

Nearly 200 Attend Banquet

Hoke Farmers' Club Gives First Awards

Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

The Christmas season is upon us and it will soon be forgotten as the New Year comes in. Our Christmas issue will be next week and we will come out Tuesday morning instead of on Wednesday. So be sure to get all articles in a day early. Most of them should be in on Friday, December 19 to be sure of publication.

All advertisements must be in the office by noon on Monday, December 22.

Ever so often folks will come into the office and start talking about old times and who and where certain things were located many years ago. As I have mentioned many times in this column, when we needed something that happened in the 1920s or 1930s we would pick up the phone and call Mr. So and So. Well, Mr. So and So is not around anymore and things must be confirmed by people just a little older than the writer of this column.

Last week I received a letter that contains many interesting facts about the Raeford Volunteer Fire Department and think that it will be of interest to the readers.

The letter follows:
Dear Sam,
In looking over *The News-Journal* of December 4th I believe I found an error concerning the American LaFrance fire truck. The caption states that the LaFrance was the first fire engine in the fire department. It could have been the first fire engine but it was not the first fire truck.

If my memory is correct the first fire truck was a shiny red and gold Republic, which was bought many years before the American LaFrance. I don't think the LaFrance was bought until after the disastrous fire which nearly burned the business district.

The Republic had a large nickel plated tank which was located crosswise behind and above the driver's seat. I believe this tank was chemically activated. Nearby was a large hose reel with about 100 to 200 feet of rubber hose. This hose was about 1 1/2 inches in diameter, was red in color and had a nickel plated cut-off at its end. Behind this equipment was an area for the regular or standard fire hose and several hundred feet could be carried. The siren was hand operated. There were several "extras" attached to the sides, such as nozzles, fire axes, lamps, etc. Incidentally, I believe I have in my possession one of the old hose nozzles used on this truck and I will gladly donate it to the Raeford Fire Dept. if they care to have it. It is about 30" long and was made without a cutoff valve.

Before the Republic truck I seem to remember a small, home-made type of truck made from an old car. The rear of the car had been removed and in its place a small wood platform had been placed, upon which coils of fire hose could be carried.

Before this the fire hose was carried on big reels which were mounted between high, rubber tired wheels. This equipment was both pulled and pushed by members of the fire department.

My earliest recollections of the fire company have these hose reels located on a vacant lot at Main St. and Elwood Ave. where now is located a three story building which was once occupied by Page Trust Company. Toward the rear of this lot was a small wooden house or office which may have been the town office. I'm just not sure after all these years. Twenty or thirty feet in front of the little building a large fire bell was mounted between two telephone poles. These poles were placed about six or eight feet apart. The large bell was suspended from a cross bar about twenty five or thirty feet high. Two ropes extended from either side of the bell clapper to a pulley on each pole, and then down to the ground. By alternately pulling the ropes a loud alarm could be given.

I believe the Republic fire truck was the first to be kept in a (See AROUND TOWN, page 10)

Holiday Closings Scheduled

Hoke County schools, government and private offices, and businesses will take Christmas and New Year's Day off, and some of them will take several other days as well.

The *News-Journal* will be among the businesses closed Christmas Day, but will be open as usual New Year's Day.

The 1930-31 Christmas-New Year's vacation for the schools will start after classes on Friday, though officially it will start Monday morning. The next day of classes will be January 5.

State and Hoke County government offices will have a three-day Christmas holiday, starting Wednesday and running through Friday. For most employees the weekend will be added to the holidays. The driver's license examiner's office, open in Hoke County on Thursdays only, will be closed till January 8.

Raeford city offices will be closed Christmas morning and the day after, with most employees also having the weekend off. However, the city-county landfill will reopen themorning of December 27.

The Raeford Post Office will be closed only Christmas and New Year's Day. The holidays will mean no city or rural mail deliveries except "specials" will be made, and no window service will be provided at the post office.

The other federal offices will be closed Christmas and the next day, and New Year's Day.

Meanwhile, Raeford area stores went on their Christmas season schedule with most staying open till 8 p.m. weekdays and 6 p.m. Saturdays. The season's schedule started Monday.

At Santa House, in the Aberdeen & Rockfish Railroad depot on south Main Street, Santa Claus is listening to youngsters weekdays and Saturdays through Christmas Eve, and his mail box is just outside the door for the convenience of children who can't get to see him during his visiting hours.

Santa's hours are 5-8 p.m. Mondays, and 2-6 p.m. Saturday.

He arrived at his Raeford house Friday afternoon and started receiving children's wishes immediately and the next afternoon, returning Monday.

The Hoke County Farmers' Club, nearly a year old, presented its first awards Thursday night for outstanding achievement in agricultural production and service before an audience of nearly 200.

The awards were presented at the 45-member club's first Farmers' Award and Recognition Banquet held in Gibson Cafeteria of Hoke County High School. The presentations followed a talk consisting of farmer anecdotes made by Ray Wilkinson, using rural style speech, that kept the audience in nearly continuous laughter.

