

Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

For the past several years this column has appeared in this corner of the front page, and when I started to think of what would be written this time I wondered what had appeared for the past 52 weeks. In thumbing through the files, I was amazed at the different things that had appeared.

Comments, congratulations, letters and other things handed to me or called in by people who read the column.

The following items appeared last year and I will try to say why they were put in the column.

Last January, a call at home one night after the Christmas holidays. Mrs. Joe Hoffman told me of the theft of flowers from a grave in the cemetery. Of course this had to be put in the column.

Then someone brought in an old *Charlotte Observer* that had the sports pages that brought forth comments on some of the baseball players.

A program at the Kiwanis club by the Hoke High Chorale just had to be mentioned.

In February an article asking for donations to be turned in so that the United Fund drive could be completed.

Comments about Kathy McMillan being nominated for an award.

A letter and pictures from Mrs. Lina Mae Angstadt of South Bend, Ind. telling and showing the amount of snow they had been having in that section of the country.

The comment on the United Fund must have done a little good because later in the month a letter from Ashwell Harward appeared thanking Gene and Eloise Carter for a job well done in bringing the drive to a successful completion.

A mention of H.R. (Hootch) McLean's 85th birthday and other things concerning him.

Then in March this column took notice of the feature article with pictures in wildlife magazine by Mrs. Betsy Ross Gatlin Wilson of Raleigh.

Sam Snead, Raeford native, who had been living in South Carolina, was by the office to say he was retiring and returning to Red Springs.

Commented on the letter from Shorty Clark about his retirement.

In April, had a phone call from Rebecca Harrington of Congressman Charlie Rose's office, praising the conduct and fine showmanship of the Hoke County High School Chorale under the direction of Mrs. Mary A. McNeill.

Bill Andrews came by and we talked about some mistakes in an article about the National Guard unit here in the twenties.

A call from Mrs. A.A. McInnis to get a replacement for her to write the *Rockfish News*. She kept on for many more months before finally retiring.

Nice letter from John Wilson to Paul and myself was printed in the column.

In May, Jesse Gullledge brought in an old post office record book when D.J. Currie was postmaster. This article led to several more articles after calls and a visit from Mrs. Floyd Monroe and Mrs. J. Scott McFadyen.

Letters from Carson and Iris Davis about the Bicentennial and Allen Edwards on the State Track and Field meet held here.

In June, comments about the conduct of some in attendance at Commencement Exercises.

A nice letter from Mrs. Rebecca Bridges Folar of Kinston and she enclosed an old Raeford High newspaper.

Robert Currie, native, honored after 40 years teaching in Broadway.

Letter from Mrs. Flora McPhail Logan and a paper from Asheville with a feature on the new basketball coach at Hoke High.

In July a letter from Kay Piotrkowski and a writeup from a newspaper in Oregon on the feats of Kathy McMillan in a track meet there.

Many letters on the Bicentennial issue of *The News-Journal* -- most of them favorable.

In August, some lip service about the foursome playing with Joe Upchurch, when he made a hole-in-one.

Mentioned the changes at the Arabia Golf Course. In September, a nice letter of appreciation appeared to the law enforcement people from Wood's Furniture.

Commented on the entering (See AROUND TOWN, Page 12)

County To Ask Legislature To Curb Sunday Beer Sales

In a surprise move Tuesday morning, county commissioners agreed to ask the state legislature to act to exempt Hoke County from the state's general brown bagging laws, and thus, halt the sale of beer on Sundays in restaurants throughout the county. The action came after Danny DeVane, newest member of the board, brought up the subject of the Sunday sales at the close of the board's regular meeting. The matter of a handful of Class A restaurants selling beer for takeout on Sundays-which is allowed by state law since Hoke County has never approved on-premise

consumption-has been a topic of controversy here since last June. Since state law takes jurisdiction over local law, the county is powerless to end the sales at the restaurants on Sundays, unless a general Sunday closing law, or "blue law", is enacted by commissioners, county attorney Charles Hostetler explained. DeVane told the other members he had done some checking in recent weeks and concluded the best plan was to ask legislators to consider an end to a problem which DeVane and the other commissioners considered "unfair".

Hostetler was directed to draw up a bill which would return control of the beer question to the county and see to it that State Sen. Luther Britt and the three delegates in the House of Representatives are contacted.

The proposal is aimed only at beer sales. It would not affect consumption of liquor or wine in any establishment licensed for brown bagging on Sundays or any other days.

