The News - Journal

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BRUTAL CRIME SHOCKED COMMUNITY

Herbin Murder, Trial, Were 1964's Big Stories

Monday, August 31, was a hot, sweltering day in Raeford. Before the day was over, however, there broke a story that was to chill the very marrow.

Late on the afternoon of that fateful day, State Highway Patrolman W. T. (Bill) Herbin, a resident of Raeford for some 14 years, stopped a black 1957 Chevrolet on a routine check eight miles east of Raeford. In the car were four Negroes.

As Herbin stood beside the car talking with two of the Negroes, fellow patrolman Joseph E. Dupree passed along busy Highway 401, heading toward Raeford.

Dupree slowed his patrol car and lightly sounded the siren, as if asking Herbin if he needed assistance. Herbin waved him on.

It was the last time Joe Dupree saw his friend alive. Some five hours later, officers discovered Herbin's body, badly beaten and shot four times in the head, in a cornfield alonside the road at the spot Dupree had seen him earlier.

Thus broke Hoke County's number one news story of 1964. And it became one of the biggest in the state.

Before it was over -- with Herbin's slayers, Willie Junior Smith and Rudy Clegg Bruton, getting life imprisonment -- the story had been covered by every major state paper, all the wire services, and at least two "detective" magazines.

The Herbin story -- the murder, the developments, the trial -- dominated the news from September to mid-December. But there were other developments in Hoke County, too, during the year 1964.

Week by week, here were the top stories in The News-Journal during the year:

January 2 -- A rash of holiday accidents kept local officers busy. Six major wrecks were investigated by the State Highway Patrol.

January 9 -- Sheriff Dave Barrington told the board of county commissioners that he needed an additional deputy for night duty. Later in the year, commissioners authorized the hiring of two new deputies to bolster the sheriff's staff.

January 16 -- Two cases of meningitis were reported in Hoke County. The victims were Michael Edens and Betty Odom.

January 23 -- Thieves raided the county office building for the second time in two weeks, making a dry run after stealing $225 in the first raid. The culprit later was arrested.

January 30 -- A team of inspectors from the Post Office Department arrived in Raeford to inspect possible sites for a new post office and federal building. The site eventually selected was on Elwood Avenue, where work is beginning on the new building.

February 6 -- Town commissioners halted plans for a perpetual care cemetery in Sunset Hills and after residents continued to protest, the plan was abandoned.

February 13 -- L. Richardson Preyer, candidate for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination, drew a sparse crowd in a Wednesday afternoon appearance at the courthouse.

February 20 -- Hoke Countians were pleased when neighboring Red Springs raised $150,000 for a new school, Vardell Hall, which later opened in September on the former campus of Flora Macdonald College.

February 27 -- Volunteer firemen vehemently protested a state rating report and subsequent publicity in which the department was described as "poor." Townspeople rallied to the department's cause and any doubts which may have arisen were quickly dispelled.

March 5 -- County commissioners voted an end to the handout of free food to the county's impoverished families, ending a program which for three months had supplied 11 staple items of food to needy families.

March 12 -- President Johnson's income tax cut would mean $676,680 to Hoke County workers for the year 1964, a survey revealed as the tax cut went into effect here.

March 19 -- Hoke High's girls basketball team went all the way to the finals in the Southeastern District 3-A tournament before dropping a 31-20 decision to Wadesboro.

March 26 -- Sheriff Dave Barrington, at 30 one of the state's youngest sheriffs, won the annual Distinguished Service Award of the Junior Chamber of Commerce.

April 2 -- Three Raeford policemen -- Sam Motley, Harvey Young and J. C. Barrington -- were credited with saving the life of Mrs. Annie Dezerne when they carried her from her burning home on North Main Street. Mrs. Dezerne died of natural causes later in the year.

April 9 -- Voit Gilmore of Southern Pines resigned as head of the U. S. Travel Service in Washington to run for the State Senate in the 18th Senatorial District. Gilmore's bid later was successful.

April 16 -- Miss America stopped briefly in Raeford and turned a cold shoulder to newsmen. Dr. I. Beverly Lake was somewhat more sociable as he appeared here for a handshaking tour and press conference.

April 23 -- Hoke's school budget was tentatively set at $189,858 -- the highest in history. The town bought a new street sweeper.

April 30 -- Dewey Huggins, principal at Hoke High School for five years, announced his resignation to enter private business in Yadkin County.

May 7 -- Archibald A. Graham, well-known Raeford businessman, died unexpectedly while on a trip to High Point to visit friends.

