



photo by LIB STEWART

Scott Campbell, left, and Bobby Horne are pictured inside the corner building of what was once part of Plonk Brothers Department Store, which operated in Kings Mountain for a century in downtown Kings Mountain. They and Robert Campbell have purchased the two properties from the Plonk family.

WRECK
From Page 1

to palm trees, grass to fences, marked each painted cake plate with a card and a lady bug, wrapped cutting boards, and had a "good eye" for graphic design. She was majoring in Library Science and wanted to pursue a Master's in history and work as an archivist in a museum.

Jennie loved to read and had volunteered to read to children this summer in the local library. Jennie read to her mother when Mrs. Huffstetler drove the car. She spent afternoons at Mauney Memorial Library immersed in the history of the building.

When her mother painted, Jennie read to her. She encouraged her mother to paint with secondary colors, telling her "Oh Mama that's beautiful."

Jennie loved animals and one of her favorites was a stray, gold colored tomcat she named "Ginger" that she fed every day. Melba said that the cat would make terrible sounds at night. But Jennie declared, "Oh Mama he's just proud of himself." After Jennie's death the Huffstetlers looked for the cat. He was gone.

The Huffstetlers think their daughter was enjoying her drive in the cool air last Tuesday with the windows rolled down in her car. Feel-

ing better after a migraine headache, she told her Mom that she was going for a Diet Sundrop.

Her cell phone was not in the wrecked car, only the small purse that contained her driver's license and the Sundrops. They speculate that Jennie may have reached for her phone or it could have fallen out the window and she swerved and lost control of the car.

"Our house is empty without her laughter," says her Mom.

"She was incredible," says her Dad. And they won't forget what she preached to them on many occasions "Don't you dare give up, you're stronger than that."

LANDMARK
From Page 1

Horne has started the renovation of the corner building facing the downtown Patriot's Park. Updating the two buildings will cost about \$500,000 but Horne said their ultimate goal is to draw more business into downtown.

The two businessmen are already recruiting prospective tenants. As the two worked at the site this weekend they said they showed the buildings to a man interested in opening a photography studio and to a restaurant owner looking at a site for an eatery.

"Our family was looking for developers like Bobby and Scott and both have the expertise and are excited about how that entire block will look in the near future,"

said John O. Plonk, who added the family closed on the sale Feb. 1.

A new facelift of the former Plonk buildings will feature new windows, new store fronts with awnings in front and back of the buildings, new stucco, a new look to the back of the buildings with patio and other enhancements that could draw traffic and interest from Patriot's Park.

Scott Campbell is the son of Ed Campbell of Kings Mountain and the late Betty Campbell. A sales manager for United Parcel Service for 18 years, he is interested and excited about new development in Kings Mountain.

He and his wife, Marsha, have two daughters, Lauren and Summer. They are members of First Wesleyan church.

Horne, a building con-

tractor for 22 years, is the son of Linda Beaver and the late Sharon Horne. He has developed and owns a number of properties in the downtown area, two buildings just up the street from the Plonk buildings and also the former Sellers Chiropractic building in downtown Kings Mountain.

He has also worked on several other buildings in downtown, most recently for the new J Oliver's. He and his wife, Sharon, have four children, Brad Myers, Taylor Myers, Lauren Horne and Lindsey Horne. They are members of Resurrection Lutheran Church.

The two entrepreneurs are excited about their plans for Kings Mountain revitalization on Railroad Avenue.

"This can be a showplace and beef up our economy," they say.



EMILY WEAVER/HERALD

Left to right, Chris Smith and Mark Blanton stand beside the sign of their new restaurant in the Oak Grove community.

RESTAURANT
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"We bought ourselves a new job," he laughed inside the restaurant.

Blanton runs the Grill with his son-in-law, Chris Smith, who teaches third grade at Cherryville Elementary. The two have tackled many things together. While Blanton is playing the drums or singing the lead vocals in the band, Smith is often running the sound system.

The two also disc jockey together at local events. "He's been working with me since he married my daughter in 2000," Blanton said with a grin.

"We've been wanting to do this for a while and now the

right opportunity has come along," he added.

Cooking has been a hobby for both men. But now the hobby will also be a profession.

"It's a profession and a hobby because we both still teach in the school system," Blanton said, although he added that the restaurant will now be his primary job.

He has been substitute teaching in Kings Mountain since 1989. Smith has been with the school system eight and a half years and will help out at the restaurants on nights or weekends when school is out.

But even though the restaurant will take them outside of the classroom, school spirit will not be lacking at the

Grill.

The restaurant's charm lies in its Doo-wop and Mountaineer-pride themes - two things that have meant a lot to Blanton over the years. After being in the music business 40 years and teaching nearly half as long, he has blended both passions with a love of grilling.

Doo-wop will soon play from the speakers at the restaurant. Once the walls are fully decorated they will showcase oldies and Mountaineer memorabilia.

Both men have followed the Mountaineers through good and bad years, attending every home football game together. Blanton was president of the Optimist Club for many years.

COOK-OFF
From Page 1

Anna's Sweet Treats will be selling many goodies, including fried banana pudding and fried Snickers. Another vendor is scheduled to be selling barbecue on a stick.