Hostetler speculated that the proposal may draw "statewide support", as other counties which are without on-premise beer sales may also be unhappy about the situation posed by the brown bagging cafes.

In other business Tuesday, J.H. Blythe, chairman of the county social services board, appealed to commissioners to consider appropriating extra funds to locate and maintain a storage area for used clothing and other articles, but the four commissioners present asked Blythe to put the request on an official basis by having the social services board approve a resolution.

Blythe, who told commissioners he was representing the other social services board members, said he was under considerable pressure from the community to reopen the "clothing closet" operated by the Department of Social Services before the agency moved to its new quarters in 1975. He requested that the county board consider a building large enough to display the items, and that it be situated close to the social services office.

"When we've got an agency here with a budget of a couple of million dollars a year, I don't think we can refuse to provide this (service to needy people)," Blythe said.

Benjamin Niblock, director of the county social services, was present with Blythe and told commissioners he had prepared a "position paper" for them, but that he didn't want to discuss it in an open meeting. "I don't think this warrants (See COMMISSIONERS, Page 12)

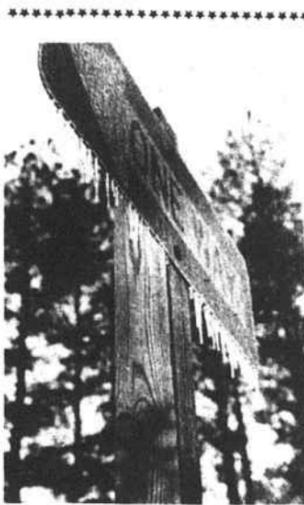
2 Jailed In Killing

The Hoke County Sheriff's Department reported the capture of two of the alleged robbers who entered a Rockfish store Dec. 23 and fatally wounded store operator Robert Leslie Brooks.

Arrested on the 401-Bypass near Garland's Drive-In at 4:30 a.m. Dec. 31 was Allen Dwain Smith, Jr., 24, of Rt. 8, Box 910, Fayetteville. He was charged with murder and armed robbery and held without privilege of bond. His preliminary hearing date has not been set.

Also picked up and charged with armed robbery and murder was Kenneth Leo Dockery, 24. He was arrested by the Sheriff's deputies at 10:25 a.m. Dec. 31 at his Rt. 1, Box 390, Raeford home. Dockery is also being held without bond pending a preliminary hearing.

Investigation of the incident was conducted by the Hoke County Sheriff's Department and the State Bureau of Investigation who are still seeking a third suspect for whom warrants have been issued.



CHILL-The icy fingers of winter were everywhere Tuesday morning after Monday's sleet and overnight sub-freezing temperatures put a chill in the early-morning air. Icy roads caused a rash of accidents which injured nine persons.

County Commissioner Not Guilty Of Trespass

County commissioner James A. Hunt was found not guilty Friday in District Court here on a charge of trespassing brought by a South Hoke man and his daughter.

Hunt was accused of trespassing in a complaint made by Luther Locklear, Rt. 1, Red Springs, and his daughter, Mary Lee Locklear, arising out of an incident Dec. 4.

The warrant charging Hunt with the misdemeanor was signed Dec. 7 by magistrate Helen S. Barrington and served on him Dec. 11 by a deputy sheriff.

District Court Judge Joseph E. Dupree gave a verdict of not guilty after hearing the testimony of the state's only two witnesses, Locklear, in his 70's, and his daughter, in her 40's.

Hunt, who represented himself in court, presented no defense evidence and asked only one ques-

tion during examination of Miss Locklear -- whether she could recall what day of the week Dec. 4 was.

Hunt said afterwards that the whole thing was a misunderstanding. He said a boundary dispute occurred over some land adjoining the Locklear property, which Hunt had recently sold. The commissioner said that the Locklears apparently thought they had lost three feet and that surveying work which Hunt had ordered was incorrect.

Hunt said that he realized the arrest and trial would be somewhat embarrassing to him because of his status but that he did not want the assistant district attorney to drop the charge.

"No, I never thought of that. I wanted to have the whole thing heard in court", he said.

'Jingle Bells'

Tax Register Rings Tune Of \$1/4 Million

By Marty Vega

Friday, Dec. 31 was a very profitable day for the county despite the fact that all of the county government offices were closed except one-the courthouse annex which happens to house the tax collector's office.

The tax collector took in, or raked in as some beleaguered taxpayers might call it, \$249,680 in the space of a nine-hour day, as citizens stood in line to beat the deadline. A penalty is calculated on late payment after December.