Wilkinson, the guest speaker, is farm relations director for WRAL-TV and the Tobacco Network. Also on the speaking program was Dr. J.E. Legates, dean of the School of Agriculture and Life Sciences of North Carolina State University at Raleigh.

The awards, announced by Jimmy Plummer, Jr., vice president of Federal Land Bank of Raeford, were presented to:

--John Balfour, Sr., Outstanding Farmer Award.

--Balfour and his son, John Jr., Corn Award.

--James Edward Hayes, Cotton.

--George Shook, Soybean.

--Ellis Edward Harris, Tobacco.

--Tarheel Turkey Hatchery (Wyatt Upchurch, manager), Poultry and Livestock, given for outstanding production.

--Farm Chemicals, Inc. (Alfred Leach, president), Outstanding Service to Agriculture.

--Jimmy Maxwell, Outstanding Farmers' Club Member. Maxwell is president of the club which started with 18 members.

Special awards also were presented by Wendell Young, Hoke County Agricultural Extension Service chairman, to Edward Dew, for his cooperation in agricultural demonstration with the Agricultural Extension Service; W.W. Cameron for his participation in the state's Research on Wheels program; and Hoke tobacco farmers and the county's Extension staff for the participation by 99 per cent of the county's tobacco farmers in the state's R-9-P pest-eradication program.

Legates told the banquet audience, "We (in the United States) have an agriculture that's the envy of the world," but, he added, one that's not static. He also referred to the heavy financial investment American producers have in agriculture -- \$900 billion in equipment, land, and materials.

Wilkinson after he was introduced said he was making as the theme of his talk "Let's keep the fun in living." Then he told stories drawn from his experiences in reporting of farm and farm-related events during his career from Alabama to Virginia. Most of

his professional years have been spent in North Carolina, starting with radio work in Rocky Mount.

Toward the end of his talk, he said the ability of North Carolina people to laugh at their problems and enjoy life is a heritage "we can leave" to the people of the coming generation.

Wilkinson was introduced by Ed Manning, marketing manager of House of Raeford Farms, Inc.

Maxwell, president of the club, served as master of ceremonies and stated the purpose of the banquet.

After the awards were presented, he gave recognition to the organizations which have supported the club and the banquet program. They are Dundarrach Trading Co., Farm Chemicals, Teal Oil Co., Southern National Bank of Raeford, Elanco Products Co., The Johnson Co., The Bank of Raeford, Federal Land Bank of Raeford, Ciba-Geigy Agricultural Division, Hoke County Farm Bureau, Raeford Oil Co., Inc., Riddle Equipment Co., Inc., of Carthage, Southeast Production Credit Association of Raeford, and Motorola Communications Equipment (John Briggs, area representative.)

He also recognized these firms for making donations of the door prizes of the banquet: A Growing Concern, at Arabia; Ciga-Geigy, Elanco Products, McLauchlin Co., and Raeford Hardware Co., Inc.

Among the guests at the banquet were Ralph Sasser, chairman of the Agricultural Extension Service South Central District, which includes Hoke County; and Larry Locklear, who served 15 months on the Hoke Extension staff as an assistant, then associate agent, till he resigned effective last September 15 to work with an agriculture-related business.

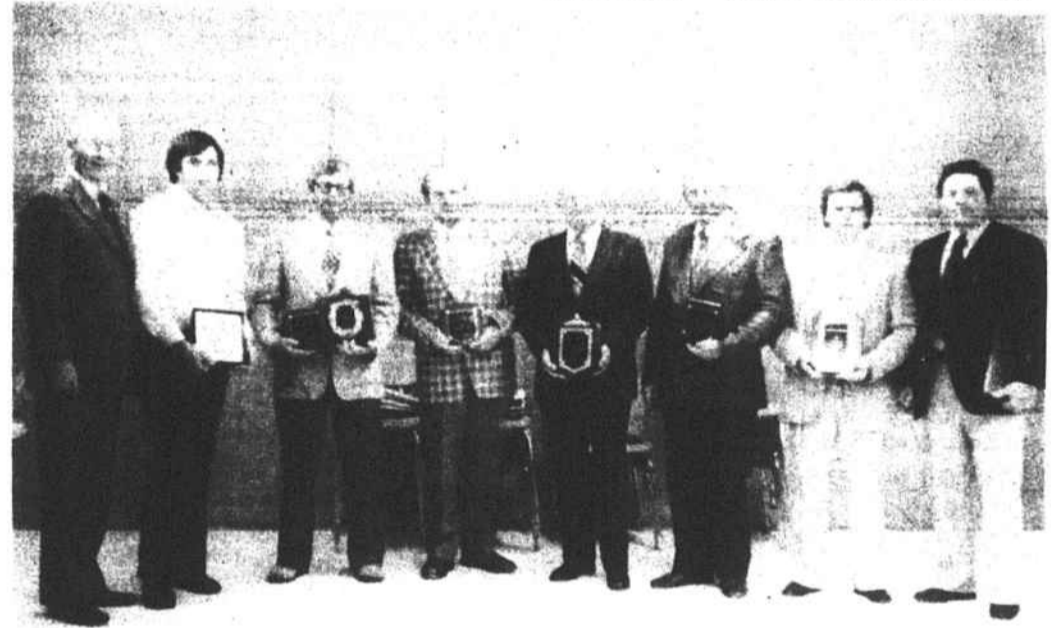
Mrs. Mina Townsend was recognized as a representative of the County Board of Education. Cameron also is a member of the school board but he also was attending, seated with his wife Rhenda at the speakers' table as secretary-treasurer of the Farmers Club. The elder Balfour, chairman of the Board of Hoke County Commissioners, also was recognized as a representative of the commissioners.

