

Hawkins: "You did a splendid job"

One of the highlights of the dedication ceremonies of the Kings Mountain Depot Center last Saturday was the comments of Sidney E. Hawkins, supt. of Southern Railway System transportation department.

Hawkins said, "We (Southern) have always had strong ties with your community. The origin, growth and shape of Kings Mountain is closely tied to this rail line of our company."

He said that today Southern provides one of the important transportation links between the industries of this community and the nation. "In addition to freight cars, locomotives and tracks," Hawkins said, "we are a company of people. Often we have the opportunity to respond to community needs that don't really have anything to do with transportation. One such opportunity has been the coordinated effort to give new life to the Kings Mountain Depot building for community use now that it has outlived its usefulness in our business."

Hawkins said the depot was constructed in 1925 to serve as freight and passenger station and was used for the handling of less-than-carload small shipment freight, Railway Express and U. S. Mail.

"This building replaced, according to our records," Hawkins said, "three buildings of frame construction built between 1879 and 1899."

"Of course," he continued, "since 1925 when this building was constructed, the rail industry experienced many im-

portant changes which affected the use of this small building."

He said in the mid-1960's the rail industry moved away from the small shipment less-than-carload service and with the increased use of the automobile, passenger business declined. The last passenger train making a regular stop in Kings Mountain was No. 29-30, which operated into the mid-1960's.

"In 1973 the Mobile Agency concept came to this community," Hawkins said. "To better provide service to our customers, the agent was taken out of the depot and now drives in a company vehicle directly to the customer. He can, by radio communication, talk to the local freight crews lining up the switching service needed by the customer."

"So you can see the need for the depot building has drastically changed in the last decade," he said. "I'm very glad that this building can again be put to good use for your community. You have done a splendid job in renovating the building and I know it will serve your community well."

Southern Railway signed a lease agreement with the City of Kings Mountain in 1975 for the use of the depot. At that time the depot had been abandoned for several years and was in disrepair. Plans were then being formulated to renovate the depot into a community facility using Community Development Block Grants and city and volunteer help in the actual work.

Ceilings and walls were torn out, wiring stripped



NICE TO MEET YOU — At right S. E. Hawkins, supt. of Southern Railway System transportation dept., chats with Frank Van Story of the Kings Mountain Kiwanis Club and Haywood Lynch. Lynch and the Kiwanians

donated two cabooses to the city for use at the depot center and were recognized during last Saturday's town meeting-depot center dedication.

Photo By Tom McIntyre

away and glass removed to make way for new interior construction. Extensive brick work was done to the exterior and the construction of a concrete walk and rear platform was added.

The baggage area was in worse shape than any other portion of the building. The section now serving as a sunken rest area was actually a portion of the hardwood flooring that had caved in under the weight of lithium powder stored there for so many years. It required a bulldozer to remove the lithium from the area.

Bill McMurray, a local stonemason, was hired to construct a large chimney to face the baggage area-turned-meeting and dining room. McMurray said the stone used in construction was donated by Lithium Corporation. The chimney required eight tons of stones, 8,000 bricks and three yards of concrete. The fireplace irons were cut and welded from railroad track by Jerry White, city gas dept. supt. The fireplace will hold a four-foot log.

The original benches used in the depot waiting room were salvaged and are now used in the meeting room.

The thick baggage room floorboards were sanded

down into the grain and coated and the pegs driven deeper to maintain an authentic look. A kitchen area was also added and will be used daily to cook the meals for the city's aging program participants.

The depot center will also house the city's museum, development office, aging program office and a health station. The entire building has been air conditioned.

The center will be made available for group meetings and on July 1 becomes an exhibition hall for a traveling art show sponsored by the Shelby Art League.

At the south end of the depot center are two cabooses to be used as meeting places and locations for children's parties. The cabooses were donated to the city by Haywood Lynch and the Kings Mountain Kiwanis Club.

The city has also constructed two brick and wood shelters, in the same style as the depot, for use as a community market. The market will cater to the local farmer produce growers and craftsmen as a sales outlet.

On a temporary basis, the Rev. Kenneth George will serve as manager of the depot center. Rev. George is coordinator of the city's aging program. His office is located in the center.

Obituaries



MRS. HAROLD COGGINS

Funeral services for Mrs. Octavia Crawford Coggins, 66, of 917 Sharon Dr., were conducted Monday at 4 p. m. from Kings Mountain Baptist Church of which she was a member.

Rev. J. C. Goare, assisted by Rev. Miller Freeman, officiated and interment was in Mountain Rest Cemetery.

The family has designated memorials to Cleveland County Cancer Society or Kings Mountain Baptist Church.

Mrs. Coggins, widow of J. Harold Coggins who died May 26, 1976, died of cancer following a three month illness Sunday morning in Charlotte Memorial Hospital. She was daughter of the late William Joseph and Vennie Octavia Littlejohn Crawford.

President and Treasurer of Cooper Furniture Co. she was a graduate of Kings Mountain High School and of Asheville Normal School. Before her marriage, she had taught in the Charlotte School System.

Surviving are two nephews, Harold Crawford, Jr. and Billy Crawford, both of Kings Mountain; one niece, Miss Jane Crawford; her uncle,

D. G. Littlejohn of Kings Mountain; and two aunts, Mrs. Grace Coleman of Facolet, S. C. and Mrs. Cora Mayfield of Greenville, S. C.

Harris Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.

MRS. OLA HAYES

Services were held at 4 p. m. Saturday for Mrs. Ola Cleary Hayes at Penley's Chapel Church by the Rev. W. L. Huffstetter and the Rev. Frank Shirley. Burial was in Shady Grove Baptist Church cemetery.

Mrs. Hayes, 73, of 702 Meadowbrook Rd., died last Thursday in Kings Mountain Hospital. The widow of Rives Plato Hayes, she was the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Dan Cleary. She was a member of Shady Grove Baptist Church.

Surviving are three sons, Anderson Hayes of Shelby, Edward Hayes of Fallston and Voyd Hayes of Kings Mountain; five daughters, Mrs. Ruth Bowen, Mrs. Katherine Arrowood and Mrs. Carolyn Kiser of Kings Mountain, Mrs. Jeanette Arrowood of Cherryville and Mrs. Jean Arrowood of Shelby; one brother, Charles Cleary of Durham; three sisters, Mrs. Clyde Green of Kings Mountain, Mrs. Gert Fredell of Gastonia and Mrs. Callie Godfrey of Hickory; 26 grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren.

Harris Funeral Home had charge of arrangements.

MRS. IVA PRICE

Graveside services for Mrs. Iva Hambright Price were held Thursday at 10:30 a. m. in Grover cemetery.

A native of Kings Mountain, Mrs. Price, 86, died last Tuesday morning in an Asheville hospital. She was the daughter of the late David R. and Mary

Ann Dixon Hambright and the widow of Eugene L. Price. She was a former member of Shiloh Presbyterian Church of Grover.

Surviving are two daughters, Mrs. Anne L. Edwards of Fairview and Miss Vera E. Price of Asheville; one brother, Dewitt Hamoright of Kings Mountain; two sisters, Mrs. Irene Barber of Charlotte and Mrs. Eunice Royster of Greensboro; nine grandchildren; 32 great-grandchildren and 18 great-great-grandchildren.

The Rev. Olin Whitener officiated at the services and Penland and Sons Funeral Home of Asheville had charge of arrangements.

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