

Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

Robert Gatlin brought in his weather chart on Monday and he had made a copy of it to show the rainfall for a given day or so. The red lines were pointing to rainfall of about nine inches in two days. The rainfall for September was a record as far as Gatlin's records show.

This month has started out without rainfall, but hopefully the hurricane season is over and we won't receive over 13½ inches in October.

I know that most farmers don't need any more rain during this harvest season.

A call came last Tuesday from Mabel Riley, Hoke County Commissioner, to let us know that she was out of the hospital. Mabel said that she had to return sometime this month, but that the good people of the county had filled her room with cards and she was very appreciative.

Monday Mabel was in the seat at the month meeting of the County Commissioners and from all reports was doing fine.

Mary Matherly of the county tax office was by the office last week and had with her a hunk of cheese she had brought from Wisconsin. She and members of her family went there for the marriage of her son, David. Now maybe the people in Wisconsin don't say a hunk of cheese but this is what most of us used to ask for in the "Good old days." That was during the days of hoop cheese and it didn't have to be refrigerated.

The cheese that Mary brought was called "Kojak" whatever this means, but it doesn't have to be put in the refrigerator either.

From all reports the trip was a success but Mary didn't tell me about her plane trip. Maybe it is better to crochet than look at the scenery from the plane windows.

Congratulations to the bride & groom.

The following letter was received last week from Lelmar Taylor William, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Marion Gatlin of this city. Lilmor now lives in Ammondale, Va., and she is a reader of this paper. We will print the letter and try to explain to her a point she brought out in the letter. Maybe other people have had the same feeling that Lilmor has at this time.

Dear Sam:
My compliments to the town of Raeford, Gene Carter, the Board of Directors, and the staff of the new Bank of Raeford. I'm sure they will continue to serve the people of Raeford well, as they have in the past.

It somewhat saddened me though, as I read about the history and early years of the bank, to see a name omitted that was so long a part of The Bank of Raeford.

Miss Jessie Bright Ferguson served many people in Raeford during her years with the bank. As I think back, it was at "Miss Jessie Bright's" window that I first signed my name to a legal document - it was there that I deposited money from my piggy bank to a savings account and there that I first opened a checking account.

"Miss Jessie Bright" and her smile and soft greeting were the Bank of Raeford. It is because of people like her that the town of Raeford is remembered so fondly by those of us who moved away long ago.

I'm sure others must have had somewhat the same feeling upon seeing her name omitted from last week's special edition of Bank News.

Sincerely,
Lilmor Taylor-Williams
As an explanation about the history and Miss Ferguson, *The News-Journal* didn't go very deep into the history of the bank because the bank was publishing a book concerning the history and gave it away at the Grand Opening. The book was dedicated to Jessie B. Ferguson and we felt we shouldn't take away anything from the bank and from their grand opening.

This book was one of the nicest things that has come to the front in Raeford in a number of years and (See AROUND TOWN, page 14)

To Meet Anticipated Space Needs

Board Hears Building Proposals



AT "DOWNTOWN" MEETING -- Raeford Mayor John K. McNeill, Jr., is shown speaking at Monday night's meeting on the Downtown Revitalization program for the city. [Photo by Bill Lindau]

At Public Meeting Monday

Downtown's Needs Are Discussed

About 100 people, including owners of business property and operators of businesses, and Raeford city and Hoke County government officials and others Monday night heard explanations of the Raeford Downtown Revitalization project being conducted by the Town of Raeford with the Downtown Revitalization Committee of the Raeford-Hoke County Chamber of Commerce.

City Manager Ron Matthews said the Town of Raeford has "seed" money budgeted for downtown business section improvements, that it can improve sidewalks and handle "street furniture" (public signs) but the downtown merchants and property owners constitute the key to the revitalization program.

Earl Fowler, manager of the Chamber of Commerce, told the audience the job has to start now, before it is too late citing his observations of Burlington, especially, and other communities. He is a retired A and P store manager.

He said steps toward revitalization already have been taken, pointing to improvements made in recent months by property owners and business people. He also pointed to the establishment of the Hoke Medical Complex farther south on South Main, and reported a dental clinic adjacent to it is planned.