Young made the recognitions. J.H. Blythe, president of Coble Dairy, gave the invocation.

The other officer of the club is Kenneth Hendrix, vice president.

Leach served as chairman of the Awards Committee, and Balfour as chairman of the Banquet Committee.

The other members of the committees were: Awards -- Gary Rogers, vice chairman; and Jimmy Plummer, Jr., Julian Butler, Gene Carter, Howard Hust, Ken Stroud, and Young; and Banquet -- Hayes, vice chairman; and Hendrix, Cameron, Billy Dalton, Leroy McDuffie, and Willie Featherstone, Jr., associate agent of the Hoke Extension Service.



Dean Legates (left) and award winners, L-R -- Edward Dew, John Balfour, Wyatt Upchurch [representing winner Tarheel Turkey Hatchery], Alfred Leach [representing winner Farm Chemicals, Inc.], George Shook, Jimmy Maxwell, and W.W. [Bill] Cameron. The other winners are John Edward Hayes, who received the Cotton Award; and John Balfour, Jr., who shares the Corn Award with his father. [Staff photos by Bill Lindau].

Man Found Guilty In Sex Offenses

A 55-year-old man was sentenced Friday in Hoke County Superior Court to 10 to 12 years after a jury found him guilty of second-degree rape and second-degree sexual offense.

The defendant, Jessie Lee Leak of Rt. 11, Fayetteville, gave notice of appeal to the State Court of Appeals.

Judge Robert Hobgood of Louisville imposed the same sentence for each offense and ordered the sentences to run at the same time.

Leak pleaded not guilty to each charge, and the jury verdicts were issued after four days of trial.

Leak was charged with committing the offenses against Cynthia Perkinson also of near Fayetteville last April 5.

Sunday Night In Raeford Presbyterian Church

Community Choir To Give 'Messiah'

The Raeford Community Choir will present Handel's "Messiah" at 8 p.m. Sunday in the sanctuary of Raeford Presbyterian Church.

Guest soloists for the worship service will be Miss Katherine Jane Lakoski, soprano, Mrs. Barbara Presnell Strider, alto, James William Powers, Jr., tenor, and Dale Stine, baritone.

The 60-member choir will be accompanied by orchestra members from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro Department of Music. Conductor for the musical ensemble will be Chris

Watkins, director of music at Raeford Presbyterian Church.

Many area choirs and choruses sing Handel's "Messiah" each year at Christmas or Easter. However, this will be the first time that the masterpiece has ever been attempted in Hoke County as a complete worship service.

Since the last Sunday in September, members of the community have met each Sunday afternoon to learn the choruses of the "Christmas Portion" or Part I, of "Messiah". Although many of the musicians can read music,

there are still many of the singers that have had to learn the music strictly by going over and over the music and learning their vocal lines by sound alone.

"I have heard the high school chorale and chorus do sections of 'Messiah' each year, and I always hoped that I would be able to teach a choir the thrilling music that Handel wrote," says Watkins. "I have directed the Community Choir for a few years and I felt that this was the year that the members and the town were ready to tackle this difficult work."

"I feel sure that everyone that comes to hear and take part in this musical worship service will receive a wonderful blessing from the music that they hear."

"Those of us that have participated and learned the music for this exciting event have been blessed in a number of ways. First, all the members of the choir are from different churches and backgrounds, and, yet, we have become a closely knit family that has worked for one goal - to serve the Lord Jesus Christ with our talents."

"Secondly, the words and music of the Christmas portion of the work have suddenly taken on a (See MESSIAH, page 10)



The Raeford Community Choir at rehearsal.

Bring Ads, Photos, News For N-J Day Earlier

News articles, advertising and photos intended for publication in *The News-Journal* Christmas and New Year's weeks must be in the *News-Journal* office a day earlier than usual.

The newspaper will go to press Tuesday, December 23, and December 30, those weeks because of the U.S. Post Office's holiday schedule.

All material intended for publication those weeks must be in the *News-Journal* office by noon, December 22 and December 29.