

# After 62 years, class ring makes its way back home

By GARY STEWART  
Editor of The Herald

If this little ring could talk, it would probably tell some interesting stories, not the least of which is how it lay near the Southern Railroad tracks for so many years without getting a scratch on it.

Frances Dettmar Hayes of Greensboro was less than a year out of Kings Mountain High School when the ring disappeared in the early 1940s. She says her ring finger was so small back then - she was 5-foot-8 and weighed 99 pounds when she graduated KMHS in

1940 - it often slipped off so easily she didn't miss it for several days.

That's what she figured when she first missed it, and she always thought she'd find it somewhere in the house.

But over 25 years later, some Kings Mountain National Guardsmen who were doing some clean-up work around the old cannon across from the Joy Theater found the ring under some gravel.

They took the ring to their sergeant, Charles Wilson, a '44 KMHS grad, and he took it home and put it in a safe place until he could find the owner.

There were no yearbooks in '44 because of World War II, and Wilson said he enlisted the help of a cousin and others to try to locate the owner, but couldn't. The only clues he had were that the year 1940 was engraved on the outside, and the initials FAD on the inside.

The years went on, and in a conversation one day with

Juanita Steffy, Wilson mentioned the ring.

Mrs. Steffy, who was in the '40 graduating class, got out her KMHS yearbook and found that the only classmate with the initials

FAD was Frances Alene Dettmar.

Upon returning home to fetch the ring, Wilson, who says he put the ring with his high school ring so he could always remember where it was, couldn't find it.

Recently as he was preparing for colon cancer surgery, Wilson said he began going through some material at his home and found the ring. He immediately called Mrs. Steffy and told her he would bring the ring to her that night, and asked if she would see that it got to Mrs. Hayes.

Learning that the ring had been found was a big surprise - a miracle in fact - for Mrs. Hayes, who thought she'd never see it again.

"I honestly don't remember when I lost it," she said.

"When I graduated high school I went to Brevard College for two years and then to Duke University Nursing School, and I really don't remember if I lost it during that time or not. It's been so long I had forgotten what the ring looked like. I thought I remembered it had the old monument on it, and sure enough that's what was on it when it arrived."

The most amazing thing, though, is that the ring was almost in mint condition, inside and out. Her initials inside the ring were as clear as they were when the ring was purchased her senior year.

"I have no recollection of being there (at the site of the cannon)," she said. "It's just amazing that it was found there."

Wilson said he was not at the site the day the ring was found in the mid-sixties. The mayor (he believes it was during Kelly Dixon's administration) had called him asking if the Guard could help clean up the area around the cannon.

"The original cannon was a Civil War cannon," he

recalled, "but the town donated it for scrap during World War II. Somebody had gotten the idea to replace it with a copper cannon and it just sat there for years with a flat tire and grass growing up around it. The mayor asked me if we'd clean up around it and get a tire to go on it."

One of the Guardsmen found the ring and took it to Wilson and asked, "What is this?"

"Why, that's a Kings Mountain High School ring," Wilson remembered saying. He asked his cousin, Whitey Bridges, to check in his his yearbooks to see if he could find someone with the initials "FAD" and put the ring in his desk. After a period of time, he hadn't had heard from Bridges so he put the ring in an envelope and took it home for safe keeping.

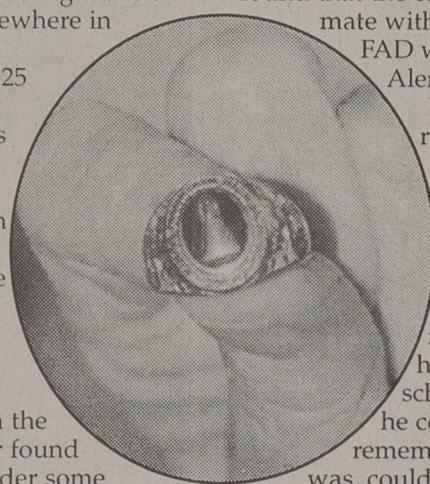
Although he can't remember the exact date the ring was found, Wilson is sure it was during the time of construction of the new National Guard Armory in the mid-sixties. The new high school was being built at the same time. Thus, the ring lay in the gravel by the cannon for some 25 years, and in Wilson's home for over 35.