Fowler told the business people the Chamber didn't want to be

"overbearing" and push for downtown revitalization but that it would help any business and property owner who asked for it.

Questions from the participants in the meeting concerned possible relocation of power and telephone lines from above Main Street to either underground or behind buildings; paving of unpaved vacant lots used for parking and which become muddy, with water-filled holes when it rains.

In reply to a question from William Kelly regarding paving of private parking areas off Main Street, Matthews said the city will let the property owners take care of their parking lots, as the town would have to pave the lots of all who requested it if it paved one, and the town does not have the financial resources to do that job. Kelly suggested driveways at the rear of buildings and grassing the other areas by the driveways.

He said the town would be concerned with taking care of the public streets.

A Carolina Power & Light Co. representative, replying to questions about relocating overhead lines from Main Street, agreed with a questioner that placing them behind buildings would be one way, an alternative to putting them underground. He said in reference to "burying" lines that studies could be made of the situation. Matthews said earlier he was sure the company can work with the

downtown business people on the matter.

The talks and questions followed the showing of color photo slides texts of the study made last spring and summer of the downtown area by Townscape of Raleigh. The commentary was by Peter Bachelor, who conducted the study, which was financed by the town with federal funds.

Among other points, the presentation covered the need for downtown beautification by growing treestand grass in proper areas; improving store fronts, not with "lavish" installations but simply by cleaning and restoring the masonry to its original appearances and putting up attractive canopies which allow light in to help window-shopping; rearrangement of street signs from current confusing clusters; the subject of nonlocal truck traffic; the unsightly appearance given by overhead utilities lines; the deserted look of downtown during some periods of daylight; vacant spaces between business buildings; and the need for small recreation areas adjoining downtown.

Mayor John K. McNeill, Jr., was in charge of the meeting.

COUNCIL MEETING

The meeting on Downtown Revitalization followed the regular October meeting of the City Council. During the session, the council on second reading enacted an ordinance which in effect renews the North Carolina Natural Gas Corp. franchise for 20 more years, to supply the town with natural gas. A new provision voted into the lease by the council at its September meeting permits each party to "take a look" at the agreement every five years in regard to possible significant changes in present conditions which changes the economy might bring.

The council also approved purchase of a key control system to control use of the gas pumps at the city garage. Braswell Equipment Co. of Wilson will supply and install the system at a cost of \$3,372.44 to the town. Braswell was the only bidder to supply the equipment.

Matthews said in his memorandum to the council, mayor and City Attorney Palmer Wilcox that the system "would give us the control and the capabilities of record-keeping, not only for our vehicles, but should County vehicles be included later."

State Sales Tax

The state got a net \$68,565.49 in its 3 per cent sales tax on retail sales in Hoke County during August, the State Department of Revenue reported last week.

The July net was \$64,542.09. The August collections were on gross retail sales of \$3,355,919. July retail sales grossed \$3,186,073.

The Board of Hoke County Commissioners Monday heard proposals for meeting the county government's anticipated needs for space in five and 10 years. The commissioners will act on the proposals, after thorough study.

The proposals with estimated costs based on conditions existing this month were presented by Sam T. Snowden, Jr., an architect, of Jordan, Snowdon and McVicker of Laurinburg at the commissioners' regular meeting for October.

The largest scale project would be construction of a Courthouse addition which would cost \$1,352,600 including the costs of renovating the present Courthouse plumbing, mechanical and electrical installations, for needs anticipated in the next five years; and \$1,357,770 in the next 10 years.

The addition could contain all present county offices and the following now housed in the County Office Building on West Edinborough Avenue: the commissioners' conference room, the Inspection Plant and Community Development and Public Buildings (maintenance) departments, and the offices of the county manager, tax supervisor and county finance officer.

These and other details are contained in a written report of the study the Laurinburg firm made of the county's present available space and its future needs based on anticipated growth in government services and personnel.

Snowdon, quoting the report, told the commissioners an option to the Courthouse expansion would be to leave only the offices of the register of deeds and clerk of Superior Court in the Courthouse; erect an addition which would cost \$585,000 to \$600,000; and expand the County Office Building, which would cost \$360,000 to \$400,000.