May 14 -- Mrs. Alfred Cole, wife of a former mayor, was injured in a car wreck at Sanford. Harry Birch retired as plant manager of the local U. S. Rubber plant. J. D. McMillian predicted Dr. I. Beverly Lake would get 75 per cent of the county's vote.

May 21 -- Mrs. Richardson Preyer, campaigning here in behalf of her husband, shook hands with 750 persons who turned out at a Preyer rally and fish fry. Hoke High School graduated a class of 149.

May 28 -- Donald D. Abernethy, then principal at Wallace-Rose Hill High School, was hired as principal of Hoke High School. Dr. John Jacob Goldstein, McCain Sanitorium physician, apparently died of a heart attack while driving his car near Ashley Heights.

June 4 -- Richardson Preyer won a 284-vote plurality in Hoke in the May 30 Democratic primary's governor's race. I. Beverly Lake polled 847 votes to Preyer's 1,131. Dan Moore got 566 votes.

June 11 -- About 75 Hoke County women left Raeford by bus for a tour of the World's Fair in New York. Major elements of the 30th Infantry Division National Guard, moved into Hoke County for 15 days of annual training. The local unit later trained at Fort Stewart, Ga.

June 18 -- Judge Harry

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SANTA'S GONE -- Santa Claus has come and gone, but he left a lot of happiness in his wake. The warm days of the Christmas season gave youngsters an excellent opportunity to try out Santa's toys, such as the young quartet is doing above. They are, left to right, Markie Prince, Joe Brewer, Ann Howell and Jeff Davis. (Photo by Dan McPhaul)

Negro Boy Bound Over

But Charge Is Reduced By Dupree

Alex David Harris, 15-year-old Rockfish Negro, was bound over to Superior Court and freed under $500 bond on a charge of involuntary manslaughter this week in connection with the death of another teenage Negro.

Harris is accused of the unintentional slaying of Rommie J. Baker, 16, on the night of December 20 at the home of his mother, Mrs. Bessie Harris.

The Baker youth was lying on a bed in the home when Harris allegedly accidentally fired a shotgun he had taken from a closet. The charge struck the youth in the abdomen and he died later that night in a Fayetteville hospital.

Harris was jailed on an open charge of murder; however, Judge Joseph Dupree sent the case to the grand jury on a charge of involuntary manslaughter. The grand jury could, of course, file a more serious charge. Involuntary manslaughter in North Carolina carries a maximum penalty of 20 years.

Johnny Clyde Jones of Raeford Rt. 2 also was bound over to Superior Court after he pleaded guilty to a charge of assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill.

Jones is accused of slashing Willie J. Richardson with a pocketknife December 19, inflicting serious wounds. Richardson was cut about the neck, back and shoulders.

In another hearing, Judge Dupree found no probable cause against Luther Edmond Locklear of Shannon Rt. 1, who was charged with felonious assault

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WORK BEGINS -- Workmen are shown above digging footings for Raeford's new post office and federal building, now under construction on Elwood Avenue. Speros Construction Company of Maxton is the builder and will have the new building completed in late summer or fall.

Soothsayer Takes Look At Weather

By LUCY GRAY PEEBLES

Christmas day was not bad, weatherwise, but the two days that followed were hardly the kind to tempt youngsters to get out and enjoy new bicycles, tricycles, skates or other rolling equipment.

The weather was not cold, however, and children could get from under foot and play in garages and porches.

In fact, if old superstitions hold true, we are not in for too severe a winter, anyway. We have experienced some low temperatures this year but fortunately, as far as the fuel bill is concerned, extremely cold nights and days have been few.

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Yule Business Is 'Best Ever'

Business is better than ever in Raeford. At least that is indicated by a spot survey made among business men early this week.

Christmas business was better than last year at every store contacted and some managers volunteered that it was better all year long than in 1963.

J. A. Baucom Co. reported that this was the best Christmas it had experienced. "In fact, the entire year was the best I have had in four years," Baucom said.

Elmer Parnell, chairman of the Merchants Bureau of the Chamber of Commerce, said, "We had more traffic in the store and on the streets than ever before."

W. C. Phillips, manager of Belk - Hensdale, said, "Business was right much better this year than last. We were well please."

A spokesman at Niven's Appliance and Furniture Co. said that business there was well above that of the previous year. People began their shopping earlier than usual, too, he commented.

Irvin Hubbard at Collins Department Store said business was better than ever before. At Theresa's Dress Shop, Mrs. McBryde said, "Our business was better but, then, sales have been on the increase with us each year during our eight years in business."

Homer McGuinn at Western Auto, which carries a large sup-

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Boards Will Meet Monday

Hoke County Board of Commissioners will meet Monday to hold its first meeting in 1965, and its second meeting with the newly sworn members.

