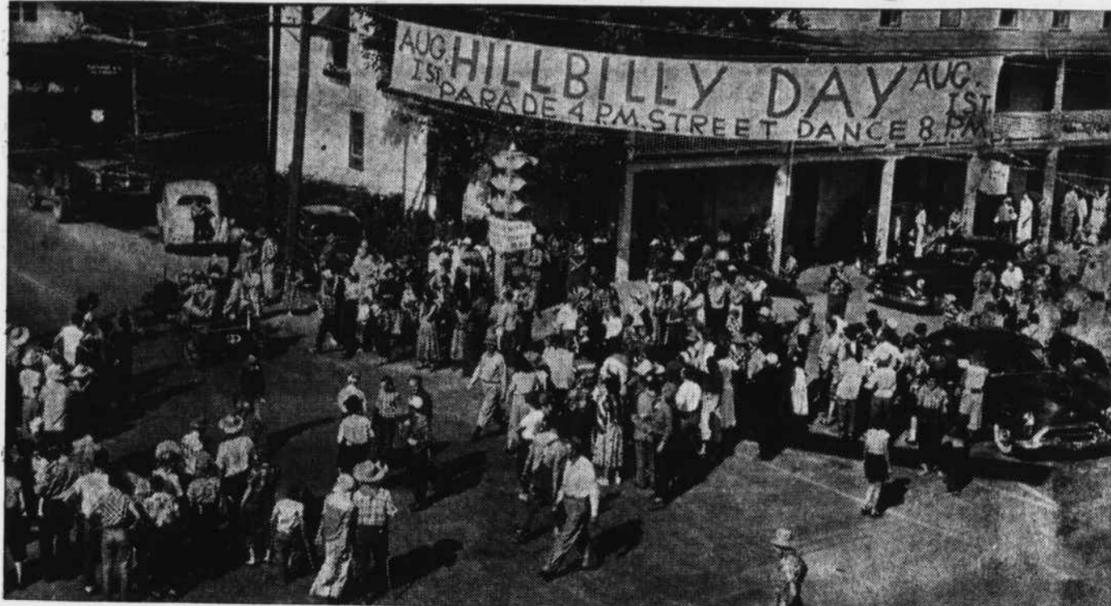


## They Came—They Stayed—They 'Conk-ered' Highlands



As the sun peeped over the ridge yesterday (Wednesday) morning a rakish assortment of "human beans" started romping up and down the main stem of Highlands. These odd critters, who had swelled into thousands by mid-morning, turned

out from all over the country to help the resort town celebrate "Hillbilly Day". The "Parade of Hillbillies" was staged in the morning, the afternoon featured a string band contest, and a street dance and the crowning of the "Country Squire" and "Highlands Belle" occupied the night hours.

## Opening Of Folk Festival Tonight

Solidly backed by a talented variety of entertainers, the fifth annual Macon County Folk Festival opens tonight (Thursday) "under the stars" in the Franklin High Stadium for a three-night run. Performances will get under way at 8 each night and will continue "until the entertainment runs out, or gives out," according to members of the sponsoring Franklin Junior Chamber of Commerce.

Advance registration by entertainers has been "encouraging", it is reported, and the festival is shaping up nicely.

Competition will be limited to amateurs living inside Macon County and the contests will cover most musical instruments, singers, buck dancers, dance teams, string bands, and specialty acts.

Three square dance teams already have registered, along with more than 20 individual entertainers.

Cash awards will be made to the winners in each event, in addition to ribbons.

"Panhandle Pete, the One-Man Band", who pitched in to help the local Jaycees stage their first festival, will again be on hand as the show comic.

Several string bands also are working up comedy acts for presentation between those

competing for prize money.

Music for dance teams, singers, and buck dancers will be provided by the "Black Rock Mountain Boys", an outfit headed by Harry Roberson, of Otto. The band currently has a radio program over a Cornelia, Ga., station.

Admission to the festival will be 25 cents per person. The proceeds are earmarked for the Jaycee civic betterment fund.

## Houk Back From Raleigh; Amendment Vote Sept. 8

Macon Rep. G. L. Houk returned Saturday from Raleigh where he and other members of the General Assembly approved several pressing measures, including the Pearsall Plan, a piece of legislation designed to meet the school segregation problem.

The special five-day session, called by Gov. Luther H. Hodges, was the shortest in the state's history. It ended Friday at 4:44 p. m.

Most significant action taken by the Legislature, Mr. Houk said, was the passage of a constitutional amendment embodying the "guts" of the Pearsall Plan.

## Annual Baptist Association Meeting Slated August 9-10

August 9-10 are the dates for the 53rd annual meeting of the Macon Baptist Association, largest church group in the county.

