingly, Toni has been bowling only since October.—Photo by Burlington County Times.



**WHERE IT COMES FROM**—When our coastal region is proclaimed the Land of Enchanting Waters, the reference isn't to the potent liquid corn that is manufactured in steam stills like this one captured by ABC officers at Harlowe. We're not pushing temperance

propaganda, but the filthy set up seen here may make you think twice before you take your next swig of white lightning. Never inspect a still if you've got a squeamish stomach.