Forty-five teams had registered to compete as of Friday afternoon. The competition will be capped at 52. Five local teams, including Big E's BBQ of Kings Mountain, had registered to compete as of Friday.

Last year's grand champion and first-time Firehouse contender Smokey Mountain Smokers, of Tennessee, will be returning to defend their title. Teams will be filing into the park this week from as far south as Landolakes, Fla.; as far north as Cleveland, Ohio; as far west as Jasper, Ga.; and as far east as Hartford, NC.

The Kings Mountain Fire Department organizes and hosts the event in conjunction with the city at the walking track each year. Money raised from the Cook-off benefits the

KMFD and the Kings Mountain Fire Museum.

With an average of six people per team, 65 judges and all of the friends and family, who join them in the competition, this year's Firehouse BBQ Cook-off is estimated to bring in an average of 500 people over the weekend.

But not only does the event attract barbecuers, judges, friends and family nationwide, this year's Firehouse will also welcome firefighters to the "hearth." Teams from Landolakes, Fla. and Cleveland, Ohio, are manned at least partly by firefighters.

Royal Oak will provide all competing teams this year with charcoal and lighter fluid.

For 41-50+ teams competing, the prize money will total: \$4,000 - grand champion; \$1,000 - reserve champion; and top category prizes of \$550 - 1st place, \$300 - 2nd, \$200 - 3rd, \$150 - 4th, and \$100 - 5th. Anything Butt winners will be rewarded with \$200 each for best desert and best non-desert. The best booth will receive \$100 along with the highest placing Cleveland County team.

He has coached Pop Warner football on and off for two decades. So it makes sense that the two would pay tribute to their team.

"All of our sandwich baskets are football-themed," Blanton said.

The Mountaineer burger is 8 oz. of meat, the JV burger is 5 oz. and the children's "Mighty Mite" is 3 oz.

The restaurant's chicken sandwich is called the "tail-back" and "wingbacks" are chicken wings. The "line-backer" is an 8 oz. ribeye steak, served with other fixings for a full dinner. An 8-12 oz. hamburger steak plate is called "the quarterback."

"When you're an avid football fan, this is kind of the way to go," he said.

He added that he's incorporating the doo-wop theme in the other side of the menu.

The restaurant serves a variety of foods, including burgers, chicken, wings, fried hors d'oeuvres, club sandwiches, hot dogs, salads, homemade slaw and breakfast sandwiches. Although they haven't quite decided which brand to sell, Blanton said that the grill will soon be serving ice cream.

Blanton and Smith got the property on August 6 and the

two have worked on getting the restaurant ready for about a month and a half.

"We've already helped the economy," Blanton smiled. "We've hired three people."

They didn't intend to hire anyone at first, but business was so steady the first week that Blanton realized they needed help.

Although current health codes only allow the restaurant to have indoor seating for four, business has been good for the grill, which also offers curb service and pick-ups for call-in to go orders.

Once the City of Kings Mountain's sewer lines are extended to the property, indoor dining will be increased to accommodate a larger crowd. But Blanton is working with the county to find another way, until then.

The Grill is open 6 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday-Saturday. All menu items are served at any time during the day.

KM Museum hosts Spring Fling Sat.

The Kings Mountain Historical Museum is planning a Spring Fling on April 18th from 1-5 p.m. at the Museum Commons behind the Exhibit Hall.

The 19th century Barber and Cornwell Houses will be open and interpreters, dressed in colonial costumes will be performing crafts and skills. There will be several tomahawk throwing demonstrations throughout the afternoon.

Shelia Ingle, the author of "Courageous Kate, A Daughter of the American Revolution" and winner of the 2007 DAR Historic Preservation Award will be speaking about the Revolutionary period at 2 p.m. Afterward, she will sign copies of her book selling for \$11.95.

The Log Cabin String Band will be playing at 3 p.m. in front of the Barber House on the Museum Commons.

Wells reunion slated April 26

The 23rd reunion of the John and Britter Wells family descendants will be held Sunday, April 26, at Dixon Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall, 630 Dixon School Road, at 1 p.m. The family meeting will begin with a potluck lunch followed by a short business meeting. The group will ride to the old Wells Cemetery located on the Hughes farm on Stewart Road to view the tombstones of the original members of the family.

Family members are asked to take documents, wills, pictures, etc. for display. All descendants are urged to attend to share the food, fellowship, memories, laughter and family genealogy. Rev. Robert Wells is the president of the reunion.

John and Britter Wells were among the earliest settlers in this area, buying land in the Dixon Community from a land grant issued by the King of England prior to the Revolutionary War in 1780. Their cabin was used to treat the wounded from the Battle of Kings Mountain Oct. 7, 1780 and is currently the oldest residence in Cleveland County. Elizabeth Stewart owns the house on Stewart Road. The old Wells Cemetery, where John and Britter Wells are buried, is on the Betty Hughes farm located on Stewart Road.

For additional information call Secretary Steve Wells at 704-739-1545 or President Robert Wells at 864-489-8680.

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