Three churches this year will host the two-day gathering, according to the moderator, the Rev. M. W. Chapman.

On the opening day, a session will be held at the Burningtown church and that night a special service is planned for the Iotla church. The Cartoogechaye church will be the scene of the meeting the second day.

The '56 theme is "The light of the World is Jesus".

### Reports Planned

Reports on local and state levels will feature the sessions, Mr. Chapman said.

Among state officials expected here to give reports on the first day are Morris Grant, of Thomasville, editor of Charity and Children, who will report on the orphanage; Dr. L. L. Carpenter, of Raleigh, editor of the Biblical Recorder, who will speak on the activities of the publication; Dr. Richard K. Young, of Winston-Salem, whose talk will feature work at the Baptist Hospital; Dr. M. A. Huggins, of Raleigh, general secretary of the Baptist State Convention, who will discuss the cooperative program of the convention; Dr. Julian S. Hopkins, of Raleigh, secretary of evangelism, whose topic will be on that phase of church work; and Dr. Bruce Whitaker, of Raleigh, secretary of the Baptist Student Union department, who will speak on B. S. U. activities.

Local reports in these fields

SEE NO. 2, PAGE 10

## Siler Family Reunion Slated Here Saturday

Silers from here, Silers from there, there'll be Silers from just about everywhere when the clan that helped pioneer this area shows up in Franklin this Saturday for its 105th "family meeting" without break.

This year's gathering — already officially under way with the arrival of several members from out of town — is slated for Slagle Memorial Building. Host and hostesses are the Rev. A. Rufus Morgan and his sisters, Mrs. Esther M. Freas, of Franklin, Mrs. Anna M. Barr, of Charlotte, Miss Lucy C. Morgan, of Penland, and Mrs. Laura Warren, of Murphy.

More than 200 Silers are expected to be on hand. And, if past meetings are any indication, they'll come from more than a dozen states and several foreign countries. And all ages, from infants to several nonagenarians, will be represented.

One important feature of the business meeting of the clan will be the election of a chairman to succeed the late C. S. Slagle.

Last year, the family marked the 200th anniversary of the birth of Weimar Siler, progenitor of the Macon County Silers. While this year's will be the 105th gathering of the clan, it is the 104th annual one. Early in its history, the family met twice in one year when the date for the get-to-gather was changed from January to late summer.

## Jury Is Still Deliberating Boy's Murder Trial Verdict

### New Singers, But Old Song

A new grand jury is singing an old song.

The old tune is "A New Courthouse For Macon County", a favorite of grand juries for more than a quarter century.

In filing its report of conditions of county facilities Tuesday afternoon with Judge Zeb V. Nettles, the grand jury made the following observations about the present 73-year-old courthouse:

"We have examined the courthouse and find all offices crowded for room. Rest rooms are not sanitary on account of room. Some county records have no fire protection. Some window screens need repairing. The entire grand jury recommends a new courthouse."

A committee found the prison camp in "good condition" and another observed that the county jail is "very neat, clean, and orderly", but made three specific recommendations:

1. Replace four commodore no

SEE NO. 4, PAGE 10

### Trade Promotion Dinner Is Slated

Plans for promoting more trade here will be discussed by merchants and other businessmen of Franklin at a dinner meeting next week.

The gathering is set for 6:45 p. m. Wednesday (August 8) at the Cartoogechaye School.

The Franklin Press will be host for the occasion.

All the newspaper's regular display advertisers are invited. In addition, a representative of any business in this community interested in trade promotion will be welcomed.

Persons planning to attend, however, are requested to notify The Press — phone 24 — by not later than Monday, August 6, since it is necessary to know in advance how many to prepare for.

In addition to the business discussion, a brief program of entertainment is planned.

### It Was Just About A Decade Ago, Judge Nettles Remembers

Nearly a decade ago, a young Superior Court judge suggested streamlining county government here by replacing the old county courthouse with a new, modern building.

Monday morning, that same judge, in the same courtroom, in the same old courthouse repeated this suggestion, but this time tempered it with some rather pointed remarks.

Recalling his courtroom suggestion of many years ago, Judge Zeb V. Nettles declared that the 73-year-old courthouse is "totally inadequate".

"I made that statement almost 20 years ago," he told the grand jury, "and I make it again now."

If the citizens are to have pride in their county, they are entitled to a new courthouse, he said.

"I think that your county does not regard this matter in the way it should," the judge declared.

Pointing to inadequate storage facilities in the old structure, Judge Nettles said a fire would result in "endless litigation" since most of the county records would go up in smoke. He cited an instance in another county where a courthouse burned and described the confusion that followed in attempting to check titles and records as "a terrible thing."

