



ALAN HODGE/THE HERALD

In business for over 35 years, Mac's Grocery in Kings Mountain is famous for its steak sandwiches served with a smile. Besides sandwiches, Mac's sells a little of everything from hubcaps to ice cream. Pictured greeting customers are Danny McAbee and sister Cheryl Pearson.

## A KM landmark

### Customers come from all over to buy sandwich at Mac's Grocery

BY ALAN HODGE  
Staff Writer

Mac's Grocery in Kings Mountain is a lot like Abraham Lincoln - not exactly gorgeous on the outside, but full of character on the inside. A Kings Mountain food store landmark for decades, Mac's Grocery is a throwback to the time when each neighborhood in a town usually had its own family owned grocery.

Mac's Grocery has been in the McAbee family since 1961 when Russell McAbee founded it. When McAbee passed away in 1967, his wife and four of their eight children took over operation. Today, Don, Cheryl, Danny, and Kenny McAbee keep the store open from 8:30 am until 8:30 pm Monday through Friday, and 8:30 am until 7 pm on Saturday.

The building on 900 N. Piedmont that houses Mac's dates back to 1935 and was originally owned by Charles Stowe. Outside, chipped and faded paint combines with old-time signs advertising various soft drink brands and other products. One side of Mac's consists of a lean-to shed where patrons can spend some shady time sitting at a picnic table or on an old church pew. Especially interesting is the floor at Mac's. Originally in an old mill, the boards are well-worn by the tread of countless feet.

Stepping through the screen door at Mac's is like stepping back to a time when today's baby boomers were just kids peering at candy behind a counter glass. Items on the shelf at Mac's ranges from hubcaps to the working man's friend Beenie-Weenies. Just a few of the other things available at Mac's include Monkey Grip tire patching kits, pickled eggs, motor oil, bread, stew, a wide assortment of ice cream, soft drinks, and golf balls in egg cartons.

Though Mac's Grocery provides the staples of life on its shelves, it's what's cooking on the grill in back that keeps Mac's on the map. Famous far and wide for the creations that

come from the grill, Mac's serves up a steady stream of sandwiches and other items to customers. Besides the usual hamburgers and hot dogs, Mac's offers freshly made hoagies, chuck wagon sandwiches, and one of the best steak sandwiches on the globe.

"I come up to Mac's at least once a week to get lunch," said Ray Roseberry of Kings Mountain as he waited on a couple of sandwiches for he and his son Christopher. "They will definitely hook you up with something good to eat."

Their premiere claim to fame, Mac's steak sandwich consists of a pile of rib eye steak on a huge bun topped with mayo, lettuce, home grown tomato, and a splash of streak sauce. Just one bite will send any hungry man, woman, or child into spasms of delight.

Daughter of Russell McAbee, Cheryl Pearson is often found at the grill turning out food as fast as she can cook.

"I've been working at the store since I was about 15 years old," Pearson says. "We have customers that come from Gastonia and Shelby all the time. Travelers stop here too because they've been told about Mac's by relatives in Cleveland County."

Keeping Mac's open and thriving in the face of competition from fast-food restaurants and chain supermarkets has not always been easy.

"The Lord has always been with us," Pearson says. "We don't sell beer even though a salesman said we could never make it if we didn't. It's just been the will of the Lord for us to stay in business. We've also had some family squabbles over the years, but we always managed to work them out."

With Pearson and her brothers' children coming along in age, the time is ripe for yet another generation of the McAbee family to take over running the store. Given the way that customers are treated at Mac's, and the way those steak sandwiches taste, chances are good that the store will still be around to see a lot more years of success.

## BUSINESS BRIEFS

### Patricia Gosnell joins First Charter

Patricia M. Gosnell has joined First Charter as a Senior Vice President and Electronic Banking Group Manager. She will be responsible for the coordination of electronic banking services, cash management operations, the ATM network, and online banking.

Commenting on the appointment of Gosnell, James T. (Jim) Mathews, Jr., Senior Vice President at First Charter stated. "Electronic banking is a critical growth area for First Charter. Patricia's broad experience in bank operations and cash management will help us continue the rapid deployment of electronic options to our customers."

Gosnell comes to First Charter with over 25 years of banking experience. Prior to joining First Charter, she managed the Operations and Cash Management areas for Moody National Bank in Galveston, Texas.