By far, the largest chunk of the nearly quarter of a million dollars rung up Friday was taxes from business and industry. Burlington Industries paid \$164,000, according to Tax Collector Elizabeth Livingston.

Mrs. Livingston and her assistants Judy Pittman and Magdaline McKenzie were kept busy throughout the day and a long line snaked around the lobby of the office early in the afternoon. The telephone kept the women busy, too, as resourceful taxpayers called to check when the day's bank deposit would go.

Since it was the last day of the month, many with big tax bites brought a check in the afternoon which wouldn't be processed by the bank until Tuesday. On Tuesday, the funds to cover the check could be drawn out of a savings account and the customer wouldn't lose any of his interest on his savings. Legal? No, but the system works.

Of course, some people pay their tax bills in July or August and take advantage of a two per cent discount.

Mrs. Livingston reported that there was the usual amount of grumbling from her customers this year as most people found themselves paying a higher tax bill. In July, the county adopted a \$0.89 per \$100 of valuation tax rate, a four cent increase over the previous

(See TAX REGISTER, Page 13)



TAX OFFICE -- The county tax office took in nearly a quarter of a million dollars in 1976 taxes Friday, the last day to pay before penalties start. County Tax Collector Elizabeth Livingston is shown assisting Julian Wright with some forms.

Bomb Scare Empties Mill

Both plants of the huge Burlington Industries complex west of the city were emptied at noon Tuesday after a telephoned bomb threat was received but a search turned up nothing.

According to police, a male caller dialed the Burlington switchboard at 11:50 a.m. and stated, "There's a bomb set to go off at one o'clock. Did you hear that? This time I'm not kidding" and hung up.

Company officials ordered both plants evacuated and the mill's fire brigade conducted a search of the premises. Police stood by, but no explosives were found.

It was unknown just how many workers were affected by the apparent hoax. Plant manager Jack Bradford refused any comment whatsoever on the incident.

1976 - The Year In Review

1976, the Bicentennial year, is over. It was a year for celebrating the past and planning for the future. A year of optimism as the economy began recovering and signs of growth and revitalization appeared. It brought jubilation as a shy 18 year-old Hoke girl went to the Olympics and won a silver medal. It was an election year. A time of joy for some, despair to others.

Most of all it was a year of activity. The news-making events and people of the past 12 months are reviewed here. Part Two will follow next week.

Political maneuvering started the year off as several hopefuls began scrambling among Democratic executive committeemen for appointment to the vacant seat on the board of county commissioners. Tragedy struck in Rockfish when a 16 year-old high school youth was killed by a freight train. Morrison's Ambulance Service pulls out of business with the county after six years and is taken over by James R. Harris.

Julian H. "Buck" Blue succumbs to poor health at 76. Rev. Neill W. McPhatter, one of three recommended by Democratic

committeemen to county commissioners, is appointed the fifth member and becomes the first black ever to hold a seat on the county governing board. The sheriff's department makes headlines as fired deputy Elisha Diaz, an Indian, accuses Sheriff Dave Barrington and other members of the department of corruption during a packed meeting of the commissioners.

In an emotional statement the following day, Barrington admits to a "betrayal of the public trust" and discloses the details of an alleged ticket-fixing case, an action which was to bring the three-term sheriff into court months later.

February brought a new city manager to Raeford as 28 year-old Robert Drumwright, city assistant to Graham, N.C., took over his new duties. The city council wasn't budging from its offer to fund only 25 per cent of the cost of the new National Guard Armory, leaving unhappy county officials to pay the other 75 per cent. State planners say the new facility could be started by 1979.

Figures released for farm production for the previous year showed a \$1.5 million decline in

income, while the Raeford Housing Authority announces plans to build 40 apartment units and apply for up to one million dollars in funds. Bill Cameron hands in his resignation as head football coach at Hoke High after three years, citing restrictions imposed on him.

Politicking increases during the month as Raeford audiences see more aspirants for state offices passing through ahead of the March primary, and the local board of elections reports a high rate of voter registrations.

March winds brought the first in a flurry of Bicentennial activities, as a four-week series of forums, "The Good Old Days" begins, a combined project of the Sandhill Library System, the Raeford Woman's Club and the Hoke County Bicentennial Commission. At the same time, women's club members demanded action from the city to clear up blighted areas and tear down delapidated buildings which would mar the Bicentennial observance.

Burlington announced a \$5 million equipment expansion and company executives predicted a rosy future, while Knit-Way lays (See 1976 REVIEW, Page 12)



Kathy McMillan