An important issue will be the hearing at 1:30 p. m. of a brief to be presented by Jim Fout, manager of the Chamber of Commerce and chairman of the local unit of the national Economic Opportunity Act. The brief will be a presentation of an EOA program for the county which has been compiled by various local agencies.

Also to be discussed will be the cost of the proposed program to the county. The federal government, sponsor of the act sometimes called "War on Poverty", will underwrite 90 per cent of the cost.

The commissioners will attend to routine business during the morning and will draw a jury for the next term of court.

The town board will meet Monday night. Tow commissioners are expected to set a date for a hearing on annexation proposals on East Prospect Street. They also will study a request to have property rezoned for a new cemetery.

Local Student Can Choose From 16 Schools In Area

When Sandhills Community College at Southern Pines is opened next fall, there will be 16 school and colleges within commuting distance of Raeford at which high school graduates can continue their education at moderate cost.

Miss Josephine Hall, Hoke home agent, told her club women recently that it is now high time a high school senior is making up his mind where he will enter school next year. Many college applicants today are being turned down by the school of their choice because they waited until late spring to apply.

Practically every school of higher learning is forced to turn down applications each year because its quota is filled early.

Young people of Raeford and vicinity are fortunate to have such a large number of higher education facilities within their reach. Students in some counties of North Carolina are not fortunate enough to have a single school, beyond high school level, to which they can drive to and from home daily. The result is that the majority of teen-agers in these areas are going to work without any technical specialized or professional training because they cannot afford to attend boarding schools.

Schools near Raeford and some of their qualifications and requirements are:

Carolina Military Academy (Maxton) -- Campus comprises 67 acres. Classes are small and individual help is available. This is a preparatory school and good for those not quite ready for college. Tuition is $1,650. Uniforms, $280.

Fayetteville Beauty College -- Will accept students between ages of 16 and 31. The cur-

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MORE INCOME:

Hoke Families 'Living It Up'

A new report, just released, contains the first figures showing how Hoke County made out, economically, during the past fiscal year.

They reveal that it was a year of sturdy growth locally. Most families had more money to spend, after taking care of their taxes, and they spent if freely. It resulted in a high level of business activity for local retail merchants.

The extent of the progress is brought out in the annual fiscal -year survey made by the Standard Rate and Data Service. It indicates how much was earned and spent in the 12 months ending June 30, 1964, by people in each section of the United States.

Residents of Hoke County, it shows, had a net income in the year, after taxes, of $16,662,000. It represented a gain over the previous year's net of $15,415,000.

What this higher income boiled down to, in terms of the local family, was found by dividing the total net income by the number of households. It averaged $4,707 per household. The year before it was $4,355.

The rise, which amounted to 8.1 per cent, compares favorably with the United States rise of 5.0 per cent and with the South Atlantic States' 7.5 per cent.

The national business boom, now almost four years old, was bolstered during fiscal 1964 by a number of favorable factors.

A dent, small though it was, was made in the unemployment situation, industrial spending for new plants and equipment went up, factory output rose, government spending remained high, taxes were cut and personal income broke all records.

At the same time, only a minor increase in the cost of

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NUMBER, PLEASE -- These three girls will man the local license bureau at the Chamber of Commerce when new license plates go on sale Monday. Hoke County numbers this year will be prefixed by an "E" instead of last year's "DW". The license bureau will be open daily from 9 a. m. to 4 p. m. except Wednesdays and Saturdays, when it will close at noon. And, of course, it's closed on Sundays. Left to right: Nancy Dean, Brenda Nichols, Angela Phillips.

Greene Portrait Gets Contributions

Admirers of Judge Harry Greene have pitched in to help his widow acquire a portrait in oils of the judge to be placed in the courtroom of Hoke County courthouse.

The board of county commissioners voted several months ago to accept a portrait in memory of the late judge and to have it hung in an appropriate place. A New York artist was employed to do the work through use of a photograph.

As news of the memorial spread, a large number of friends asked to be allowed to help with the cost. Mrs. Greene said this week that she and her daughter, Miss Frances Ward Greene were grateful to every person who had contributed, no matter how small the gift.

Judge Greene had served as Hoke County Recorder's Court Judge for nine years and had been re-elected to a new term of office when he died last June 18.

Police Report Quiet Holiday

According to a report this week from the police department, conduct on the streets of Raeford was good throughout the Christmas holidays.

"Traffic was heavier than ever before and trouble was lighter," one policeman remarked.

He added that the police force did not see a single drunk during the long week end. Traffic accidents were held to a minimum.