Gosnell is a graduate of the University of Charleston in West Virginia. She is a member of the Treasury Management Association (TMA) and Financial Women International (FWI). She and her husband, Reg, have one son, Jared, and reside in Charlotte.

### Reinvestment award shared by businesses

First National Bank of Shelby and The Book Mill were named co-winners of the David White Uptown Shelby Reinvestment Award for 1998-99.

In 1999 Shelby developer David White established the award for Uptown Shelby development projects that exemplify a high level of quality and commitment to the revitalization and preservation of Uptown Shelby's economic and historical resources.

This year's award was given to First National Bank and The Book Mill for the extensive rehabilitation of their buildings located on N. Lafayette St. and S. Trade St. respectively. Both projects, while on a different scale, made dramatic impacts in their part of Uptown Shelby. "Both exhibited sensitivity to historic character and will have long-lasting positive implications for years to come," according to Ted Alexander, Executive Director of the Uptown Shelby Association.

The award carries a check of up to \$500 to deserving projects. This is the second year having co-winners. Projects are judged on the basis of the amount of private investment; historical impact of rehabilitation; comprehensiveness in scope, number of jobs, businesses and expansions created as a result of the renovation; and overall impact on the Uptown.

### 325,000 taxpayers will receive refund

Roughly 325,000 taxpayers who paid the intangibles tax without protesting will receive refunds under a bill overwhelmingly approved by the House recently. "I am glad we finally brought to a conclusion this nagging problem. I have been in favor of paying non-protestors ever since I was elected. I am overjoyed to be able to report to the people that their government really works," Rep. Dedmon said.

House and Senate leaders worked for weeks to settle a lawsuit over the issue. Approval of the bill removes a major obstacle in the adjournment of the General Assembly.

"The resolution of the intangibles tax case brings us that much closer to adjournment," said Rep. Dedmon of Cleveland County. "The House leadership worked hard to reach a fair and reasonable settlement that's good for North Carolina and does not raise taxes."

The N.C. Supreme Court ruled in 1998 that the state must refund taxes on "intangibles," such as stocks, to taxpayers who had paid but failed to protest the tax within the 30 days required by law at the time.

North Carolina will settle the case by repaying \$440 million over the next two years to every taxpayer who paid the intangibles tax from 1990 to 1994, when the tax was repealed.

The settlement will provide full compensation for the principle paid by taxpayers for all years as well as a pro rata amount of compensation for interest.

Under the agreement, no refunds will be paid until after August 1, 2000.

### Sears to open at Eastridge Mall

Sears will hold a grand-opening for its spacious new 101,000-square foot store at Eastridge Mall, Gastonia, Saturday, July 24 at 8:30 a.m.

"We're delighted to bring Gastonia customers a new place to shop for everything for their homes and families," said Sears Store General Manager Wanda Edwards. "Our new Sears has significantly more selling space than our old one. We've expanded our women's and home-improvement departments. Plus, we've added fine jewelry, fragrance and small-appliance departments."

With more than 63,000 square feet of selling space, the new store will focus on the company's "softer side, especially apparel and accessories," Edwards said. It will highlight brand names such as Sears own Canyon River Blues, Crossroads and Apostrophe.

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## Service groups may qualify for phones

Bell Atlantic Mobile is looking for local social service organizations to participate in programs that use wireless technology to help those most in need - victims of domestic violence and the homeless. More than 40 organizations throughout North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia are already involved in the company's HopeLine, the Domestic Violence Initiative and Phone Recycling programs.

Since 1995, Bell Atlantic Mobile has helped thousands of individuals and invested more

than \$124,000 into its "Wireless at Work" program in the Southeast region. The company's HopeLine program continues to help hundreds of homeless individuals through free access to wireless voice mail boxes, providing a better way to search for jobs, housing, and other services. Almost 600 voice mail boxes have been donated in the last three years.

"Several years ago we recognized that for homeless men and women to get back on their feet, they needed a direct connection, one which sidesteps

the stigma of being homeless or phoneless," said Jerry Fountain, vice president, Bell Atlantic Mobile Southeast Region. "HopeLine uses wireless voice mail technology to offer a bridge for self-improvement,

helping people obtain jobs,

For more information on any "Wireless at Work" program, contact Brian Chandler, program coordinator, at 704-332-2030.

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