He said the expansion of county government means simply that "you are going to have

SEE NO. 6, PAGE 10

### Was It An Inquisitive Finger That Did It?

Firemen think an inquisitive figure might be responsible for a false alarm last Thursday about 9:45.

The alarm was turned in at the call box on a pole near the courthouse.

Since the protective glass over the alarm button has been out for several years, they think someone couldn't resist the temptation to prod the button.

### BULLETIN

James Dudley Mathis was found guilty of involuntary manslaughter and was sentenced to 3½ to 5½ years at a first offender camp.

The jury still had not arrived at a verdict yesterday (Wednesday) at 2 p. m. in the trial of 17-year-old James Dudley Mathis, who is accused in the June 12 rifle slaying of his father on a mountainside in the Cowee section.

Following an hour's charge, Judge Zeb V. Nettles turned the case over to the jury at 12:30 and it retired behind closed doors. At 1:05 the judge called the jury back to the courtroom, and, upon learning that a verdict still had not been reached, recessed until 2 o'clock with an explanation "we don't want to starve you gentlemen to death".

The state is seeking a second degree murder or a voluntary manslaughter verdict.

### Youth Impassive

Throughout the trial, the youth has been impassive.

Mathis has stared off into space, yawned, looked the courtroom over from floor to ceiling, played with a rubber band he found on the floor, probed his finger in a hole in the railing behind his chair, and scraped the soles

of his shoes. Shortly before the lunch recess, he leaned over to ask Deputy Van Frazier the time.

Officers testified during the trial that James Dudley admitted accidentally shooting his father, mistaking him for a groundhog. The body of the elder Mathis was found slumped over a 12-gauge shotgun near a groundhog hole. A .22

SEE NO. 5, PAGE 10

### By-Pass Into Georgia Open

The construction by-pass between Franklin and the Georgia state line is now open to traffic, although the new section still has to be gravelled.

According to George Byrd, of the state highway shed here, the by-pass will not be marked by the state because it cannot be classed as a detour around the new highway project on US 23-441.

A detour, he explained, must adequately carry all kinds of traffic. The new by-pass is actually a net work of narrow county roads running through the Clark's Chapel and Hickory Knoll sections and could not handle heavy traffic, he said.

A section of about six-tenths of a mile had to be opened up by highway maintenance crews near Otto to complete the by-pass. It is this section that still must be gravelled, Mr. Byrd said.

The by-pass was opened to provide relief for those working and doing business in the immediate N. C.-Georgia area.

A state marked detour runs through Highlands.

### At W. N. C. Open Meet —

## Zickgraf Breaks Records

Franklin's lanky swimming star, Bill Zickgraf, broke four records Friday in Asheville in turning in the top individual performance in the W. N. C. Open Swim Meet.

The 6' 3", 185 pound tankman, who is a varsity swimmer at the University of North Carolina, set new marks in the men's open 50-yard free style, 100-yard free style, 100-yard breast stroke, and 100-yard back stroke.

In the 50-yard free style, he broke the existing record of 27.1 seconds with a blistering 25.3.

He clipped two whole seconds from the 100-yard free style mark, swimming it in 1:02.

In topping the 100-yard breast stroke record, Bill was clocked at 1:12.7. The old mark was 1:15.1.

He churned the 100-yard back stroke event in 1:11.5, shaving the old record of 1:14.6.

Bill also racked up a third place in the men's open diving event, although he is not considered a diver and does not place any emphasis on it in his training schedule.

Son of Mr. and Mrs. Grant Zickgraf, he is a rising junior at U. N. C.

The W. N. C. competition is

sponsored annually by the Commerce. Bill was sponsored Asheville Junior Chamber of by the local chamber.



Bill Zickgraf . . . Record Breaker

## Mrs. Purdom Sweeps Local Flower Show For 2nd Year

For the second straight year, Mrs. E. S. Purdom, of Wayah Valley, has walked off with top honors in the Franklin Garden Club's annual flower show.

The colorful show, held Friday and Saturday in the high school cafeteria, saw Mrs. Purdom duplicate her last year's achievement by winning the

Ribbon winners are listed on Page 7.

sweepstakes award and the tricolor award in the arrangements division.

T. M. Deckman, of Gneiss, took the tri-color award in the horticulture division.

### Praises Show

A nationally accredited judge,



A total of 69 blue ribbons were awarded in the Franklin Garden Club's annual flower show Friday and Saturday. Checking over the winners are (L to R) Mrs. John M. Archer, Jr., Mrs. Allan Brooks, show chairman, and Mrs. J. Ward Long, club president.