The other offices would be placed in the expanded County Office Building.

The expanded County Office Building would include also part of the Sheriff's Department, the offices of the State Highway Patrol, driver's license examiner, U.S. Social Security Commission, the offices of the State Highway Patrol, State driver's license examiner, Civil Preparedness coordinator, and U.S. Social Security Commission and State Department of Revenue.

The report recommends the present old county office building on West Elwood Avenue across from the Post office and the Highway Building be abandoned, and disposed of. The offices of the County Parks and Recreation Department, Employment Security Commission and County Literacy Council would be transferred from the old county building to the

present National Guard Armory after the new Armory is built.

If the commissioners choose to continue using the old West Elwood Avenue building for a long time, the report commends it be renovated to provide exit corridors and a fire detection and alarm system. The cost of the renovation is estimated at \$30,000 to \$40,000.

The report's comments on other county buildings follow.

The Social Services Building, which contains the offices of the Department of Social Services, Agricultural Extension Service, Board of Elections, Veterans Service officer, and Four-County Community Services, will need 3,070 square feet in five years and 4,430 in 10, all for the Social Services Department. The cost of the expansion is estimated at \$198,630 for the lesser addition and \$269,100 for the other, at current construction costs of \$45 per square foot.

The present County Health Department building is adequate for the next 10 years, based on present programs.

The State ABC store building should get an outlet in Rockfish when needed.

The proposal for the expansion of Courthouse space includes replacement of the present steps at the west and south entrance - exits of the present Courthouse with ramps for convenience of the handicapped; and an elevator in the present Courthouse, for convenience of the handicapped as well as other clients.

MAGISTRATE'S OFFICE

Complying with a request of Magistrate Lockey McFadyen, the commissioners adopted a motion the magistrate be furnished with a new judge's - bench - type desk and chair. The commissioners acted after inspecting the magistrate's office furnishings.

McFadyen told the commissioners the proposed desk, 7½ feet long, would make a favorable impact on his clients. He said he wanted to make his office look like a courtroom. The magistrates explained he handles civil cases, small claims, for example and that he expects to have 600 in all this year, compared with 200 previously. McFadyen took office last Jan. 1.

APPOINTMENTS

The commissioners appointed retired school principal J.W. Turlington to the Youth Services Task Force, after accepting the resignation from the group of Juvenile Court Counselor David

(See BOARD, page 14)

Former Mayor McLean Buried Here Tuesday

Hester Raymond McLean, native of this community, died at his home here Monday morning after several years of failing health. He was 88.

Mr. McLean, "Hooch" to his contemporaries, was born one mile south of what is now Raeford in what was then Robeson County on February 25, 1891, a son of the late Mr. and Mrs. M.W. McLean. He attended Raeford Institute and Guilford College and was a veteran



H. R. McLean

of World War One. He played professional baseball for several years in Wyoming and West Virginia and semi-pro in this section for several years after that, while serving under the N.C. Wildlife Commission as a game warden and game protector for 31 years.

After retiring from the Wildlife Commission in 1958 he served as mayor of Raeford for four terms, from 1961 to 1969. He also farmed some, was an elder in Raeford Presbyterian Church since 1940, and served in the National Guard for several years.

Funeral service was conducted at Raeford Presbyterian Church Tuesday afternoon at 3:30 by the Rev. Dr. John Ropp, pastor, and burial was in Raeford Cemetery.

Pallbearers were Graham Clark, L.S. Brock, Jr., Graham Monroe, Sam Morris, Wilson McBryde, and Bennie McLeod.

He is survived by Mrs. McLean, the former Sadie Culbreth; three daughters, Mrs. Stuart Ritchie of Charlotte, Mrs. Wyatt Aiken Jr., of Mebane and Mrs. Lloyd Lovelace of Gaffney, S.C.; two brothers, John D. McLean of Aberdeen and Arch W. McLean of Clearwater, Fla.; two sisters, Mrs. Sarah McCormick of Nichols, S.C. and Mrs. Marshall Beatty of Dunedin, Fla.; and five grandchildren.