"So it wasn't like I was putting the ring at the Armory," he said. "There was so much junk out there I put it somewhere where I wouldn't lose it - but I did lose it!"

Mrs. Hayes says the ring now will only fit her little finger, so it's safe in her jewelry box. It will only come out for her to show her children and grandchildren, and tell the story of how it came back to her after so many years.

"It's amazing that the weather hadn't done anything to it; it could have been underground," she noted. "It was well preserved. Nothing had eroded. Everything on it was just perfect."

"I think it's a miracle that it was found, and I appreciate Mr. Wilson and Juanita Steffy getting it back to me," she said. "The ring is 62 years old and is older than most people living nowadays, but it's in beautiful condition. They made good things in those days!"



**Happy 40th Birthday!**

Dena Howell Bridges

Your Loving Family

The Kings Mountain Herald Staff would like to thank **J.D. Wray** for his contribution of the new bell for our lobby counter.

**Bluegrass Night At The Joy**  
Saturday Night Nov. 2, 7:00 PM  
Featuring  
"Mandolin Player of The Year Nominee"  
**Darin Aldridge and the Darin Aldridge Band**  
with Special Guest  
**FLINTHILL**  
(Bluegrass Straight To The Point)  
12 and Under \$6.00  
Adults \$12.00

**Maranda Harris**  
Sophomore at Kings Mountain High School won Young Miss Gastonia and Most Photogenic on Saturday, October 5th, 2002 at Gaston College.

**MONDAY NIGHT BINGO!**  
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<b>JACKPOT \$500</b>	<b>GRAND OPENING NOV. 4TH</b>	<b>BINGO!</b>	<b>DOOR PRIZES</b>	<b>HOTDOGS &amp; OTHER REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE!</b>
<b>USE PATIO ENTRANCE</b>	<b>SMOKE FREE</b>	<b>COME EARLY</b>	<b>DOOR PRIZES</b>	<b>Non Paying &amp; Non Playing Customers Not Admitted</b>
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PROCEEDS BENEFIT COUNCIL ON AGING OF CLEVELAND COUNTY

## OBITUARIES

**LISA RENEE LANIER BESSEMER CITY** - Lisa Renee Lanier, 39, 308 West Indiana Avenue, died October 19, 2002 at Gaston Memorial Hospital.

She was a native of Cleveland County and daughter of the late Jack Lanier.

She is survived by her mother, Thelma Styers Lanier of Bessemer City; son and spouse, Eric and Trina Ray of Cherryville; daughters, Anita Ray of Spartanburg, SC, and Kayla Lanier and Kasie Ray of Bessemer City; grandchild, Ashley Ray of Spartanburg, SC; brothers and spouses, Jackie and Sissy Lanier of Cherryville and Paul and Tracy Lanier of Kings Mountain; and sister and spouse, Wanda and Kenny Wells of Bessemer City.

The funeral was conducted by the Revs. Dennis Wells and Doug Ramsey at 4 p.m. Friday at Victory Baptist Church, Grover. Burial was in Mountain Rest Cemetery, Kings Mountain.

Pallbearers were David Creighton, Jackie Lanier, Paul Lanier, Eric Ray, Monk Short, and K.J. Wells.

Greene Funeral Service - West Chapel was in charge of arrangements.

**BRUCE CADWALLADER KINGS MOUNTAIN** - Bruce Ridgway Cadwallader, 54, 244 Dillon Road, died October 23, 2002 at his home.

A native of Scott Air Force Base, St. Clair Co., IL, he was the son of the late Ave Schroff Cadwallader. He was employed at CA Short Co. in Shelby for 30 years.

He is survived by his wife, Darlene Short Cadwallader of Kings Mountain; father, Col. John S. Cadwallader of Salisbury; son, Joe Shull of Kings Mountain; daughter, LaChrista Shull of Kings Mountain; brother, Craig Cadwallader of Hermosa Beach, CA; and sister, Janice C. Maddox of Greensboro.

The funeral was conducted by the Rev. Tim Hendrick at 2 p.m. Saturday at Patterson Grove Baptist Church. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Memorials may be made to American Cancer Society, 500 East Morehead Street, Suite 211, Charlotte, NC; Marine Corp Recruiting Command "Toys for Tots," 112 East Dixon Blvd., Shelby, NC 28152; and Patterson Grove Baptist Church Building Fund, 301 Oak Grove Road, Kings Mountain, NC 28086.

Harris Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.

**ESSIE MAE DAVIS SHELBY** - Mrs. Essie Mae Davis, 64, 414 Apt. 1 E. Marion St., died October 27, 2002 at Cleveland Pines Nursing Home.

A native of Lincolnton, she was the daughter of the late George Henry Sisk and Elizabeth Kathleen Russ Sisk.

She was formerly employed at Rogers Theater and Taste-T-Drive In. She was a member of Shelby Missionary Methodist Church.

She is survived by her husband, Dean Davis Jr. of Shelby; sons and daughters-in-law, Rev. Charles Ray and Jeannie Davis of Marion and

Keith and Star Davis of Shelby; daughters and sons-in-law, Bernice and Roger McDaniel and Wanda and Jon Kee of Shelby; grandchildren, Jim Davis of Morgantown, Amy Lunsford, Jennifer Davis and Matthew Davis of Marion, and Brian Davis, Brandi Davis, Wendy McCurry, Johnathon Kee and Christopher Kee of Shelby; and special friends, Ray Arrowood and Danny Arrowood of Grover.

The funeral was conducted by the Revs. Allen Knicley and David Black at 11 a.m. Wednesday at Shelby Missionary Methodist Church. Entombment was in Cleveland Memorial Park.

Memorials may be made to the American Heart Association, P.O. Box 2391, Shelby, NC 28151.

Clay-Barnette Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.

**ROY CHITWOOD KINGS MOUNTAIN** - Roy Chitwood, 50, 204 Fulton Street, died October 27, 2002 at his home.

He was a native of Cleveland County and the son of the late Ralph Monroe Chitwood. He was also preceded in death by his brother, James Chitwood, and son, Christopher Brian Davison.

He was formerly employed by Haywood Pools. He was a longtime disc jockey for WKMT Radio, and served in the U.S. Army.

He is survived by his wife, Rebecca Oliver Chitwood of Kings Mountain; daughter, Jennifer Davison Wells and husband Travis of Kings Mountain; mother, Mary Black Chitwood of Kings Mountain; brother, Gettis Chitwood of Gastonia; and sisters, Hattie Beaver of Lincolnton, Barbara Jackson of Bessemer City, and Mary Wynn of Gastonia.

The funeral was conducted by the Rev. Darryl Alexander at 3 p.m. Wednesday at Ollie Harris Memorial Chapel. Burial was in Mountain Rest Cemetery.

Harris Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.

**IRVIN FRANKLIN SHELBY** - Irvin Franklin, 70, 414 Hatcher Road, died October 29, 2002 at his home.

A native of Cleveland County, he was the son of the late Paul r. and Elizabeth Ross Franklin.

He is survived by his sons and their wives, Irvin and Lynn Franklin, Mitchell and Lila Franklin, and Winton Franklin, all of Shelby, and Robert and Lori Franklin of Jacksonville, FL; daughters and their husbands, St. Augustean "Sissy" and Jimmy Blanton, Alori and Scott Hunt, and Ava and David Bowen, all of Shelby; brother, Jerry Franklin of Kings Mountain; sisters, Mary Jo and husband Arron Everhart of Lexington and Catherine Lail of Casar; 15 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

The funeral will be held at 11 a.m. Friday at Way of the Cross Baptist Church. Visitation is from 6-8 p.m. Thursday at Clay-Barnette Funeral Home.

## Women's conference set at Kings Mountain church

"WWW.NTRUTH&POWER" - Women Who Worship in Truth and Power - conference will be held November 17-23 at 7 p.m. at Remnant of Faith Christian Church, 126 West Mountain Street, Kings Mountain.

Guest speakers include Evangelist Joanne Barber of Gastonia, Minister Debra Ransom of Lincolnton, Co-Pastor Stacey Brown of Charlotte, First Lady Hazeleen Smith of Shelby, Elder Jewel McClain of Kings Mountain, Evangelist Nellie Kirkland of Lincolnton, and Overseer Chonta Nealous of Ezra Emmanuel Ministries in Clarksville, TN.

Special music guests include the Palmer Grove Baptist Church Praise Team, recording artist Total Victory over Winston Salem, Evangelist Robin Ponder, and Elder Jewel McClain.

Bishop O.T. McCray Jr. is Overseer and Pastor of Remnant of Faith Christian Church.

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